

## Pivoting for COVID-19:

### Statement from the SANI Project Manager, Sarah MacIndoe

**Ottawa, ON—July 5, 2020** – It is a unique and unprecedented time, here in Canada and globally. The Southern African Nutrition Initiative (SANI) is in its final year of implementation, a time when CARE and partners are focusing on the sustainability of our interventions and continuing to support local government and local leadership health and nutrition structures. At the same time, COVID-19 has placed our project and partners in a challenging situation.

In Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, weakened health infrastructure, poor health literacy and food insecurity are likely to exacerbate the spread and impact of COVID-19 in the coming months. The pandemic also poses a significant challenge to SANI's ultimate goal to reduce morbidity and mortality among women and children. Moreover, endemic gender inequality means that women and girls are considerably more vulnerable to the direct and indirect impact of the virus, and reports from high caseload countries indicate a considerable increase in gender based violence. Fortunately however, SANI has found itself in a position to respond to COVID-19 as CARE offices are well placed to work with our government partners to identify where and how best to respond so that our efforts are aligned and coordinated.

With support from the Government of Canada, the SANI project has been extended for an additional six months (beyond September 2020), in order to meet the needs of communities in Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia and to respond to COVID-19. In coordination with the Ministry of Health within each country, CARE is ensuring accurate knowledge is shared on COVID-19 transmission and safe prevention practices and helping to support local health facilities with the resources they need to respond to and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Specifically, CARE will focus on improving the capacity of health centers and personnel to respond to COVID-19, build community knowledge and resilience, and continue to strengthen the food security and nutritional status of target communities. During this time, SANI will continue to carry out nutrition education programming, with complementary COVID-19 messaging, so that community members, community health workers and project volunteers are equipped with the knowledge they need to stay healthy, improve the nutritional status of their household, and prevent infection. Continued education on water, sanitation and hygiene practices remain key to helping protect communities from the spread of COVID-19.

SANI has a strong focus on working through a network of Community Volunteers to deliver life-saving information to the most rural and isolated communities. SANI recognizes the gendered nature of the virus, and the additional risks and burdens women and girls face. CARE is ensuring that we target our public health outreach to ensure it gets into the hands of women and girls.

I want to personally reassure our supporters that CARE is working diligently to support our partners and communities in this challenging time. SANI is continuing to respond to COVID-19 needs on the ground and adapt programming where we can, in the safest way possible.

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**About "Feed Her Future":** Feed Her Future ([www.feedherfuture.ca](http://www.feedherfuture.ca)) is a campaign dedicated to building awareness about the importance of giving women and girls access to proper nutrition, through the lens and learning of CARE's



Southern African Nutrition Initiative (SANI). SANI is a 4-year project launched in March 2016, and is being delivered in partnership between CARE Canada, Cuso International, the Interagency Coalition on AIDS and Development (ICAD), McGill University, and the governments of implementing countries. SANI is a \$25.6 million CAD project funded by the Government of Canada, CARE and the Canadian public.

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