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Gender in Emergencies Guidance Note Recruiting Gender balanced Teams

This guidance note provides tips on how to recruit a balanced team; it draws heavily on information shared in the Gender Equity and Diversity (GED) Institutional Group on tips to attract a more diverse workforce.

Introduction

The CARE International Gender Policy aims to improve programmatic and organizational practices to support gender equality and women's rights. The policy sets out four common standards focused on policy and programs; human resources; accountability; and organizational capacity assessments. The second common standard states that: "Human Resources policies and practices will adequately address gender equality. CARE members will track and report annually on gender balance in staffing and governance structures and implement specific strategies to balance male/female representation".

Six Simple Recruitment Steps

There are some simple, cost-effective steps to recruiting under-represented groups, particularly women. These approaches have been tried and tested in many CARE country offices and have proven to be effective.

Step 1: Advertise jobs in diverse places:

- If advertising on the radio, think about timing. You will have a different set of listeners during a popular soap opera, or a program that focuses on women's issues than during a sports program or the news.
- In local newspapers, target issues on days with the 'women's feature'; think about using diverse newspapers.
- Make connections with local women's networks that represent marginalized groups – systematically send them adverts; ask to feature CARE openings in their newsletter.
- Make connections with local university departments who focus on development studies or gender studies – systematically send them adverts; ask to feature CARE openings in their newsletter.
- Think about setting up a joint web-site for international and local NGOs in the country – take a lead on getting a site that advertises positions.
- Use informal and formal networks – get the message out through partners and friends.
- Consider organizing anticipated recruitment for some key positions at the onset of the response to explore and secure skilled male and female candidates.

Step 2: Actively encourage women to apply:

When encouraging women to apply, first, check with local labour laws! The following are example tag lines which have been vetted and approved by the CARE US legal department:

- CARE seeks to improve the lives of the most marginalized, particularly women and girls.
- CARE seeks to improve the lives of the most marginalized, particularly women and girls. We encourage people from diverse backgrounds and experiences, particularly women, to apply.
- Our diversity is our strength; we encourage people from all backgrounds and experiences, particularly women, to apply.

Step 3: Include in job descriptions:

Systematically include standard language in all job descriptions on CARE's commitment to gender equality and diversity (GED) and outline key competencies required.

When job descriptions do not contain any language or reference to a proven commitment to gender equality and diversity; HR should adjust. This means the job description is returned to the hiring manager with a comment stating it cannot be advertised due to the absence or insufficient reflection of GED. The HR professional provides specific language that might help (see below). Types of phrases that might help:

- In the opening of the Job Summary: *"CARE is a leading humanitarian organization dedicated to fighting poverty and social injustice with a special emphasis on women and girls."*
- In Job Responsibility #1 – the supervisory role: *"The [Position Title] will be responsible for ensuring that gender equality and diversity principles are upheld in the recruitment, orientation, performance and management of staff."*
- In Technical Job Responsibilities: *"Paying particular attention to the gender dynamics of..."; "Ensuring that gender and power dynamics related to emergencies are considered."*

- In Networking Job Responsibilities: *"Reaching out to (humanitarian and relief) organizations with competence, expertise and ability to positively influence others in gender equality and women's empowerment..."*
- In Fundraising Job Responsibilities: *"Ensuring the proposals (narrative and budget) and reports contain explicit reference to gender analysis and approaches used to address unequal gender relations."*
- In Program Quality Job Responsibilities: *"Ensuring that adequate gender and power analysis has taken place."*
- *"Able to provide technical assistance in the area of gender in emergencies to ensure that programmatic strategies are addressing unequal power relations."*
- *"Ensuring that evaluations pay particular attention to gender and women's empowerment and the potential negative consequences of CARE's action."*
- *"Providing specific attention to gender and women's empowerment impact measurement indicators, systems and processes."*
- Under competencies: *"Proven experience with practical and impactful gender equality and women's empowerment approaches to development and humanitarian action."*

Step 4: Ask specific questions in interviews:

In interviews, include a question to explore the level of proven commitment the interviewee has towards gender equality. Some examples follow:

- Explain your understanding of gender equality issues especially with regards to how this is important in emergencies.
- Explain a specific action you have taken that demonstrates how you've contributed to greater gender equality; the example could be from your professional or personal life.
- What have you done to promote gender equality or diversity in your previous job(s)? Give a specific example and explain what happened and what you learnt from it?

Step 5: Track diversity of candidates:

Systematically track, who is applying, long listed, short listed and selected across two or three areas like:

- Gender
- Nationality
- Ethnicity

Step 6: Be creative in shortlisting and interviews:

- Render all applications gender and ethnicity blind (cut off or black out all reference to gender or ethnicity before sending to the HR professional for short listing). This is **PROVEN** to provide greater diversity of shortlisted candidates because it neutralizes bias in the reader. Applications are instead coded.
- When considering qualifications, reconsider what is 'required' or 'desired'. Women and some ethnic groups are systemically excluded from higher education by virtue of their identity. Put greater emphasis on competencies and proven track record in the weighting of the candidates. Reduce the qualification requirements if absolutely necessary.
- Do not accept any interview process without a woman candidate.
- Ensure a mixed (diverse) panel of people that have good understanding of GE/GIE.
- Do competency based recruitment, e.g. one country office invited all candidates to a half day assessment. Tasks were set and candidates observed for specific competencies required for the job e.g. team work; communication skills; analytical skills; financial skills, etc.
- Use a diverse approach to recruitment; include tests, presentations, invite prospective candidates to present on a particular issue for a 'brown bag' talk to staff and ask staff to evaluate them.
- Consider positive discrimination (e.g. in a situation where at the final stage there is a male and a female candidate with equal or similar qualifications). Determine a course of action on this prior to interviews.

Managing and retaining diverse staff

Here are some ideas to consider on retention of staff to ensure that you are working in line with CARE's stated commitments to gender balanced teams:

- Consider the social norms and cultural context related to gender dynamics and relations to "Do No Harm"
- Be aware (and analyze) how men and women are assessed – look out for any trends that might indicate bias or discrimination (e.g. labeling women as 'emotional' or 'shy').
- Develop criteria and target staff development funds to improve female representation in emergency response and leadership roles.
- Analyze annual performance information and ensure that any inconsistent data or patterns related to GED (e.g. no women being considered for promotion; or assumptions about women not being able to take on 'field' positions) is followed up by the Senior Management Team.
- Undertake organisational assessments to help understand gender and diversity issues within your office. (Organisational Gap Analysis Guidelines are a good resource to support this.)

Want more information?

- Email the Gender in Emergencies team at emergencygender@careinternational.org.

Key documents:

- CARE International Gender Policy (in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese) [here](#).
- The Gender Equity and Diversity Institutional Working Group has prepared [Recruitment Tips for Country Offices](#).
- CARE USA's Organisational Gap Analysis Guidelines: A Resource Guide for Advancing Gender Equity & Diversity within CARE [here](#).
- CI Explanatory note on CARE's Gender focus [here](#)

For Gender in Emergencies Specialist Position: A sample of questions for an interview can be found on Minerva and [here](#)