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ACRONYMS

CARO Central Africa Regional Office

CEB Communautés éclésiales de base

CEPR Conférence Episcopale du Rwanda

CRS Catholic Relief Services

HOCAI Holistic Organizational Capacity Assessment Instrument

HRM Human resources managementIHD Integral Human Development

NGO Nongovernmental organization



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Longtime development partners Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Rwanda and the Catholic Church of Rwanda began a unique collaboration in 2004 when CRS started providing technical assistance, accompaniment, and eventually modest funding for capacity strengthening. The work began with the Diocese of Cyangugu and soon expanded to include the Episcopal Conference and four other dioceses to varying degrees. The interventions evolved into what CRS came to call the *Church Strategic Support Portfolio*.

In the early 2000s, the Church found itself struggling to recover from dwindling external support and the 1994 genocide, and struggling to respond to the overwhelming need for services among those left vulnerable by the social upheaval. Key leaders with exposure to management principles were among those who sparked reflections within the Church and reached out to CRS for support.

The Church Strategic Support Portfolio started small and grew organically, becoming more systematized as the Episcopal Conference and the Diocese of Cyangugu implemented strategic plans that helped guide the capacity strengthening. The Portfolio yielded—and continues to yield—tangible institutional changes that are clear precursors for sustainability and that help the Church to better realize its mission. In targeted parishes and dioceses, these achievements include:

- Development and implementation of, and awareness-raising around strategic plans for the Episcopal Conference and the Diocese of Cyangugu;
- Development, adaptation, validation, roll-out, and monitoring of 30 management tools specific to Church needs and context;
- Recruitment, training, and accompaniment of—and provision of relevant equipment for—skilled accountants;
- Consistent and comprehensive financial and programmatic management and reporting procedures and systems;
- Dramatic shifts in mindset among stakeholders who grew to recognize and appreciate the value of management principles in pursuit of the Church's earthly and spiritual missions.

The Catholic Church in Rwanda existed—and even thrived—in Rwanda for as much as a century before management practices became a concern, and yet the institution has embraced capacity strengthening and changed dramatically in fewer than ten years. The remarkable change was possible in part because of four factors of success as identified by stakeholders representing CRS Rwanda and the Catholic Church in Rwanda. The factors are consistent with accepted theories of organizational development and capacity strengthening, but CRS does not regard these factors as prerequisites per se:

- External environment that supports—even requires—change;
- Leadership and commitment from all partners at all levels in their organizations;
- Meaningful relationships and trust among partners;
- **Equitable negotiation** by partners to navigate change and uncertainty together.

Every institution has room to grow and the Church continues on its path to sustainability and self-sufficiency. The way forward with CRS continues to develop as funding sources change and evolve, and CRS Rwanda remains a committed Church partner. In the coming years, the Church and CRS hope to expand the capacity strengthening throughout each of Rwanda's nine dioceses and their 168 parishes. To institutionalize the ownership and sustainability of the efforts—and in keeping with CRS' commitment to subsidiarity—this expansion will rely largely on a peer-to-peer training and accompaniment model that will utilize technical experts within the Church and reduce CRS' role to one of discrete and specialized technical assistance.

INTRODUCTION

Often held up as one of sub-Saharan Africa's greatest development successes, Rwanda has made tremendous strides in building its economy, infrastructure, and health and government systems after the genocide of 1994. The country is now among the most stable on the continent, boasts progressive environmental policies and a booming economy, and has been at the forefront of anti-corruption and good governance efforts, as well as development solutions that are both locally owned and locally driven.

The progress in Rwanda has been remarkable, and the rapid change has challenged the country's civil society organizations—including the Catholic Church—to strengthen their management capacity in order to better fulfill their missions, to comply with government requirements of accountability and transparency, and to compete for international donor funds.

After more than a century of management that was decentralized and often uncoordinated, the Catholic Church in Rwanda has embraced improved management systems and skills, and welcomed roles and responsibilities previously unfamiliar or unknown to its clergy. These management improvements include the professionalization of staff such as accountants and human resources personnel, standardized financial reporting and tracking systems, and detailed job descriptions and employment contracts for all staff. The Diocese of Cyangugu developed its first strategic plan in 2004to inform decisions and to guide capacity strengthening efforts in each domain, and the Episcopal Conference (see Figure 1: The Structure of the Catholic Church in Rwanda) soon followed suit with their own strategic plan. This work was done in partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and included funding (approximately US\$40,000 over four years) from Trócaire, the overseas development arm of the Catholic Church of Ireland, CRS also provided financial resources (nearly US\$800,000 over a period of three years) and extensive technical assistance and accompaniment for capacity strengthening to both the Episcopal Conference and the Diocese of Cyangugu over four years. These efforts culminated in what came to be called the Church Strategic Support Portfolio, an ongoing capacity strengthening effort between CRS and the Catholic Church of Rwanda.

CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

CRS regards **capacity strengthening** as essential to any organization's health. It includes **capacity building**, which focuses on individuals or teams, enhancing or developing new knowledge, skills, and attitudes in order for people or teams to function better; **institutional strengthening**, focusing on an organization, enhancing or developing its systems and structures to function more effectively, work towards sustainability, and achieve goals; and **accompaniment**, consistent coaching and mentoring that allows new skills to be mastered or new organizational systems to become standard operating procedures.

These tenets were critical to the successes of Church Strategic Support Portfolio.

Factors of Success

The remarkable organizational growth experienced by the Conference and by the Diocese of Cyangugu was possible in part because of four "factors of success" identified by stakeholders representing CRS Rwanda and the Catholic Church in Rwanda:

- **External environment** that supports—even requires—change;
- Leadership and commitment from all partners at all levels in their organizations;
- Meaningful relationships and trust among partners;
- **Equitable negotiation** by partners to navigate change and uncertainty together.

The factors are consistent with accepted theories of organizational development and capacity strengthening, as well as CRS's own Partnership Principles (see the inside back cover of this case study) but CRS does not regard these factors as prerequisites per se.

Documentation Methodology

While the circumstances are particular to this context, CRS and Church staff feel that the Rwanda experiences could be relevant to other partnership and capacity strengthening efforts with both Church and non-Church partners. To document this work, CRS sent two researchers—an independent consultant and a headquarters-based staff member who was new to CRS and not previously associated with the efforts—to Rwanda in September 2012. This case study is the result of extensive interviews with 30 stakeholders in the US and Rwanda (including CRS Rwanda; bishops, priests, and lay employees in the Episcopal Conference of Rwanda; the Bishop of Cyangugu; and priests and lay employees throughout the Diocese of Cyangugu), desk reviews of several relevant documents, and the thoughtful feedback from stakeholders in Rwanda and Baltimore (see Annex A for the names and affiliations of interviewees and reviewers).



2003

Church begins to reflect on its need to work more effectively.

2005-06

CRS continues to provide support to Church largely based on project requirements and resources.

2007

CRS and Trócaire support to CEPR begins (primary focus: strategic plan).

2004

With CRS support, Diocese of Cyangugu develops five-year strategic plan (2006–2010).

2007-09

CEPR Strategic Plan for the Catholic Church in Human Development, 2008– 2017 developed.

CRS consultant develops manuals and procedures with CEPR and Diocese of Cyangugu.

2011

- CEPR buys accounting software to be installed progressively at all dioceses; CRS helps recruit, train, accompany, and monitor parish accountants in Diocese of Cyangugu.
- Church holds mutual learning session to improve CRS staff knowledge on Church structures and workings.
- CRS validated and helps disseminate 28 management tools developed for or adapted to the Church, conducting more than 100 follow-up site visits.
- CRS hosts HRM orientation sessions for 33 priests and six key staff.
- Diocese of Cyangugu presents project achievements to Bishops
- CRS supports orientation session for new priests on management tools; orientations to be held for new priests each year.
- CRS conducted needs assessment for eight dioceses and the Episcopal Conference commissions to help prioritize support from CEPR to dioceses.
- CRS holds quarterly evaluation and planning meetings with General Secretariat and dioceses of Cyangugu and Kibungo.

2012

- CRS organized workshop on planning, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation for 35 church key leaders.
- CRS organized workshops on fundraising, and mobilization and diversification of resources in dioceses of Kabgayi, Butare and Cyangugu. Nearly 200 stakeholders participated.
- CRS and CEPR held a joint workshop to evaluate progress and results of the Church Strategic Support Portfolio, share lessons learned, and determine the way forward.
- CEPR organizational chart finalized and approved by all Bishops.

2008

CEPR hires strategic plan coordinator.

With CRS support, Church conducts national- and diocesan-level surveys.

2010

- CRS/Rwanda 50th Anniversary. Year-end celebration included the apostolic Nuncio, all Rwandan bishops and mass by Archbishop of Kigali.
- CRS establishes Strategic Initiatives Unit to focus on Church capacity strengthening linked with CEPR strategic plan.
- CRS held six internal reflections to plan how to build Church capacity and sustainability in accordance with CRS mission and CEPR and Cyangugu strategic plans.
- CEPR strategic plan disseminated and marketed to dioceses and other stakeholders.
- CRS organized introduction session on IHD Framework as a planning and managing tool.
- CRS helps Church develop and adapt existing manuals.
- With CRS support, CEPR presented capacity strengthening achievements in bishops' semiannual meeting.
- Diocese of Cyangugu organizes workshop for CEPR to learn from Cyangugu's implementation experiences.

BACKGROUND

CRS in Rwanda

CRS began operations in Rwanda in 1960 by providing humanitarian and development assistance. Since the 1980s, the agency has promoted self-help initiatives by introducing projects that encourage local communities to participate in the identification and resolution of their own development problems. CRS was directly involved in emergency programs after the 1994 genocide, which had a profound effect on the agency's mission. Since the genocide, CRS has focused on development, peace-building, and reconciliation activities. The Catholic Church is CRS' preferred partner for development work in Rwanda.

The Catholic Church in Rwanda

Introduced by German missionaries while Rwanda was colonized by Germany, the Church received decades of support from the colonial power and benefited from missionary resources (both human and financial). Support began to decline, but remained to varying degrees, after the country gained independence in 1962 until about 2000. During this time of diminishing support, the demand on Church resources increased as Rwanda's many Catholics (at times more than half of the population) turned to the Church for social services. The coinciding decrease in support and increase in demand began a decades-long strain on the Church as an institution.

For more than three decades, the government considered the Catholic Church to be a unique institution, in part because of the services for social good that it provided. As a result, the Church and other civil society organizations were sometimes exempt—either by law or because of limited enforcement—from many legal and financial requirements (such as taxation or labor laws) faced by other institutions.

While the Church has been criticized by some for inaction during the 1994 genocide, Catholic priests, nuns, and bishops were killed during the violence—many as they struggled to protect and help other potential victims. These circumstances devastated the Church much as it devastated the rest of the country. As many as one million lives were lost in Rwanda, countless assets were destroyed, and communities were physically and spiritually shattered. Making matters worse, at a time when survivors critically needed both earthly and spiritual support, the Church

struggled financially and institutionally. It lacked material resources and was facing its own internal turmoil and self-examination. Genocide devastated physical and social structures, yet the people of Rwanda needed services and support like those offered by the Church more than ever. This desperate situation and the collective trauma—individual and institutional—in many ways primed the Church and its community of Christians for the dramatic institutional change to come.

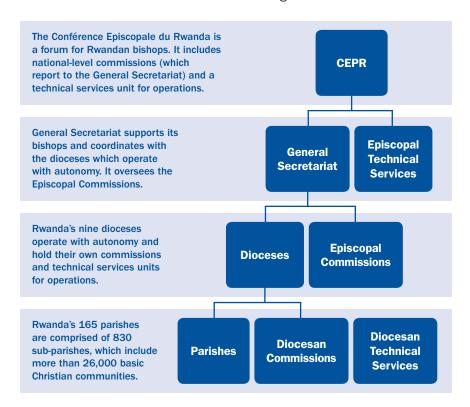


Figure 1: The Structure of the Catholic Church in Rwanda

To fulfill its mission, the Catholic Church acts through its hierarchical and decentralized structures. The Episcopal Conference (Conférence Episcopale du Rwanda, or CEPR) is comprised of all Rwandan bishops, nine dioceses, 168 parishes, 830 sub-parishes, and 26,075 basic Christian communities called Communautés de base (CEB) in French. (Statistics from CEPR, Summary of the Strategic Plan for the Catholic Church in Human Development, 2008–2017. Kigali: March 2010, p.16.) The Church also operates through various structures of religious congregations (e.g., houses of nuns in charge of schools or health facilities).

The Partnership between CRS and the Church

The Church and CRS began to work together more than 50 years ago, though the partnership has taken on a new dimension in the past decade. Typically, CRS managed programs that directed donor funding to the Church's network and leveraged the network for programmatic results. For example, CRS would receive funding for an education program, offer subgrants and technical assistance (e.g., curriculum development) to an existing school run by the Church, and present improvements as evidence of the program's impact. This model is common to many countries in which CRS works and is effective in that it makes use of existing systems and structures such as health centers or schools already serving communities. However, the model cannot be sustained without external support (namely CRS accessing and managing financial resources) and is not ideal, particularly in today's donor environment in which country- and community-owned solutions are desirable.

When CRS did help to strengthen the Church's capacity, it occurred in the course of project implementation. Typically, the need would be dictated by project requirements and any training, equipment, or procedures were limited to project staff and management rather than used throughout the Church or even an entire diocese. At the end of the project cycle,



"[We shared a] belief that we're all working for the good of the institution and decided to make the journey of change together."

— Pascasie Musabyemungu, Strategic Initiatives Manager, CRS Rwanda

related staffing, resources, monitoring, and expectations typically also ended, limiting the long-term impact of the improvements. Additionally, many in the Church structure previously considered capacity building to be equipment (such as computers and motorcycles) that remained with the organization after the end of a project, rather than as training and technical assistance (and the resulting skills or knowledge).

Recognizing the Church's pressing need to address these shortcomings to better serve its two-pronged mission to evangelize and to help attend to the earthly needs of the communities, different Church leaders (first the bishops of Cyangugu and Nyundo, and later members of the Episcopal Conference and other dioceses) started to reach out to CRS for support.

WHY CYANGUGU?

Strategic support to the Church was very organic and reactive to organizational needs, particularly in the first years. While the Diocese of Cyangugu served as a sort of pilot project, starting there was a matter of happenstance and, to some degree, benevolent opportunism.

Two items, in particular, came up during research interviews: The Bishop of Cyangugu is charismatic and was in charge of administration and finances at the major seminary in Rwanda before his appointment by the Holy Father in 1997. The experience made him a credible and dedicated proponent of management principles. Additionally, CRS had undertaken capacity strengthening efforts in two of the diocese's parishes under the auspices of the agency's global AIDSRelief project, providing an opportunity to leverage that programming for broader impact.

The Church Strategic Support Portfolio

The long relationship between the Church and CRS, coupled with CRS' rich experience strengthening the capacity of individuals and institutions worldwide, made the agency an obvious resource when the Diocese of Cyangugu—and later the Episcopal Conference—first sought to improve its financial and administrative functions and to develop a strategic plan. At first the work was discrete—for example, creating employment policies in response to the changing legal landscape—and focused on the Diocese of Cyangugu in western Rwanda. Over time the work evolved into the Church Strategic Support Portfolio.

CRS went on to fund the portfolio with annual allotments of CRS private funding (nearly US\$800,000 over three years) issued to CRS Rwanda by the regional office (Central Africa Regional Office, or CARO) and contributions (almost US\$40,000 over four years) from Trócaire. CRS committed consultants and staff time to the efforts, first for specific capacity building tasks or purchases (e.g., training to use new software) and later for ongoing project management and technical assistance. To help implement the Episcopal Conference's strategic plan, CRS funded the position of a Strategic Plan Coordinator within the Conference structure. At the country level, CRS made the decision to prioritize Church support after internal reflections about the relationship between CRS and the Church in Rwanda, and a recommitment to that partnership and its legacy.

Cyangugu served as a de facto pilot project, inspiring and informing comparable efforts at the Episcopal Conference and, more recently, in other Rwandan dioceses. In spite of the Church's decentralization, the long-term sustainability of these capacity strengthening efforts requires ownership by and ongoing commitment from the national level of the Church to institutionalize the transformation. Institutionalization will allow improvements to outlast leadership changes (for example if the Bishop of Cyangugu—a charismatic advocate for management principles in the Church context—were to leave) and to have greater impact on a national scale.

"[I was] amazed...I was transferring the knowledge, but also was learning from [parish and diocesan staff]."

—Samson Nzayisenga, Administrative Operations Coordinator, CRS Rwanda

How to Use This Case Study

Many of the factors enabling success in Rwanda were simply good fortune. Rather than to try to re-create any of the circumstances in Rwanda, CRS suggests that readers of this case study scan their environment for characteristics that are either similar to those encountered in Rwanda or that could yield comparable situations. This case study is not a how-to manual—many organizations have different and equally valid approaches and tools to strengthen capacity (see box)—instead it is a snapshot of one way that capacity strengthening played out in a unique situation. It is unlikely that most capacity strengthening assessments or manuals, including CRS' own, would identify many of the factors that the Church Strategic Support partners found pivotal to their success; thus this case study is envisaged as complementary to other capacity strengthening tools and approaches.

The Holistic Organizational Capacity Assessment Instrument (HOCAI) is designed by CRS to assist organizations to conduct a self-analysis of their strengths and challenges, develop an action plan, and improve organizational functions through capacity strengthening. With HOCAI, CRS creates a standardized framework to help organizations engage in a process of continuous assessment and improvement that will sustain organizational capacities.

The case study is organized around technical areas of capacity strengthening that will be familiar to many readers: **sensitization** or awareness raising, **strategic planning**, and skills and systems for **finance and administration** and **human resources management**. Throughout these sections are boxed discussions of the "factors for success" (see box) and examples of how those factors impacted CRS and Church work within different technical areas. CRS invites readers to draw from the experiences discussed in this document in order to improve their own capacity strengthening initiatives with Church and non-Church partners

alike. The agency hopes that readers of this case study can identify opportunities illuminated by the Rwanda experience, and that they will be proactive, learning from challenges encountered in Rwanda.

Strategic Support to the Church of Rwanda: Factors for Success

- External environment
- Leadership and commitment
- Meaningful relationships and trust
- Equitable negotiation



"Sensitize the bishops and the leadership of the Church because those priests are intelligent people—they are so clever—they can do nothing before they get the message and are aware of what they will be doing.... [The community also] must play a role...there is no Church without community."

— Emmanuel Havugimana, Coordinator, Department of Strategic Planning,

Episcopal Conference of Rwanda (through a translator)

SENSITIZATION

Identifying a Need & Cultivating Support

Seeking to rebuild physically and spiritually after the genocide and years of declining outside support, leaders within the Church recognized that the institution was not operating as effectively and efficiently as it could. This was severely limiting the Church's ability to offer vital services to the people of Rwanda. Some clergy had prior experience with different aspects of management in other roles they had held (for instance, the Bishop of Cyangugu) and began to identify management gaps within different areas of the Church. Identifying and addressing these gaps was further complicated by the decentralized nature of the Catholic Church: individual dioceses and commissions are quite independent in how they manage their affairs (see Figure 1).

Gradually Church leaders and their counterparts at CRS began to discuss ways to strengthen basic management skills and systems within the Church, specifically within the Diocese of Cyangugu. Yet within the Church many clergy were unsure, even resistant. Some priests were insistent that the Church's sole mission is to evangelize—that accounting or employment policies should not be the concern of *spiritual* leaders.

To reduce resistance and to start changing mindsets among stakeholders, CRS worked with the Church to conduct several sensitization workshops. Workshops initially were held for stakeholders in Cyangugu, then for the Episcopal Conference leadership, and most recently for other dioceses that are eager to participate in capacity strengthening. Sensitization workshop topics included:

 Integral Human Development (see box) and Catholic social teaching as a justification for improving Church management skills and systems; "At the beginning of [the Church Strategic Support portfolio activities], I was reluctant to follow any given advice, considering change impossible as to me it looked not applicable to our mission. But now, I understand well why, things are smooth and easy to proceed despite limited resources at the parish's level."

— Parish Priest, Diocese of Cyangugu

- CRS' Integral Human Development Framework¹ as a tool for planning and management;
- · Gaps identified through the strategic plan, or "Why We Need Change";
- Results of parish management assessments, sharing real-time challenges and soliciting advice and ideas to address them.

Additionally, the first orientation session on management tools for new priests was held in August 2011; this orientation session will be held annually for newly nominated priests.

The workshops raise awareness and spark dialogue about the realities within and faced by the Church (such as a changing external environment), as well as management best practices considered standard in most institutions (such as job descriptions or regular bank reconciliations and audits). This process of sensitization and negotiation encouraged stakeholders to come together in support of potential solutions to specific issues.

¹ CRS developed the conceptual Integral Human Development Framework in order to better analyze oftencomplex development situations in holistic ways, promoting Integral Human Development from Catholic social teaching. Online at www.crsprogramquality.org/storage/pubs/general/IHD%20Brochure.pdf.

INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: A VISION FOR HUMAN POTENTIAL

The concept of Integral Human Development from Catholic social teaching envisions a world where all people are able to live to their full potential, meeting their basic physical needs sustainably, while living with dignity in a just and peaceful society. It is based on "right relationships."

Three key elements of Integral Human Development include:

- Holistic: Integral Human Development promotes the good of every person and the whole person; it is economic, social, political, cultural, ecological, and spiritual. It also promotes the integrity of creation.
- Solidarity: Integral Human Development promotes the rights and responsibilities of each person and of every person to one another.
- Justice and Peace: Integral Human Development promotes a just and peaceful society that respects the dignity of every person.

Source: From a 2008 CRS brochure, "Integral Human Development (IHD): The Concept & the Framework." Available at: www.crsprogramquality.org /storage/pubs/general/IHD%20Brochure.pdf.

Adapting to the Church's Context & Inspiring Each Other

As advocates in CRS and the Church cultivated buy-in for capacity strengthening, they also rejected management jargon and instead found themes in Catholic social teaching to help priests and bishops better understand the value of management, and even their *duty* to effectively manage Church resources (see box on Integral Human Development). Management advocates in CRS and the Church learned about and adapted to the language, structure, and culture of the Church. These adaptations helped advocates negotiate resistance and cultivate allies for change, and adapt tools and attitudes to better reflect and to be consistent with Church's culture.

In many ways, the Diocese of Cyangugu has served as a pilot project for capacity strengthening in the Episcopal Conference. The Bishop of Cyangugu and priests throughout the diocese routinely provide testimonials at sensitization workshops and other Church meetings to inspire other dioceses to embrace change and begin to improve their own management skills and systems.

FACTOR OF SUCCESS: EQUITABLE NEGOTIATION AND ADVOCACY

Negotiation helped bring stakeholders within the Church—particularly clergy—into the change process and ensure that the Church and its community owned the change. (Ownership is an important prerequisite for sustainability.) Sensitization workshops helped priests, bishops, and CRS staff to discuss and jointly determine how to make the journey of change together, and which tools and training would serve the Church best. Tools such as the existing Integral Human Development Framework and Church canon law, and customized financial or human resources manuals have been critical to the entire capacity strengthening process.

In large part because the Church Strategic Support portfolio has developed organically and available resources varied from year to year, CRS and Church partners have learned to become comfortable with the uncertain. The commitment to each other (see Relationships on page 31) and the shared vision of a stronger, more effective Church is enough. The limited scope of the capacity strengthening efforts even has been a catalyst for collaboration and negotiation. For example, CRS Rwanda does not currently have funds to support dioceses other than Cyangugu, but offered to provide technical assistance if other resources could be found. In response, the dioceses of Butare, Gikongoro, and Byumba marshaled resources to offset workshop costs such as transportation and per diems.

CRS staff also arranged to leverage the work of other projects and existing resources to benefit the dioceses. This includes staff from the Diocese of Cyangugu who have spoken at sensitization workshops and inspired other dioceses to embrace management principles. Most recently, CRS began to provide technical and financial support and accompaniment to the Diocese of Kibungo in response to critical mismanagement issues.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Church capacity strengthening efforts—first with the Diocese of Cyangugu, and later with the Episcopal Conference—were in reaction to the Bishop of Cyangugu's vision for improved financial management and the Episcopal Conference's desire to improve the Church's financial sustainability and social services. To identify and address those needs in a more systematic way, and to develop a vision for the diocese's future, Cyangugu began to develop a strategic plan at the diocesan level. CRS provided technical assistance and financial support to Cyangugu during this process. In 2004, the Diocese started to produce a five-year strategic plan (2006–2010). Also with technical assistance and financial support from CRS, the Episcopal Conference followed suit in 2007 with a ten-year plan (2008–2017) so as to encourage the entire Church and its dioceses to "grow together."

These strategic plans have informed and helped prioritize CRS support to the Conference and to Cyangugu, including the development and



implementation of procedures and manuals, and the acquisition of resources. Strategic planning also enhanced a cultural shift within the Church as leaders have started to embrace management and capacity strengthening as vital to the institution's greater mission (see Sensitization on page 17). The strategic plans have helped the Church envision a future in which the institution can sustain itself, and diversify and optimize its resources so as to better serve its communities.

CRS also assisted both the Episcopal Conference and the Diocese of Cyangugu to disseminate and cultivate support for their strategic plans. Together, CRS and the Conference organized several dissemination workshops targeting diocesan priests and lay people in Kigali City. They also developed and adapted tools to assess needs and to determine priorities for CRS support to the Conference or Cyangugu, and for Conference support to the dioceses. The assessment was conducted in fiscal year 2011 and the assessment report is used for planning interventions and allocating resources.

The Conference assigned a bishop, hired dedicated staff, and put a steering committee in place to lead and monitor progress on its strategic plan implementation. To share news of this progress and maintain support for the plan implementation, the Church has initiated several activities, including the following:

- Monthly broadcasts on Radio Maria share strategic plan achievements and other diocesan activities with listeners.
- Monthly notices published in the Kinyamateka newspaper highlight strategic plan achievements and church-level implementation progress for readers.
- The official Church website (www.eglisecatholiquerwanda.org)
 was re-launched in May 2010 and is updated several times each
 week to communicate Church activities and accomplishments to
 external audiences.
- Workshops on fundraising strategy in March 2012 and planning, monitoring, and reporting in September 2012 have been wellattended and well-received by stakeholders learning to approach financial independence and to better manage their work.

FACTOR OF SUCCESS: LEADERSHIP AND COMMITMENT TO START AND SUSTAIN PROGRESS

Stakeholders in the Church-CRS partnership consistently cited leadership and the dedication of leaders throughout each partner organization as vital to success. Effective leadership helps an institution navigate the waters of organizational change and even embark on the journey of change. Leadership was especially important to the Church Strategic Support Portfolio, in part because the program evolved gradually, without an overriding, multi-year work plan or objectives that might otherwise guide activities.

The bishop charged with overseeing the implementation of the Episcopal Conference's strategic plan identified the importance of Church leaders actively supporting the cause and quickly began to advocate to them. Support from these bishops—and their subsequent advocacy at diocese and parish levels—is especially critical because dioceses are autonomous, yet full participation from each diocese is vital to the goal of a stronger Catholic Church in Rwanda.

Some Conference members previously referred to "the CRS strategic plan" (because of CRS' active role in its development) in informal settings, but bishops and Conference staff gradually claimed the strategic plan as their own. When the research team for this case study conducted interviews in Rwanda, the plan was frequently referenced—even cited by page and section number—and offered to researchers. The internal control that was carried out for the first time across the all commissions of the Episcopal Conference in early 2012 is another example of the bishops' dedication to institutional change.

SKILLS AND SYSTEMS: FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Historically, priests and bishops in charge of Church resources had the best of intentions but the systems were vulnerable to fraud and rife with inefficiency. Two bishops stepped down in recent years because of financial improprieties, and some dioceses and the Episcopal Conference were deeply in debt. In most parishes, the only operations guidelines available were Canon Law and the 1969 Pastoral Guide. While Canon Law includes some information about financial, administration, and operations management, it was not enough for priests who lacked relevant experience and supportive systems. Furthermore, the Church—like many other civil society organizations in Rwanda—were not subject to many financial or contractual laws, either formally or informally through limited enforcement (see Environment box on page 26).

All of these circumstances, as well as new laws and enforcement, have required the Church as an organization to adapt. For example, even simple inventories of Church assets such as land or buildings have not consistently been available, but now the Episcopal Conference, each diocese, and each parish needs to assess and document its assets (to accurately pay taxes) and revamp human resources systems (for example, to provide contracts and benefits, and to ensure fair hiring processes). While these systems and structures are common for some civil society organizations and most businesses, this was a new model for the Church, which had long operated with little more than an honor system and good will.

Tangible Results: Diocese of Cyangugu

Prior to the Church's Strategic Support Program, Cyangugu parishes relied on priests or laypeople without relevant skills to manage the parish finances and other operational functions. As of October 2012, nine of twelve parishes have a skilled accountant with a related secondary-level education who has been oriented, accompanied, and monitored by members of the CRS Rwanda Strategic Support team and diocese staff in charge of capacity building. Parishes with access to electricity or solar energy are equipped with a modem and a computer. Using a standard template, these parishes now email monthly financial reports and activity plans to the diocese and share information with each other regularly. The Episcopal Conference purchased software for the diocese and hired a consultant to train relevant staff to use the program beginning in May 2011.

"With financial assistance [alone], we were like other NGOs, other sponsors. You can get money from World Bank or any other donor but the way we are implementing institutional strengthening.... We are not perceived as sponsors but as stakeholders. We are part of the Church."

— Samson Nzayisenga, Administrative Operations Coordinator, CRS Rwanda

With CRS technical assistance and financial support, the Diocese of Cyangugu developed 30 tools for administration and financial management (see Annex B for a list), adapted them to include the language and structures of the Church, and validated and updated tools through a variety of workshops and practical application. CRS helped the Diocese of Cyangugu to publish and distribute these tools to each parish for use. Laypeople actively participate in the daily organizational life of the parishes through financial committees, freeing up priests for other work and cultivating participation of Christians in their churches. The diocese's 12 commissions also developed a consolidated tool for planning and reporting activities.

All of these changes have helped improve the diocese's monitoring and reporting systems, helping the bishop to more closely follow the finances of programs and parishes, to assess the contribution of the diocese to the country's (and the Church's) overall development efforts, and to ensure that services and programs are integrated and complementary whenever appropriate. It has also helped Cyangugu to realize a degree of self-sufficiency, critical to the Church's long-term success.

Tangible Results: Episcopal Conference

For decades, there were huge variances among dioceses and Episcopal commissions in policies, procedures, reporting structures, and even expectations. For example, each commission previously reported only to the bishop overseeing the commission, and had its own funds and reporting methods. (Supporting financial documents and two appointed signatures are now required before commission heads spend funds.) These inconsistencies often led to redundancies, inefficiencies, and missed opportunities for the commissions or bishops to complement one another.

Each national-level commission now reports to the General Secretary who, in turn, reports to the whole Episcopal Conference. Additionally,

each commission is now centrally monitored and accountable, for example through simple policies like double signatures on financial disbursements.

CRS provided the Conference and Church overall with some financial management support similar to that provided to Cyangugu. CRS installed software; trained 54 accountants to use the financial management system; and trained two Conference staff to facilitate workshops on fundraising, donor funding, and proposal writing.

FACTOR OF SUCCESS: EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT PROMOTING CHANGE

Nearly every person interviewed for this case study stressed that transformations in international donor priorities, and in Rwanda's society, government, and development approaches were enormously important contributors for organizational change in the Church. Some environmental changes were complex and diffuse in their impact, such as post-genocide reflection and reconciliation occurring throughout the Church. Other aspects were direct and undeniable, such as new or newly enforced laws. In every aspect, the Church realized it could not ignore the need for change and could not go it alone—the institution needed to adapt or it risked failing in its mission and losing relevance in current-day Rwanda. Organizational development theories often talk about the need for an environment supportive of change, but the environment in Rwanda in many ways demanded change.

The International Donor Community

The Church has extensive reach and existing networks—including schools and health facilities—and has long been an important civil society organization and development partner for CRS and other agencies. International nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have long served as intermediaries, managing donor funds and requirements while subgranting or subcontracting work to civil society organizations like the Church.

In recent years, however, the donor and development environment has changed dramatically. International donors now increasingly advocate for host-country governments and local organizations to lead development programs and directly receive and manage donor funding. International donors also require increasing accountability from recipients. This usually takes the form of financial controls and audits (sometimes even required before the donor awards funds), regular reporting on programmatic progress and impact, and even performance-dependent funding.

The Government of Rwanda

In many respects, the Government of Rwanda has been at the forefront of development programs led by host-country institutions. In 2000, the Government released *Vision 2020*—an economic and social development plan that informs virtually every aspect of such work in Rwanda, ranging from private-sector growth to charitable initiatives. *The Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy for 2008 to 2012* followed soon after and the next plan was in development as of the writing of this case study. Rwanda is also unique in that the Government has strictly held donors and implementers to these plans: every project must contribute to the long-term vision for the country, and the government has gone so far as to turn down outside assistance or reject proposals that did not contribute.

Since 2007, each district government hosts a joint action forum that helps partners to work, plan, and implement together, monitoring how socio-economic development is progressing in the district. One of its objectives is to strengthen accountability and transparency in Rwanda by making local leaders directly accountable to the communities they serve.

The current administration in Rwanda has worked to fight corruption head-on and establish or revise laws so as to prevent corruption and favoritism.

SKILLS AND SYSTEMS: HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

For decades in Rwanda, the Catholic Church—from the individual communities and parishes to the national-level conference—relied on clergy or members of the congregation to perform an assortment of non-spiritual functions. Regardless of professional or educational background, individuals might serve as bookkeepers, hiring managers, contract administrators, or fundraisers. Assignments were made based on availability, existing relationships, or timing rather than recruitment of candidates whose skill sets matched job requirements, and jobs rarely had defined responsibilities or qualifications. For example, if a parish needed a guesthouse manager and a trusted community member or relative expressed an interest in the job, the person was assigned regardless of his or her skills and without a competitive recruitment process.

Under this informal system, the employee might lack relevant experience, might not have been paid a fair wage (or paid at all), and could leave or be released for any reason without advanced notice. Similarly, clergy may have had consistent employment, but they could be tasked with responsibilities well beyond their expertise and grossly overworked. Both the staff members (be they clergy or laypeople) and the Church usually acted with good intentions, however this passive approach was at best ineffective and at worst detrimental to the Church and its mission. Furthermore, as labor laws in Rwanda became more stringent and widely enforced, inadequate human resources policies were simply illegal (see Environment on page 26).

First in response to immediate crises, and later to address needs identified and prioritized through strategic planning, CRS began to provide the Diocese of Cyangugu and the Episcopal Conference with technical assistance and funds to improve human resources management (HRM). Together, CRS and the Diocese of Cyangugu conducted workshops to sensitize stakeholders to the importance of HRM, share standard HRM practices, and determine ways to improve HRM in the Church. Workshops topics included:

- Awareness of national labor laws and how to develop compliant policies (for example, employment contracts and consistent leave or vacation time);
- Standard practices for employee recruitment, hiring, compensation, promotion, and dismissal;

- Development of practical job descriptions, responsibilities, and qualifications;
- Creation of pay scales that consider wages paid for similar work in different sectors, and consistency among staff with comparable responsibilities or qualifications.

With CRS support, the Diocese of Cyangugu developed personnel manuals and implemented human resources systems in 12 parishes, and began to professionalize positions critical to basic management efficiencies. For example, each parish now has a qualified accountant, and based on CRS' recommendation, these accountants are being trained to begin managing human resources as well. (The longer-term hope is that parishes can gradually add dedicated human resources managers.) CRS has helped to train priests and other key staff or layperson committee members in human resources systems and management tools.

The Episcopal Conference improved HRM and staffing as well. Recognizing the need to operationalize the strategic plan and to share



"It's not about technical work relationships... I know [CRS Partners like Paul, Pascasie, and Joseph] not only as technical partners but also as human beings, friends.... They know my family. I know their family."

— Emmanuel Havugimana, Coordinator, Department of Strategic Planning,

Episcopal Conference of Rwanda (through a translator)

information about that operationalization with internal and external audiences, the Conference hired dedicated staff to implement the plan and to conduct strategic communications activities (see Strategic Planning on pages 21–22). Additionally, the national-level Church commissions underwent their first internal control from March to May 2012. The resulting assessment alerted the bishops to the importance of an organizational chart to clarify roles and responsibilities. CRS provided technical assistance and accompaniment to the Episcopal Conference in order to develop its first organizational chart (approved in September 2012).

Compared to the other technical areas discussed in this case study, HRM is a new area of strategic support from CRS to the Church. Most dioceses and even many parishes have realized that they can improve their credibility and access more funding if they begin making these changes. Four dioceses in particular (Butare, Gikongoro, Kibungo, and Byumba) have witnessed progress made by both Cyangugu and the Episcopal Conference, and have approached CRS individually for support. Currently CRS does not have the financial resources to expand this work, but in the spirit of partnership, CRS offered technical assistance to the dioceses if they could fund some of the other costs such as transportation and per diems to their hundred participants. The dioceses contributed those funds, CRS provided technical experts (including key staff and representatives from the Diocese of Cyangugu) and the workshops have been very well received.

In another example, that demonstrates deep commitment and flexibility, CRS managers developed a three-day overview workshop of laws, best practices, employee contract development, and human resources management tools in response to a bishop's request for information on labor laws affecting Church employees. These workshops were not part of anyone's work plan, but occurred within a month of the request.

FACTOR OF SUCCESS: CAPACITY IS INHERENTLY RELATIONAL

Every system interacts with its environment, influencing and being influenced. Similarly, individuals and institutions also exist in relation to each other and to their partners and even competitors. This makes mutually respectful relationships critical to successful capacity strengthening—a process that often involves addressing the weaknesses or difficulties of both the learner and the "expert." CRS and the Church share core values of support for the poor and vulnerable, share a faith, and share more than 50 years of collaboration in Rwanda. In some ways, this capacity strengthening work was a natural extension of that relationship, yet a historical relationship alone would not have been enough.

Right Relationships

Mutually respectful and trusting relationships within the Diocese of Cyangugu, and among CRS and diocesan staff helped make organizational change and capacity strengthening possible. The Church's Justice and Peace Commission and CRS were leading post-genocide reconciliation efforts in Cyangugu, efforts that included extensive post-trauma counseling and an intensive healing process within both the churches and the community. This helped prepare stakeholders in Cyangugu for change and strengthened the deep partnership and subsidiarity between the Church and CRS. Stakeholders also had other technical or programmatic relationships prior to the Church Strategic Support efforts—for example program staff have collaborated with the Church for decades to improve agriculture or to alleviate the struggles of orphans and vulnerable children.

At the Conference level and within other dioceses, CRS staff also had prior relationships with Church counterparts. Several staff are devoted Catholics for whom the capacity strengthening work is a labor of love, including one pivotal staff member who is a well-respected academic teaching Church history in both public university and the Rwandan seminary.

Accompaniment

In interviews, Church staff and clergy spoke highly of how CRS staff worked side-by-side with the Church to accomplish goals. This accompaniment approach reflects CRS' belief that capacity strengthening is far more than a transfer of skills or tools, and is in stark contrast to other programs. Interviewees from the Church referenced capacity building activities in which the partner provided funding or training and then disappeared, only to resurface when a report or an audit came due. In Rwanda, the Church-CRS relationships made this accompaniment possible, but the capacity strengthening also served to strengthen the relationship. "It opened minds and doors," said one senior CRS staff member who worked with both Cyangugu and the Episcopal Conference, "we [CRS] are not perceived as sponsors, we are perceived as part of the Church."

The Church made countless gestures indicating the depth of its relationship to CRS, two of which are particularly striking: (1) All of Rwanda's Catholic bishops attended a CRS Rwanda 50th anniversary celebration in Kigali—one long-time Church collaborator noted that he had never before seen all of the bishops at a single public event, and (2) the Church invited CRS staff to participate in a self-evaluation conducted by the Church, acknowledging CRS as an integral part of the team and the family. CRS is invited to attend virtually all Church events and the two organizations are committed to mutual learning and growth.

All of these relationships evolved through the course of the Strategic Support Portfolio (and will continue to do so), and were marked by honest communication and trust, accompaniment, and solidarity.

CONCLUSION

CRS has worked with countless institutions across the globe to strengthen capacity and function more effectively as organizations, yet the experience with the Church in Rwanda has been unique in its evolution and its effectiveness. The long-time relationship between CRS and the Church has been pivotal, and the CRS Partnership Principles are as relevant as ever. Additionally, four factors for success in Rwanda continually came up during research:

- · External environment
- · Leadership and commitment
- Meaningful relationships and trust
- · Equitable negotiation

These factors are not prerequisites, and the CRS Rwanda experience is not meant to be a template, but other groups and other CRS country programs may wish to reflect on this case study when strengthening the capacity of both Church and non-Church partners. It is our sincere hope that this case study contributes in a meaningful way to the body of work informing capacity strengthening and the shift in development to solutions and interventions that are truly owned by the host country, from the decision-makers and leadership in a capital city conference room to the poor and vulnerable most affected by the work.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the extraordinary support that the Rwanda Church Strategic Support program received from CRS headquarters in Baltimore and the CRS Central Africa Regional Office (CARO). The financial means may appear modest in comparison to some development initiatives, but such a commitment of resources—in particular flexible resources—is virtually unprecedented. By putting trust in CRS Rwanda and our Church partners, CARO elevated both the special relationship between CRS and the Church, and the profound role that capacity strengthening can play in development.

We are also deeply grateful and appreciative to our partners throughout the Catholic Church of Rwanda. Their openness to new approaches and ideas has been extraordinary, and their unflinching dedication to healing and growth has deepened CRS' commitment to our shared mission and values during harrowing times.

Thank you to the past and present staff in CRS Rwanda and CARO, and the clergy and laypeople of the Episcopal Conference the Diocese of Cyangugu for their willingness to break new ground. Thank you also to the clergy and laypeople in the dioceses of Butare, Byumba, and Gikongoro who are in earlier stages of their capacity strengthening journeys—*Bon courage!*

Thank you to everyone who agreed to be interviewed and share their experiences for this case study; to the author of this document, Rebecca Bennett; and to the reviewers whose thoughtful comments on early drafts were invaluable.

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ANNEX A: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES & REVIEWERS

NAME	TITLE	AFFILIATION	
LeAnn Christine Hager	Country Representative	CRS Rwanda	
Marie-Noelle Senyana	Head of Programming	CRS Rwanda	
Pascasie Musabyemungu	Strategic Initiatives Manager	CRS Rwanda	
Joseph Muyango	Program Manager, Justice and Peace	CRS Rwanda	
Emmanuel Mahirane	Chief Accountant	CRS Rwanda	
Isaïe Uwimbabazi	Senior Grants and Compliance Officer (or Senior Grant Manager?)	CRS Rwanda	
Samson Nzayisenga	Administrative Operations Coordinator	CRS Rwanda	
Juvenal Hakizimana	Finance Manager	CRS Rwanda	
Father Fidel Niyomana	Deputy General Secretary	Episcopal Conference of Rwanda	
Emmanuel Havugimana	Coordinator, Department of Strategic Planning	Episcopal Conference of Rwanda	
Frederick Kayijuka	Capcaity building staff	Episcopal Conference of Rwanda	
Providence Uwamariya	Capacity building staff	Episcopal Conference of Rwanda	
**Father Gatete Theotime	Former General Secretary	Episcopal Conference of Rwanda	
Father Celestin Hakizimana	General Secretary	Episcopal Conference of Rwanda	
Monsignor Alexis Habiyambere	Bishop, Nyundo Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda	
Paul Rutayisire	Partnership consultant	CRS Rwanda, National University of Rwanda	
Jacqueline Nyirahabimana	Head of Administration unit	CRS Rwanda	
Prosper Sebagenzi	Program Officer	Caritas Rwanda	
Father Oreste Incimatata	Director	Caritas Rwanda	
Donatien Twizeyumuremyi	Deputy Secretary General	Caritas Rwanda	
Monsignor Philippe Rukamba	Bishop, Butare Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda	
Jennifer Smith Nazaire	International Development Fellows Program Officer (formerly Country Representative, CRS Rwanda)	CRS	

NAME	TITLE	AFFILIATION
**Sean T. Gallagher	Country Representative (formerly Country Representative, CRS Rwanda)	CRS Mali
Monsignor Jean Damascene Bimenyimana	Bishop, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
Monsignor Serevillien Nzakamwita	Bishop, Byumba Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Alexis Nshimiyimana	Head Priest, Shangi Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Fabien Kabanda	Priest, Shangi Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Berthile Hategekimana	Priest responsible for finance, Shangi Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Achile Nzamurambaho	Priest responsible for Ntendezi parish project, Shangi Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Callixte Kalisa	Head priest, Mashyuza Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Norasque Mazimpaka	Priest responsible for finance, Mashyuza Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Modeste Kajyibwami	Priest, Mashyuza Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Paulin Habimana	Head priest, Nkanka Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Emmanuel Niyonsenga	Priest responsible for land, Nkanka Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Jean Damascene Ombeni	Priest responsible for finance, Nkanka Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Evariste Nambaje	Priest in charge of Finance at the Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Jean Damascene Ntakirutimana	Head priest, Nyabitimbo Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda
*Father Ernest	Priest in charge of Finance, Nyabitimbo Parish, Cyangugu Diocese	Catholic Church of Rwanda

^{*}Interviewed, but did not review drafts.

^{**}Reviewed drafts but was not interviewed.

ANNEX B: LIST OF MANAGEMENT TOOLS DEVELOPED, ADAPTED TO THE CHURCH CONTEXT, AND VALIDATED DURING THE STRATEGIC SUPPORT PORTFOLIO INITIATIVE

FRENCH	ENGLISH		
GESTION ADMINISTRATIVE	ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT		
Registre de courriers expédiés Registre de courriers reçus Cahier de distribution du courrier Fiche de transmission du dossier Personnel Contrat type du travail Sentinelle / veilleurs Berger Cuisinier Agent chargé de propreté Secrétaire ordinaire Secrétaire comptable Caissier(e) Agents des unités de production Agents des commissions diocésaines Liste de paye (NB: Tout paiement de salaires est désormais effectué par le biais de la banque) Billet de sortie (demande de permission) Ordre de mission Fiche d'évaluation de la performance du personnel	Mail Register of mail sent Register of letters received Specifications of mail delivery Data transmission file Staff Contract Work type Sentinel/Watchmen Guard for Cows Cook Housekeeper Secretary Accounting Secretary Cashier(s) Staff of production units Staff of diocesan commissions Payroll (Note: All payment of wages is now done through the bank.) Permission form Travel authorization Scorecard of staff performance Application for leave		
Formulaire de demande de congé GESTION FINANCIERE	FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT		
 Livre des encaisses Bon d'entrée de caisse Bon de sortie de caisse Formulaire d'arrêt de la caisse Bordereau de versement (interne en espèces) Livre de banque 	 Cash books Cash receipt Cash disbursement Paid out form Cash reconciliation form Deposit slip (internal cash) Bank book 		

FRENCH	ENGLISH
GESTION DES APPROVISIONNEMENTS ET DE STOCK • Bon de réquisition de matériel • Demande d'achat (memo interne) • Demande de facture pro formas • Bon de commande • Bordereau de livraison/de réception • Fiche de stock • Bon de sortie de stock • Fiche d'inventaire de stock	SUPPLY AND STOCK MANAGEMENT Purchase requisition for equipment Purchase request (internal memo) Proforma invoice request Purchase order form Note of Delivery/Receipt Stock Sheet Waybill Inventory Stock Sheet
Carnet de suivi d'utilisation des véhicules/Calcul d'amortissements	VEHICLE MANAGEMENT Logbook of vehicle use, calculation of depreciation
GESTION COMPTABLE	ACCOUNTING
 Le formulaire de rapport financier Le livre journal: LIVRE DE CAISSE n°1: Registre des recettes et dépenses propres Le livre journal: LIVRE DE CAISSE n°2: Registre des autres recettes et autres dépenses 	 Financial reporting form Revenues and expenditures ledger Income and expenditure ledger
PLANIIFICATION/ COMMUNICATION ENTRE COMMISIONS	TOOLS FOR PLANNING & COMMUNICATION BETWEEN COMMISSIONS
 Outil de planification des activités consolidée des commissions du Diocese Outil de planification budgétaire consolidée des 12 paroisses 	 Tool for consolidated planning among diocesan commissions Budget planning tool consolidated 12 parishes

CRS Partnership Principles

- Shared vision
- Subsidiarity
- Mutuality
- Equity
- Respect
- Transparency
- Transformation
- Commitment
- · Community ownership
- Capacity building
- Sustainability

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