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Project Summary

CARE-Emory University Implementation Science Collaboration

- **Project:** CARE-Emory University Implementation Science Collaboration
- **Location:** Global
- **Project duration:** December 21, 2022 – December 31, 2025
- **Implementing Partners:** Emory University, Rollins School of Public Health, CARE USA, Network for Evaluation and Implementation Sciences at Emory

Summary Points

- This collaborative grant between CARE USA and Emory University is designed to **enhance program impact and improve the state of implementation science and research** in the highly interrelated areas of gender equity, economic empowerment, WASH, and nutrition.
- Throughout the three-year grant period, we will pursue a suite of implementation science and research projects to **address key implementation challenges identified by CARE staff**

Background: Implementation science, in simple terms, is the study of how to effectively put into practice what we know works. It addresses the “know-do” gap: the gap between what we “know” to do and “how” we do in practice. It’s like the bridge between good ideas and real-world action. In a recent [commentary](#), we describe the value of expanding the application of implementation science to environmental health, specifically water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions, as a way to respond to the complexity of sustainable service delivery.

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Timeline

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Start-up period to confirm project goals, activities, and planned results

Formative research to define workstreams that address key implementation challenges

Target engagement with CARE projects that present opportunities for workstream activities

Implementation science activities to engage a range of staff from projects and country offices across all workstreams

Ongoing piloting and iterative refinements to the application of implementation science within CARE programs

Ongoing identification of opportunities to contribute to achieving the goals of this project and **reporting and dissemination** of project outputs and findings

The Project: This collaborative grant between CARE USA and Emory University is designed to **enhance program impact and improve the state of implementation science and research in the highly interrelated areas of gender equity, economic empowerment, WASH, and nutrition.** The expected results of the collaborative grant are to: (1) Improve program delivery, (2) Enhance knowledge and application of implementation science knowledge in development programs, and (3) Enhance collaborations for future funding opportunities, including to seed new funding opportunities.

The Workstreams: Throughout the three-year grant period, we will pursue a suite of implementation science and research projects that contribute to achieving the goals of this project. In collaboration with CARE project staff, we have identified three workstreams to address key implementation challenges:

- **Process evaluation handbook:** To improve the ability of CARE to integrate process evaluation into their programs, leading to improved understanding of factors that may impact intervention implementation and system requirements to support effective implementation
- **WASH implementation reporting:** To collaborate with CARE on the development of a [WASH reporting toolkit](#) as an opportunity to champion the reporting toolkit and improve future reporting
- **Gender transformative programing adaptations:** To document best practices that inform the integration and adaptation of gender transformative approaches to CARE current and future WASH programs

The Approach: This project will align with the vision of the [CARE-Emory Collaboration](#) to jointly produce high-impact, policy- and programmatically- relevant applied research and learning to address global challenges to human development for transformative impact at scale. Settings for collaboration will fall within CARE's broader [Water+ and water-adjacent portfolio](#) and utilize the interdisciplinary research expertise of the [Network for Evaluation and Implementation Sciences at Emory](#).

Why implementation science research?

By systematically studying how best to translate research into action, implementation science helps improve outcomes, address disparities, and enhance the overall efficiency of programs and services.

Why do process evaluations?

Process evaluations are vital to assess how well an intervention or program is being implemented, helping to identify strengths and weaknesses in the execution to inform necessary improvements and enhance its overall effectiveness.

Why standardize intervention reporting?

Standardizing intervention reporting is crucial because it ensures consistency, transparency, and comparability in research and practice, allowing for better assessment, replication, and synthesis of findings across studies.

Why adapt programs?

Program adaptation is important because it allows organizations and initiatives to tailor their programs to the specific needs and contexts of their target populations, leading to increased relevance, acceptability, and effectiveness of interventions.