This Governance Programming Framework (GPF) aims to assist CARE staff in conceptualizing and planning governance work.

The theory of change (TOC) embodied by the GPF indicates the “domains of change” which are required to achieve equitable and sustainable development:

If citizens are empowered, if power holders are effective, accountable and responsive, if spaces for negotiation are expanded, effective and inclusive, then sustainable and equitable development can be achieved. Change needs to take place and be sustained in all three domains to achieve this impact.

The GPF is represented in the figure opposite as a pyramid with three building blocks or domains of change at the base. The arrows represent the real-world interactions between the three domains. The fourth building block (capstone) represents impact achieved as a result of change in these domains. The domains are broken down further into 14 more specific components or “dimensions of change”. The GPF applies to all levels; from local up to global.

Domains and dimensions of change

Domain One: Marginalised citizens are empowered

This domain is concerned with enabling the poor and marginalised, particularly women and girls, to be aware of their rights and to have a stronger voice to demand change. In short, the aim is to enable poor people to become active and empowered citizens.

The hypothesis for this domain is:

*If poor and marginalised people increase their political and civic consciousness and undertake collective action, then they will be able to engage more effectively in governance spaces and influence decisions that affect their lives.*

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*This document only outlines the basic elements of the Governance Programming Framework. The concepts and terms used here are explained in two accompanying documents – the main document and the reference document.*
Domain Two: **Public authorities and other power-holders are effective and accountable to marginalised citizens**

This domain entails working with a range of power holders, including the state, to improve their ability to fulfil their obligations and be more responsive, transparent, and accountable, especially to our impact groups.

The hypothesis for this domain is:

*If public authorities and other power holders are capable, accountable and responsive to poor and marginalised people, then public resources will be more transparently and equitably allocated and the poor will have access to better quality services and other public goods.*

Domain Three: **Spaces for negotiation between power-holders and marginalised citizens are expanded, inclusive and effective.**

This domain is the product of interactions between the previous two domains. The nature and quality of these spaces for negotiation is the focus of this domain, and the aim is to expand and strengthen them in order to aggregate and channel demands, identify and negotiate competing interests, and enable public authorities to build consensus and legitimacy.

The hypothesis for this domain is:

*If formal and informal spaces are expanded, inclusive and effective, and if cross-domain coalitions for change are built, then decisions will better reflect the interests of the poor and marginalised and resources will be allocated on a more equitable basis.*

### The role of CARE

Factors that influence what role CARE can play include: 1) the country context, 2) the nature of the programme, 3) CARE’s relationships with the state and other stakeholders, 4) CARE’s legitimacy and level of embeddedness in the country, 5) CARE’s capacities and experience, 6) CARE’s appetite for risk, and 7) CARE’s commitment to a particular mode of engagement and willingness to sustain this commitment. The possible different types of roles that CARE can assume in engaging in governance work include:

- **Capacity building** including technical support to CSOs and public authorities/power-holders from the local up to the national level
- **Developing models and scaling them up:** piloting new models, assessing their impact, and using this evidence base to lobby for their uptake by public authorities
- **Undertaking applied and participatory research:** supporting and/or funding research, promoting the dissemination of innovative and best practices
- **Influencing policy:** promote evidence based advocacy (directly or indirectly, through partners and/or joining policy influencing initiatives and coalitions)
- **Facilitating interactions** between citizens and public authorities/power-holders, and supporting the creation of mechanisms for dialogue
- **Brokering relations between multiple stakeholders,** bringing different actors together, and making sure that the “right people” and decision-makers are seated at the table.