

CARE History

Care was founded in 1945, when 22 American organizations decided to rush lifesaving CARE packages to survivors of World War II. Thousands of Americans, including President Harry S. Truman donated to the effort. On May 11 1946 the first 20,000 packages reached the battered port of Le Havre, France.

The early packages were U.S. Army surplus intended to provide one meal for 10 soldiers during the planned invasion of Japan. CARE obtained them at the end of the war and began a service that let Americans send the packages to friends and families in Europe, where millions were in danger of starvation.

When the parcels ran out CARE began assembling their own food packages, greatly assisted by donations from American companies for anyone who needed emergency food. Later packages included carpentry tools, blankets, clothes, books, school supplies and medicine. At this time, they expanded delivery to other regions in need including Asia and Latin America.

Many years ago, CARE largely phased out the CARE package as they expanded the scope of their work to focus on long term projects in addition to emergency relief. However, the CARE package remained a powerful symbol of the compassion and generosity of those who support CARE's vision of a world free of poverty and suffering. The letters in CARE originally stood for Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe. Today the letters in CARE stand for Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, but the organization simply goes by **CARE**.

Today CARE works in 87 countries around the world to support over 900 poverty-fighting development and emergency projects. CARE places women in their programs because equipped with the proper resources, women have the ability to help whole families and entire communities escape poverty.

CARE's community-based programs work to improve education, agricultural production, improve health, increase access to clean water and sanitation, and expand economic opportunity, CARE also delivers emergency aid to survivors of war and natural disasters, and helps to rebuild their lives.

Lions Club International first joined forces with CARE in 1946, a year after CARE was founded by raising funds to send CARE Packages to post-war Europe. As care shifted its focus to developing nations in the fifties, Lions Clubs increased their support of CARE.

MD 19 began its affiliation with CARE in 1951, by supporting CARE's relief efforts through LCI. During the fifties LCI operated humanitarian projects in developing countries similar to CARE projects, but MD19 determined that CARE, with its ability to leverage additional funds was able to provide services at one third the cost of the Lions Projects.

MD19 Council of Governors annually selects a CARE project to be supported by MD19. Over the years MD19 Lions have been strong supporters of education, health care, agriculture, clean drinking water and much more with a special focus on Latin American countries. Through this partnership MD19 Lions and CARE have worked together to improve the lives of thousands of people in the world's poorest communities.

Bob Yeoman
CARE Chair East