

empowering girls to learn & lead



POWERWITHIN
empowering girls to **learn & lead**



“Before I came here, I never thought I could do so many things. I have learned so much and gained so much confidence. I want other girls to have the same opportunity as me.”

– Sandhya Rani, 13, Andhra Pradesh, India

Power Within Executive Summary

Education is more than reading skills and math equations. It's more than text books, maps and quizzes. Education also means thinking critically and solving problems; yet even these are just a portion of the promise of quality education. When fully realized, that promise includes learning how to get along with others, overcoming challenges, accepting leadership responsibilities and planning for success. Quality schools are incubators for healthy societies.

Consider, then, that a conservative estimate shows 75 million children who should be in primary school are not. And this injustice is not borne equally: roughly 55 percent of those – some 41 million children – are girls. The repercussions could not be more serious. In addition to the loss of opportunity for each individual child, denying girls an education correlates to lower family incomes, higher maternal and child mortality, and a critical lack of representation and leadership from half the population. Quite simply, no society is going to overcome poverty while failing to educate its girls.

In 2000, the international community pledged to meet a set of eight Millennium Development Goals, which included *achieving universal primary education, and promoting gender equality and empowering women*. Though they appear together on this global agenda, few organizations outside the United Nations are drawing the connection between girls' education, the development of leadership skills and women's empowerment.

It is precisely this connection that forms the basis for CARE's POWER WITHIN program. By 2015, POWER WITHIN will enable 10 million girls in 20 countries to complete a primary education and develop leadership skills to guide their families and communities out of poverty.

Since the 1940s, CARE has built schools, operated school feeding initiatives, developed educational materials and run literacy programs, always with an eye toward community participation. CARE's 60 years of experience has laid a rich foundation for our holistic approaches to promoting quality, basic education. In more than 40 countries, we are engaged in a wide variety of education activities that include children, families, schools, communities and governments to create a quality learning experience for all students. These programs target places and people often overlooked by other organizations and even national education systems. In 2008, CARE implemented 173 education projects helping 9 million students – especially girls – gain the skills they need to succeed, and removing barriers to school attendance.

In India, for example, one CARE project has tripled the percentage of second graders doing math at grade level. In Malawi, the HIV and AIDS epidemic is a major obstacle to quality education, so CARE is helping students educate their peers and creating support systems that keep students and teachers affected by HIV and AIDS at school.

In Honduras, students are encouraged to lead initiatives to improve the quality of education and reduce drop-outs.

POWER WITHIN will leverage the best practices and lessons learned from these and other education programs to invest in both girls and boys, and help them transform the world around them so they can reach their fullest potential. Specific objectives to support this goal include:

- 1 **Increasing the number of girls completing primary school through equitable, quality education; better transitions between grade levels or on to vocational training; learning opportunities for older girls; supportive households and communities; and gender-sensitive education policies.**
- 2 **Building girls' leadership skills through diverse extracurricular activities; empowering relationships with families, schools and peers; establishing new social networks for promoting girls; and girls' participation in voluntary civic action.**
- 3 **Advocating for the rights of girls by addressing harmful traditional practices, reducing vulnerability, and identifying role models and champions for girls.**

POWER WITHIN Tier 1 Countries	CARE's Girls' Education and Leadership Experience
Central America	School governments, extensive work with local partners, empowerment of vulnerable girls, participatory learning, and innovation in girls' education and leadership (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua)
Egypt	Multi-grade classrooms for girls, technology clubs in girls' primary schools, gender-based violence prevention programs, and women's economic empowerment programs
India	Experience with girls' leadership activities in residential schools for girls, development and introduction of the social learning curricula to promote civic engagement of girls, innovation in girls' education and leadership
Malawi	Girl-focused HIV and gender-based violence prevention programs in schools, experience with AIDS awareness clubs that encourage girls' leadership and assertiveness, linkages to referral services for abused children, innovation in girls' education and leadership
Tanzania	Reading groups for girls, social networks for girls, innovation in girls' education and leadership

CARE will mobilize at least \$150 million for POWER WITHIN by 2015. Donors contributing to POWER WITHIN can expect semi-annual reports on program progress and achievement of objectives.



Background and Rationale

Education is more than reading skills and math equations. It's more than text books, maps and quizzes. Education also means thinking critically and solving problems, yet even these are just a portion of the promise of quality education. When fully realized, that promise includes learning how to get along with others, overcoming challenges, accepting leadership responsibilities and planning for success. Quality schools are incubators for healthy societies.

Consider, then, that a conservative estimate shows 75 million children who should be in primary school are not. And this injustice is not borne equally: roughly 55 percent of those – some 41 million children – are girls.

Barriers to girls' education and leadership opportunities are often deeply rooted in prevailing gender norms and attitudes. Many young girls, especially those from poor, isolated and socially excluded populations, shoulder adult responsibilities such as cultivating crops and caring for young children. Even when they have the chance to start school, girls are more likely than boys to drop out or be absent. By the time a girl reaches secondary school age, she is three times more likely to be out of school than her male counterpart.

Yet we know that girls' education in particular is associated with several key development goals: reduced child and maternal mortality, improved child nutrition and health, increased economic productivity and growth, enhanced political participation for women, and protection from disease, abuse and exploitation. In short, girls' education yields some of the highest returns of all development investments, creating benefits that extend to individuals, families and society at large.

In 2000, the international community pledged to meet a set of eight Millennium Development Goals, which included *achieving universal primary education* (goal 2) and *promoting gender equality and empowering women* (goal 3). Indeed, providing education opportunities enhanced with leadership training – and supported by community, national and international advocacy efforts around the rights of girls – is the cornerstone of affecting positive social change. Families, communities and nations will benefit from a generation of girls equipped to participate equally in all aspects of life and tackle the root causes of poverty. Yet, with the exception of UNICEF and some UN agencies, few organizations link girls' primary education with the development of leadership skills.

With this connection in mind, CARE is launching POWER WITHIN, an initiative that will transform communities by educating girls and preparing them to lead on the path out of poverty.

CARE'S Experience

A child who is educated is armed with new skills and a sense of self. A quality education will prepare that child to interact with others, teach her about opportunities beyond her village and inspire a vision for what she could become. For six decades, CARE has been implementing community-centered education activities. Beginning with programs to build schools, operate school feeding initiatives, develop educational materials and run literacy programs, CARE's 60 years of education programming have laid a rich foundation for our holistic approaches to promoting quality, basic education for all students. In more than 40 countries, we are engaged in a wide variety of education programs targeting marginalized areas and populations in almost every region of the world. In 2008, CARE implemented 173 education projects helping 9 million students – especially girls – gain the skills they need to succeed, and removing barriers to school attendance.





What Does CARE Mean by Girls' Leadership, and Why Is Does it Matter?

A girl leader is an active learner who believes that she can make a difference in her world; she acts alone and with others to bring about positive change. This is not about top-down leadership in the traditional sense but rather a girl's ability to take action and exert a positive influence in her family and community.

CARE has identified five key leadership characteristics we will promote through POWER WITHIN.

Voice/Assertion: Able to articulate thoughts and make decisions, be critical, ask questions and be assertive. Having a voice and knowing she has the right to an opinion.

Decision-making/Action: A sense that her decisions matter in her own life, that she can create opportunities for herself.

Self-confidence: A belief in her value as a person.

Organization: Able to organize herself to achieve her goals; able to take something from an idea to a final product.

Vision /Ability to Motivate Others: Able to bring people together to accomplish something and to play an active social role in the community.

Leadership skills are an asset for girls that cannot be taken away. Building leadership skills is about being able to:

- Protect oneself against violence and enjoy rights that previous generations had not
- Expand women's roles in economic and political spheres
- Promote the value of education for all children
- End the cycle of poverty



Goal and Objectives

The initial overall goal of POWER WITHIN is to enable 10 million girls in 20 countries to complete their primary education and develop leadership skills by 2015. The initiative is grounded in securing quality education and leadership opportunities for girls ages 10 to 14 and children from marginalized and vulnerable communities, both inside and outside the classroom. Specific objectives to support this goal include:

Increasing the number of girls completing primary school. Ensuring that marginalized girls have equal educational opportunities is one of the most important and powerful steps toward challenging gender discrimination. In addition to removing barriers to education, CARE's programs seek to improve the quality of learning for all students.

Building girls' leadership skills. Adequate education opportunities, combined with leadership development, can help girls articulate their needs, protect their personal assets, participate in decision making and shape their futures.

Advocating for the rights of girls. CARE will work with parents, teachers, community leaders, government and civil society to advocate for the rights of girls.

**Enable 10 million girls in
20 countries to complete their
primary education and develop
leadership skills by 2015**

Project Design and Major Activities

Strategic Objective 1:

Increase the Number of Girls Completing Primary School

Equitable, quality education: This component includes activities to ensure that education processes, content and environments support learning for all students, both girls and boys. CARE recognizes that getting children into school is not enough; they must be able to learn once there. And we understand that poor-quality education discourages school attendance. Thus, POWER WITHIN will increase the number of girls who complete primary school by improving education quality. Approaches include training teachers and community members to manage classrooms and schools, working with governments to ensure that the curriculum acknowledges the special needs of vulnerable communities, building local ownership to improve school infrastructure, ensuring safe school access and encouraging regular assessment of students to improve learning. Above all, POWER WITHIN will design activities to help school systems treat all learners with dignity and respect, regardless of gender, culture or socio-economic status.

Transitions between levels of education: School transitions include a child's transition into primary school and eventually on to post-primary options. Experts recognize that these transitions are critical periods in a child's educational development. For younger children, POWER WITHIN will focus on creating safe early childhood development opportunities to promote success in primary school and reduce drop outs. We will also work to ensure that children have quality

post-primary school options that might include helping children transition to secondary school or linking them to financial literacy and credit opportunities, vocational training, apprenticeships or community leadership posts. These options will help students and families see the importance of education during a period of a child's life when leadership skills are expanded, deepened and sustained.

Learning opportunities for older girls: An important strategy for increasing the number of girls who complete primary school is to address the learning needs of those who have missed the chance to start school on time or who have dropped out. Too often, these children are simply left to join the ranks of illiterate adults. In response, CARE will work with governments and partner organizations to ensure that vulnerable older girls have quality learning opportunities through bridge courses, residential schools, community schools, flexible school hours and accelerated learning curricula.

Gender-sensitive policies and programs: POWER WITHIN will create an enabling environment for girls that includes gender-friendly school programs, budgeting practices, and enrollment and completion policies. Specific activities may include efforts to pass laws prohibiting gender discrimination in education, projects that address gender-based violence in schools, or budget monitoring to ensure that provisions are made for girls' education.

Strategic Objective 2: Build Girls' Leadership Skills

For girls to develop leadership competencies, they need effective strategies – as well as physical space – to learn and practice new skills and to interact with others without fear of failure or exploitation. Caring adults who can support girls in these strategies are critical. The components of this objective include:

Diverse extracurricular activities for girls: Girls must have outlets outside of school where they can develop their social skills, intellect and leadership through supervised, structured activities. POWER WITHIN will promote these activities by supporting sports teams, student government, technology clubs and youth groups.

Social networks for girls: Having a connection with other girls and being socially integrated can be of equal importance to learning skills. Through the development of “safe spaces,” girls will have an opportunity to learn by taking on leadership roles themselves and also by observing their peers in those roles. In addition, such peer networks teach girls how to resolve conflict, deal with setbacks and become more accepting of others.

Girls' participation in voluntary civic action: POWER WITHIN will promote citizenship through leadership development activities. Voluntary civic action helps girls to be seen and heard in the community, and it stimulates a general spirit of community goodwill. Furthermore, this type of visibility engages the community by deepening its stake in the growth and development of girls. Civic action provide girls with the experience they need to later participate as citizens who assert their rights and hold leaders accountable.

In India, CARE's *Girls' Education Program* is working with more than 1 million children, adolescents, community members, teachers and government officials to increase formal and alternative education opportunities and improve education quality. In 2006, for example, only 7 percent of grade 2 students in the target area were performing math on grade level; today, the number has more than tripled to 24 percent.

In Malawi, our *Basic Education and HIV and AIDS Support* project, which was implemented from 2003-2006, worked in 40 schools and helped nearly 31,000 pupils, parents and teachers respond to the challenges of HIV and AIDS. This included establishing school committees to disseminate information about HIV prevention, raising awareness among teachers about HIV and AIDS, establishing support groups for students and teachers affected by the disease, training adults to act as counselors for orphans, and strengthening parent committees' ability to support schools and monitor teacher behavior.

In Honduras over the past two years, CARE has effectively engaged students, teachers and parents in six poor communities to improve the quality of education, increase school enrollment and retention rates and curb child labor. A total of 2,457 students and 298 working youth are benefiting from the project, an increase of 251 students since 2007; and there are currently 72 students – 65 percent of whom are girls – participating in school governments at the six schools.

POWER WITHIN will leverage the best practices and lessons learned from these and other education programs to invest in both girls and boys, and help them transform the world around them so they can reach their full potential.

Strategic Objective 3: Advocate for the Rights of Girls

The program's third objective focuses on the relationships that girls have with family and community members, as well as the environment in which they live. This objective acknowledges that it is not enough to improve girls' skills and attitudes; the people and institutions around them must also change. The components of this objective are:

Attention to harmful traditional practices: Children, particularly girls, are too often constrained by social expectations that limit a child's vision of her future and cause emotional or physical harm. Practices such as early marriage, female genital cutting and exploitative child labor can deeply affect a child's aspirations and social/physical mobility. POWER WITHIN will work with communities to identify these harmful practices and overcome their negative effects by helping to identify role models, enforce existing laws and raise awareness of how harmful traditions affect all members of society.

Reduction of risk and vulnerability: In the program's target areas, the effects of HIV and AIDS, conflict, natural disasters, landlessness, food insecurity, unemployment, discrimination and poor health

keep communities and families in poverty. POWER WITHIN will implement strategies that are sensitive and adaptable to difficult contexts and enable girls to focus on education and leadership development. CARE will build on our broad base of poverty-fighting programs to help communities meet priority needs and change attitudes that prevent girls from realizing their rights.

Role models, mentors and champions for girls: This component develops advocates for girls' rights by fostering relationships with individuals and institutions that can help make a lasting difference in children's lives. If girls are to emerge as leaders in their homes and communities, they need people to look up to, and they need people who will help their voices be heard. In response, POWER WITHIN will encourage mothers to be a constituency for their daughters, help men and boys learn to support girls' leadership development, and identify leaders with whom girls can interact and count on for support and encouragement. Partnerships with government leaders, the corporate sector, community authorities and alumni networks will also be important to this effort.



Indicators, Monitoring and Evaluation

POWER WITHIN's key objectives and activities provide a broad canvas for knowledge generation. CARE will leverage our experience by creating systems to support the collection, dissemination and use of knowledge to improve the quality of education and create new opportunities for the girls participating in the program. CARE will capture best practices and lessons learned that will be used to:

- Measure the progress of POWER WITHIN against the stated objectives for various stakeholders, including participating communities, implementing partners and donors.
- Inform future program development and strategies.
- Develop an evidence base that is used for advocacy initiatives in the country offices and in donor communities.

POWER WITHIN will operate with a single monitoring and evaluation framework across all participating countries. As CARE's Basic and Girls' Education Unit continues to develop the monitoring and evaluation framework, high-level indicators for POWER WITHIN include the following:

- Percent of most marginalized children with access to primary and post-primary schooling.
- Girls acquiring leadership skills.
- Girls' participation in civic action.
- Percent of girls who perceive they are treated equitably by the school system.
- Effective implementation of policies to ensure quality primary education for all.

POWER WITHIN will generate knowledge about girls' education and leadership to be shared with development and education communities. This approach will include the following components:

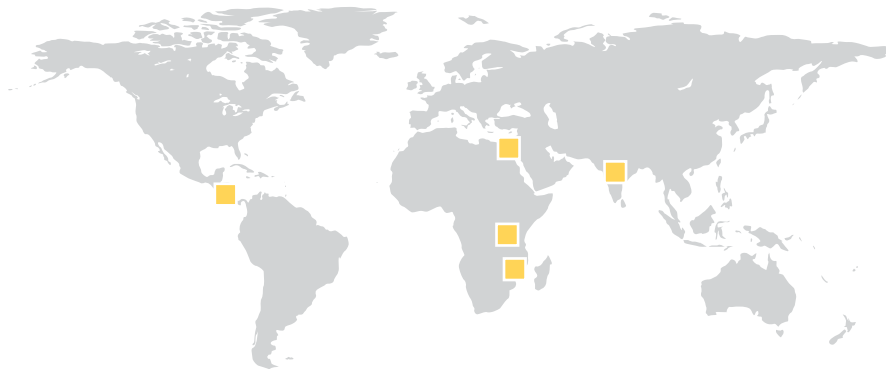
- Coordination and action on global themes. The POWER WITHIN team will develop papers for professional presentation or publication.
- External expertise. A core group of professionals (scholars, researchers and/or professionals from other agencies) will work closely with the POWER WITHIN team at all levels, offering perspective and guidance.
- Evidence-based advocacy. Program results can be used to further efforts in areas such as policy advocacy.

Progress
out of
poverty

Where and When

CARE will implement POWER WITHIN in more than 20 countries in three phases. The selection criteria for countries participating in POWER WITHIN include capacity and experience in girls' education and leadership, the state of primary education and gender indicators in each country, and striking a geographic balance across CARE's country offices. The following "Tier I" countries will be participating in the first phase of POWER WITHIN:

CARE's Girls' Education and Leadership Experience



Central America

(El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua)
School governments; extensive work with local partners; empowerment of vulnerable girls; participatory learning; innovation in girls' education and leadership

Egypt

Multi-grade classrooms for girls; technology clubs in girls' primary schools; programs to prevent gender-based violence; women's economic empowerment programs

India

Experience with girls' leadership activities in residential schools for girls; introduction of the social learning curricula to promote civic engagement of girls; innovation in girls' education and leadership

Malawi

Girl-focused programs to prevent HIV and gender-based violence in schools; experience with AIDS-awareness clubs that encourage girls' leadership and assertiveness; links to referral services for abused children; innovation in girls' education and leadership

Tanzania

Reading groups for girls; social networks for girls; innovation in girls' education and leadership

Organizational Capacity, Management Plan, Staffing and Leadership

In addition to benefiting from CARE's experience in girls' education, POWER WITHIN follows a long history of CARE's work to promote gender equity through programming approaches that challenge the gendered divisions of labor and resources in poor communities, and the unequal relationships that underlie women's vulnerability. Through programs and technical interventions in areas such as education, health, livelihoods and personal and political empowerment, CARE supports millions of women in achieving their full potential in immediate and long-lasting ways.

As the program advances, CARE will build a coalition of partners that includes international nongovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, governments, corporations, universities, donors, project participants and communities. POWER WITHIN will increase collaboration

among various stakeholders by leveraging resources and expertise, and supporting broader international efforts to ensure education and equality for girls. Furthermore, CARE envisions community engagement as a strategy to be applied to all three POWER WITHIN program objectives. Based on emerging observations and findings, the program will work with target communities to plan an approach to promoting leadership development and education. POWER WITHIN will work to ensure access to quality formal and informal education opportunities through use of existing community resources, negotiations with local authorities and community-based monitoring. Community engagement will include forming community groups, conducting local awareness-raising efforts, and embarking on a variety of sustainable activities including advocacy campaigns to promote girls' education and leadership.



Funding Requirements

CARE will mobilize between \$150 million to \$200 million for POWER WITHIN by 2015. The POWER WITHIN budget is expected to come from three primary sources: funds leveraged by partners and country offices, a pooled fund and restricted donor gifts.

Leveraged Funding

These are funds raised in a country office, generally from bilateral or multilateral donors or a national government. Leveraged funds may also be brought to bear by partner organizations.



POWER WITHIN Pooled Fund

CARE's first fundraising priority for POWER WITHIN will be to add to a pooled program fund. This flexible funding will be allocated to country offices as it is raised and as strategies are approved. Funding will be returned to the pooled fund if a restricted source is generated to fulfill the original need.



Restricted Donor Gifts

As each country office develops its strategy, it will identify essential long- and short-term needs that could expand the scope and scale of POWER WITHIN. These components will be offered to prospective donors who want to make a restricted gift for particular program components.



Conclusion

POWER WITHIN is a bold investment that will show dramatic returns in the fight against poverty by ensuring that 10 million girls receive a safe, quality education and are equipped with the training and confidence to become leaders in their homes, schools, communities and nations.



care[®]

Defending dignity.
Fighting poverty.

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