

May 2018

# GLOBAL EMERGENCY UPDATE

This is the latest report on Catholic Relief Services' ongoing emergency response and recovery activities around the world. Our work is possible thanks to the generous support of private and public donors, the dedication of local partners, and the unwavering presence of Caritas and the local Catholic Church.



## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



In Venezuela, an estimated 4 million people are eating only twice a day. *Photo by CRS staff*

**VENEZUELA** Political and economic instability are leaving people desperate for food, medical care and basic government services. Food prices have risen sharply, and an estimated 4 million people

are eating only twice a day. CRS and our partner Caritas Venezuela are focusing on the needs of the most vulnerable, and expanding programming to help Venezuelan refugees in neighboring countries.

**MEXICO** Two earthquakes days apart killed nearly 500 people in September 2017, and destroyed homes, infrastructure and utilities. CRS and our local partners worked with other relief agencies and the Mexican government to provide shelter, living supplies and counseling for families.

**THE CARIBBEAN** Hurricanes Irma and Maria resulted in loss of life, property and infrastructure in September 2017. Hundreds of thousands of people were displaced. CRS and our partners have responded in Cuba and the Dominican Republic, Dominica and the British Virgin Islands.

## EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

**BANGLADESH** More than 688,000 Rohingya people have fled extreme violence in Myanmar, bringing the total number in Bangladesh to 900,000. They need essentials, including shelter,

food, clean water, living supplies, protection and child safety. CRS is working with our partner Caritas Bangladesh to provide 360,000 people with comprehensive support.

**PHILIPPINES** Super Typhoon Haiyan wreaked devastation across the islands of Leyte and Samar on November 8, 2013, claiming more than 6,300 lives and leaving infrastructure and neighborhoods in ruin.



**Before and after:** Through a CRS cash-for-work activity, Rohingya refugees used locally available materials and techniques to build drainage structures and terraces to mitigate erosion and flooding in the refugee settlement. *Photos by Christopher Reichert/CRS*

The innovative CRS Anibong Resettlement Project is helping 900 of the most vulnerable families restore their lives and livelihoods in a safe, sustainable and dignified new settlement, created in close consultation with the community.



## AFRICA

**UGANDA** Ongoing violence between South Sudan's government and opposition forces has created the fastest growing refugee crisis in the world. More than 1 million South Sudanese have fled to neighboring Uganda, where resources are stretched. CRS' comprehensive response includes shelter, water, sanitation and livelihoods support for refugee communities and vulnerable Ugandans.

**KENYA** A cycle of drought has diminished food production and exhausted people's ability to cope. Hundreds of thousands of children are being treated for acute malnourishment. CRS, our partners and local government support access to water, hygiene promotion, livelihood recovery efforts and improved livestock health. The project is expected to reach 15,500 families.



In Uganda, CRS is providing tools, materials and technical assistance to ensure homes are built using disaster-resilient techniques. *Photo by Oscar Leiva Marinero/Silverlight for CRS*

## EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA

**YEMEN** The country has been devastated by war. The conflict and a supply blockade have triggered a humanitarian disaster, leaving 70 percent of the population in need of aid. More than 14 million people do not have enough food or safe drinking water. About 462,000 children face acute malnutrition. CRS, through support to local partner Islamic Relief, is providing medical treatment to people with acute diarrhea, improving hygiene and sanitation to strengthen cholera prevention and working to reduce deaths associated with acute malnutrition.

**EUROPE** Refugees continue to undertake dangerous journeys to Europe despite European states having taken greater measures to control access to their territories. CRS and our local partners have assisted 400,000 refugees and migrants across Greece, Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia and Bulgaria, where we are also helping other vulnerable groups.

**IRAQ** Some 3.3 million Iraqis have returned to areas once held by Islamic State, while 2.6 million remain displaced. CRS and Caritas programming includes shelter, water and sanitation supplies, critical living supplies and counseling. A critical component is ensuring children access quality formal education.

**SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS** Millions of Syrians have been displaced for several years, and struggle with family separation, grief, uncertainty and finding somewhere to live with stability and dignity. CRS and our local partners have helped more than 1.4 million Syrians across the Middle East and Europe.



A CRS-sponsored school celebrates the visit of CRS staff with a traditional dance. The CRS education program in Iraq has served thousands of internally displaced children. *Photo by Philip Laubner for CRS*

## VENEZUELA

## POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS



CRS has set up malnutrition screening and treatment centers in 66 parishes. *Photo by CRS staff*

### CONTEXT

Venezuela has been struggling with an economic and political crisis since 2015. In early 2016, a drastic fall in the price of oil—the country's main export—meant it had to slash the imports it had come to rely on and use its limited cash reserves to pay foreign debt. Food—once subsidized—became scarce, as did medicine. Hyperinflation, the collapse of the health system and violence created further instability. People do not have access to food, medical care or basic services.

While the overall situation has remained relatively calm this year, poverty has worsened, and health is deteriorating due to the medicine shortage. Diseases that had been eradicated have reappeared, and malaria, measles, diphtheria and Zika are spreading. Food production has fallen and costs have increased. Most people can only buy basic foods through government distributions that are irregular and don't provide enough to meet families' needs.

More and more Venezuelans are fleeing to neighboring Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and the islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao. More than 1.5 million Venezuelans are registered as refugees. It is the largest displacement of people in Latin American history. Venezuelan refugees face poor working

conditions, and the risks of child labor, sexual exploitation, violence and malnutrition. Many lack shelter, so they sleep on the streets or in parks. People who are detained have little or no legal aid, and getting health care is a challenge. Stress and trauma are prevalent.

### CRS RESPONSE

CRS is supporting Caritas Venezuela in providing health and nutrition activities focused on children, pregnant women, the elderly and people with disabilities. From October 2017 through March 2018, Caritas accomplished the following:

- Established malnutrition screening and treatment centers in 66 parishes.
- Screened 3,500 children under age 5 and 213 pregnant women.
- Provided food and medicine to 2,200 children under age 5 and 72 pregnant women.
- Helped 61 percent of malnourished children in the selected parishes recover.
- Organized 217 community soup kitchens serving 23,500 people.
- Ensured 14 dioceses had basic medicines.
- Organized 80 medical missions of health care workers to provide medical assistance.
- Facilitated 150 health and nutrition workshops for families.

CRS and Caritas are exploring options for importing therapeutic foods to improve our ability to treat moderate and severe malnutrition.

Caritas Venezuela has strengthened its accountability mechanisms at the parish, diocesan and national levels. Work is underway for a pilot program using electronic tablets and a cloud service platform to provide real-time data on project activities and inform decision-making.

To meet the growing needs, CRS is working with Caritas and other local partners to expand refugee programming in Colombia, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago, and Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao. In Colombia, Caritas is reaching more than 15,000 Venezuelan refugees and host community members with food, shelter, health, livelihoods and psychological support. Caritas Brazil is working with local partners, including the Scalabrini Missionary Sisters, to establish safe immigration centers and provide food, protection, and counseling and education programming.

The Living Water Community in Trinidad and Tobago provides Venezuelan refugees with financial assistance and helps cover housing, medical, food and education expenses. Last year it opened a school for refugee children. CRS is working with the organization to develop a strategy to meet the high demand for housing, and improve cash distributions.

In Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, Caritas meets regularly with other local responders to determine the best ways to help refugees, through legal and medical assistance, and education for Venezuelan children.



**MEXICO**  
**EARTHQUAKES**


The 7.1-magnitude earthquake in Mexico City killed 220 people in the city and 140 in surrounding states. *Photo by Xinhua/Alamy Live News*

### CONTEXT

The 8.2-magnitude earthquake that struck southern Mexico on September 7, 2017, caused nearly 100 deaths and damaged 110,000 buildings in the states of Oaxaca and Chiapas. Just 12 days later, a 7.1-magnitude earthquake destroyed buildings across Mexico City, killing 220 people in the city and 140 in surrounding states. Besides destroying homes and other buildings, the earthquakes also damaged bridges, roads, water supplies, sanitation facilities and the electrical grid. More than 7,000 aftershocks worsened the damage.

Chiapas and Oaxaca states, with about 9 million people, are among the most impoverished areas in the country and were hardest hit. The most affected regions are Juchitan in Oaxaca and Tonalá in Chiapas. In Oaxaca, about 800,000 people across 41 municipalities were affected. Dozens of small towns suffered severe damage, and heavy rain worsened conditions. Some Catholic dioceses reported that up to 50 percent of homes had collapsed. Families, particularly children, were traumatized. Communities needed food, clothing, kitchen sets and hygiene kits.

### CRS RESPONSE

CRS and our local partners worked with other relief agencies and the Mexican government to ensure a coordinated and efficient response. From October to December 2017, the following immediate emergency response in Oaxaca, Chiapas and Morelos was carried out by CRS, Caritas Mexico, Tehuantepec Diocese and the Missionaries of Jesus Christ Resurrected:

- Constructed 30 transitional shelters for extremely vulnerable families.
- Distributed tarpaulins to 2,860 families.
- Set up 15 communal cooking facilities to ensure daily hot meals
- Provided living supplies, including 570 kitchen sets and 67 locally made clay ovens.
- Arranged counseling for 1,040 children and young people dealing with grief, distress and trauma.

In January, CRS and our partner Tehuantepec Diocese began the recovery phase in the Oaxacan

municipalities of Juchitan and Tehuantepec. This phase includes providing an additional 125 transitional shelters for vulnerable families, toilet repair or new toilet construction for 70 families, training in disaster-resilient construction techniques, and maintenance of shelters and bathrooms.

To date, 80 more transitional shelters have been completed, and 45 more are scheduled to be completed by the end of May. Toilet construction and repairs have begun and will be completed by mid-June.

In March, community hygiene and health promotion training began for those receiving shelters and toilets, and the training will continue through June. Hygiene and health promotion messages will reach up to 3,000 community members by October 1.

The recovery phase also includes comprehensive disaster risk reduction and emergency plans coordinated with the government of Mexico.

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## THE CARIBBEAN

## HURRICANES IRMA AND MARIA



Hurricane Maria caused flooding and dozens of landslides across the island of Dominica. *Photo by Manuel Jean-Francois/Alamy*

## CONTEXT

Category 5 Hurricane Irma claimed at least 34 lives and affected half a million people across the Caribbean in September 2017. Making landfall on the Leeward Islands, and again on the northern coast of Cuba, extensive damage also occurred on Antigua and Barbuda, Anguilla, Saint Martin and Saint Barthelemy.

In Cuba, almost every region experienced damage. At least 6,300 people in the British Virgin Islands were displaced and 25 percent of homes became uninhabitable. A third of the population was left jobless.

Ten days later, Hurricane Maria made landfall on Dominica as a Category 5 storm with winds of up to 160 miles per hour. The island was severely affected by flooding and dozens of landslides, and 38 people died.

Although the Dominican Republic was not hit directly by Hurricane Maria, homes were destroyed and there was severe flooding in some areas.



## CRS RESPONSE

**British Virgin Islands** CRS, Caritas Antilles and the British Red Cross created a joint cash program, approved by the government as part of its household assistance program. The program provided money to 1,080 families to buy essentials. More than 50 social

workers were trained and deployed to more than 15 stations around the country. Given the severe drop in incomes after Hurricane Irma, the cash assistance contributed toward stabilization of the economy. The project ended in March.

**Cuba** Caritas Havana distributed food and household supplies to 400 families. CRS will help Caritas Cuba provide roofing and mattresses to 150 families in Camaguey, Ciego

de Avila and Santa Clara, pending government approval. Volunteers are supporting these families with small items such as towels, soap and other household goods, as they are able.

**Dominica** Caritas Dominica is distributing 160 roof repair kits to households damaged during Hurricane Maria in one of the worst-affected communities on the island. Caritas is also planning to construct 115 safe shelters for families whose homes were damaged beyond repair. Hygiene promoters explained safe hygiene practices and water safety to 5,500 people across Dominica, alongside the International Medical Corps and Samaritan's Purse.

CRS and our partner Caritas Antilles distributed hygiene kits, 1,590 tarps, buckets and 660 water filters to more than 600 families in 4 communities in the hardest-hit southeastern region. Hygiene kits included soap, tubs, sanitary kits for women, folding jerry cans, detergent, sarongs, whistles and solar lights. Community feedback was crucial in identifying community members whose homes were destroyed and who are now included in the Caritas shelter response.

**Dominican Republic** CRS partners supported 1,970 families with vouchers for food, hygiene and living supplies, and 311 families with hygiene kits, across La Vega, Puerto Plata, Mao, Santiago, and San Francisco de Macoris.

Partners participated in a 1-day review event, and submitted final project reports and results from post-distribution surveys. Overall, participants reported the materials received were useful and there was satisfaction with the distribution.

**YEMEN**  
**CONFLICT**
**CONTEXT**

Yemen has been devastated by war between forces loyal to the internationally recognized government of President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi—backed by a Saudi Arabia-led coalition—and Houthi rebels. More than 7,600 people have been killed since March 2015. The conflict and a supply blockade have triggered a humanitarian disaster, leaving 70 percent of the population in need of aid. More than 14 million people do not have enough food or safe drinking water. About 462,000 children face acute malnutrition. The most affected areas are Aden, Taiz and Saada, where food prices have soared.

Throughout 2017, a cholera outbreak spread at an unprecedented rate and, by April 2018, more than 1 million cases and nearly 2,267 deaths had been reported. The epidemic struck when the capacity of the health system had been crippled by 2 years of continuous conflict and restrictions on imports. Health infrastructure collapsed, also hampering water, sanitation and hygiene services. Some 24 million people, including 9.6 million children—are at risk.

The inaccessibility of some high-risk areas has hampered the humanitarian response, as has a shortage of resources, including laboratory supplies and rapid diagnostic test kits.

There is a great need for established, fully equipped and supplied diarrheal treatment centers, case management guidelines, training, and staff payment and support. As the cholera epidemic is likely to resume during the rainy seasons of March–June and August–October, responding to reports of suspected cases is critical, as is identifying and purifying contaminated water sources.



CRS partner Islamic Relief distributed 4,000 hygiene kits to families. *Photo courtesy of Islamic Relief*

Essential medicines will be delivered to targeted health facilities based on needs. CRS hopes to invest in three water systems, serving an estimated 7,000 families, or

49,000 people. Plans include the provision of 5,000 cholera prevention kits, and heightened cholera prevention messaging across target areas, reaching up to 5,000 families.

**CRS RESPONSE**

Through support to CRS partner Islamic Relief:

**Provided medical treatment to 1,000 people with acute diarrhea.**

- Distributed medicine, paying special attention to the elderly, people with special needs, women and children.
- Provided cholera medicine, solid waste bins, cleaning kits, 1,000 mosquito nets and medical supplies for health facilities, and stipends for health workers.

**Improved hygiene and sanitation to strengthen cholera prevention, benefiting 4,000 families.**

- Distributed 4,000 hygiene kits to families, and facilitated health sessions to improve hygiene and sanitation at the household level.
- Provided 8,000 jerry cans—2 per family—for safe water storage.
- Provided 76,000 water purification tablets to 4,000 families.
- Provided 20 solid waste bins and 20 cleaning kits to diarrheal treatment centers.
- Monitored water quality on an ongoing basis.

**Reduced deaths associated with acute malnutrition among children under age 5, and pregnant and nursing women, in Al Hodeida, Amran and Saada areas.**

- Admitted 1,520 severely malnourished patients to outpatient therapeutic programs for rehabilitation—527 recovered and were discharged.
- Admitted 3,780 moderately malnourished children under age 5 to supplementary feeding programs—2,140 recovered and were discharged.
- Admitted 2,310 moderately malnourished pregnant and nursing women to supplementary feeding programs—1,760 recovered and were discharged.
- Recruited 18 health workers and 18 community health volunteers, who were posted to 18 health facilities in Amran and Saada.
- Continued to provide technical support to health workers and community health volunteers in health facilities to improve their knowledge and skills.

## IRAQ

## DISPLACEMENT

## CONTEXT

When ISIS first captured Mosul almost 4 years ago, an estimated 3.5 million Iraqis were displaced. Following an intensive operation, Iraqi and Kurdish security forces retook most ISIS-held areas. With an estimated 11 million people still in need, the needs of returnees now surpass those of internally displaced people. As of January 2018, 3.3 million Iraqis returned home, while 2.6 million remain displaced. CRS has identified significant gaps in restoring education, rebuilding housing and recovering livelihoods in areas of return.

CRS and Caritas Iraq are focusing initial returnee support on the Nineveh Plains, where half of families have returned in the last 6 months. Livelihood opportunities are limited, and only families with government salaries have a consistent income. For many, the relief of returning after years of displacement is tempered by the challenge of rebuilding their lives. The past 3 years of conflict have created instability and destroyed infrastructure. Iraq's education system has been deeply affected—an estimated one in four schools was destroyed, and many more damaged. At least 5.1 million children need humanitarian assistance.

Returning safely and with dignity to areas retaken from IS will also require mine removal, significant investment in infrastructure and the rebuilding of local economies.



Students and teachers at a CRS-sponsored school. It is estimated that one in four schools was destroyed, and many more damaged in the conflict. Photo by Philip Laubner/CRS

## CRS RESPONSE

With 70 staff, CRS has partnered with Caritas Iraq to help 300,000 people with a range of support. CRS and Caritas programming in Dohuk, Baghdad and Anbar is ongoing, including the provision of a comprehensive package of shelter, water and

sanitation supplies, critical living supplies—through cash and direct distribution—education and counseling. A critical component of CRS programming is ensuring children can access quality formal education while they are displaced and once they return home.

## PRIORITIES

**Shelter** CRS has renovated more than 5,000 buildings, supporting over 70,000 people in Baghdad, Kirkuk and Dohuk. This includes improving the insulation, safety and privacy of buildings where families have taken refuge. External doors and double-glazed windows, internal partitions and doors, and weatherproofing have been installed. CRS and Caritas have also designed and provided transitional shelter, using local materials and labor, for more than 500 families stranded in the desolate Amiriyat al-Fallujah settlement.

**Support for returnees** To support families rebuilding their lives, CRS engages deeply with local communities to test and scale project ideas. These projects help communities create their own lasting solutions to displacement. CRS expects to serve more than 120,000 people this year with such

programming, including the repair of war-damaged homes, livelihoods support and access to quality education.

**Essential living and hygiene supplies**

CRS and Caritas Iraq provided critical relief items to more than 10,500 displaced families in Anbar, Nineveh, Dohuk and Kirkuk, and on the outskirts of Mosul. Items included kitchen sets, stoves, bedding, soap and other supplies. People needed specific support to cope with extreme temperatures—including extra blankets, warm clothing, heaters and kerosene. Supplies are provided directly or through vouchers or cash assistance.

**Preparedness and scale-up**

CRS and Caritas Iraq teams continue to train staff and prepare supplies and vendors for newly displaced communities, and those returning home. CRS support for the Caritas Women and Child Project is also ongoing.



## SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

## DISPLACEMENT

## CONTEXT

On April 7, a suspected chemical attack on Douma, the last rebel-held town outside Damascus in Eastern Ghouta, caused massive devastation, injury and death. A reported 42 people were killed. While international experts have attempted to examine the scene, they faced a setback when the United Nations' risk assessment team came under fire. The Syrian government continues to deny any chemical weapons attack. On April 14, the United States, Britain and France bombed several Syrian government sites in retaliation.

Millions of Syrians have been displaced for several years, and struggle with family separation, grief, uncertainty and finding safe, dignified housing. The toll on children is significant: Those who are 7 years old and younger have known only war. The war will have long-term impacts on their personal well-being, and that of Syria's future generations.



CRS helps refugee parents and caregivers with stress management and childcare assistance. *Photo by Ismail Ferdous for CRS*



Sister Amira Tabet talks to a Syrian refugee student at a Good Shepherd Sisters community center in Deir-al-Ahmar, Lebanon. CRS partners with the sisters to provide educational opportunities to critically vulnerable families. *Photo by Ismail Ferdous for CRS*

## CRS RESPONSE

CRS has helped more than 1.4 million Syrians across the Middle East and Europe. We work closely with the Catholic Church, especially Caritas and our Church partners, who have deep roots in the region.

CRS and our local partners continue to expand our child-centered programming by providing safe spaces for children to live, play and learn. We have significantly grown our engagement with parents and caregivers, and support many single mothers. In some cases, orphaned children have been taken in by other family members. To support these caregivers, CRS offers services that include stress management and childcare assistance.

Ongoing priorities include:

**Shelter and rent assistance**

Monthly rent stipends support most refugees who live in urban areas. With few opportunities to earn income, this helps prevent homelessness, squatting and destitution.

**Living supplies** Relief kits of bedding, stoves, buckets and other household items are provided to newly arriving refugees.

**Children's education, support and trauma counseling**

CRS and our partners support Syrian refugee children who are at risk of dropping out of school. We help children enroll and thrive in school, and provide trauma counseling, tutoring and recreational activities. We also support children with special needs to ensure their access to education. CRS aids local parochial schools in Jordan by ensuring infrastructure is safe, and that teachers and staff are trained to identify and manage the challenges faced by refugee children and their families. Across the region, CRS conducts parent engagement, caregiver support, parent literacy and life skills courses for adolescents.

**Food** Cash and voucher programs allow people to buy the food they need, respecting their dignity and supporting the local economy.

**Medical assistance** This includes immediate care for life-threatening injuries, care for chronic conditions such as diabetes, and maternal and child care.

**Hygiene and sanitation** Vouchers for soap, laundry detergent, diapers and other sanitary supplies are provided.



## EUROPE

## REFUGEE AND MIGRANT CRISIS

## CONTEXT

Refugees continue to undertake dangerous journeys to Europe despite European states having taken greater measures to control access to their territories. More than 19,000 refugees and migrants arrived in Europe this year—less than half the total during the same period in 2017. However, more than 2,400 refugees arrived in Greece in March—a 60 percent increase on the arrivals in March 2017.

Most arrivals in Greece are from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, and nearly 60 percent are women and children. Stranded and without proper shelter, they are vulnerable to exploitation, poverty and hunger. CRS and our local partners have assisted 400,000 refugees and migrants across Greece, Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia and Bulgaria, where we are also helping other vulnerable groups. We are prioritizing support for displaced families as they transition into communities where they can become self-sufficient.

## UKRAINE

## DISPLACEMENT

As the conflict in eastern Ukraine enters its fifth year, more than 3.4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance in the government-controlled parts of Donetsk province. Loss of livelihoods, rising prices and difficulty accessing markets make food security a year-round challenge for many internally displaced people and residents. To improve food security and agricultural livelihoods, CRS and Caritas Ukraine are distributing cash grants and offer technical assistance to vulnerable families for small-scale farming activities, including fruit and vegetable production, crop cultivation and animal husbandry. This year, CRS will provide grants to more than 250 families across five conflict-affected districts. CRS also continues to explore long-term, durable housing solutions for internally displaced people unable to return to their homes.



Refugees learn crafts at the Caritas Sofia office in Sofia, Bulgaria. Photo by Oscar Durand for CRS

CRS RESPONSE  
GREECE

Greece has an estimated 51,000 refugees and asylum seekers. CRS and Caritas are providing the following comprehensive support:

**Integration** CRS and Caritas have helped more than 60 refugees with training and links to job opportunities. CRS also implements the Greece Economic and Social Integration of Refugees project to help refugees and migrants establish themselves as active members of society, and contribute to the local economy.

**Cash assistance** CRS and Caritas have supported 18,500 refugees and migrants living in shelters and camps. With six local partners, CRS distributes cash cards for people to use at ATMs or in shops so they can meet their basic needs.

**Transitional shelter** Safe, dignified housing has been provided for more than 3,500 people by renovating apartments in Athens and Thessaloniki. Families also receive support from trained professionals, including referrals to medical, legal and children's education services.

**Urban social centers** In Athens, two service hubs provide hot meals, child friendly spaces, shower facilities, access to social workers and translators, referrals to medical services, rest areas and internet access. Approximately 2,250 people use these centers each week.

## BULGARIA

Many asylum seekers traveled from Turkey, through Bulgaria, hoping to reach Western Europe. But, when the Bulgarian border closed in 2016, most refugees and migrants had no option but to stay in Bulgaria, with little support. While the overall number of asylum seekers has fallen, the government reports that nearly 300 new arrivals have applied for asylum this year. CRS and Caritas are providing economic and social resources to support their integration into society. Programs include enrolling refugees in assisted job searches, Bulgarian language classes and training to manage household expenses.

## SERBIA

More than 3,700 asylum seekers are estimated to be in Serbia, and are unable to travel further due to the closure of the Serbian border. More than 85 percent are staying in government-run centers. CRS and our partners recently renovated one of the reception centers, and continue to serve as the only provider of cash transfers to refugees and migrants in Serbia. We have supported 6,740 people with cash assistance to meet their basic living needs.



## KENYA

## HUNGER AND DISEASE



CRS livestock restocking fairs help people who have lost sheep, goats and cattle. *Photo by Nancy McNally/CRS*

## CONTEXT

A cycle of drought has led to an erosion of assets at the family and community levels. Below-average rainfall for a third consecutive season has diminished food production and exhausted people's ability to cope. It has also led to widespread land degradation, deforestation, and poor soil and water management practices. To date, almost 400,000 children were being treated for acute malnourishment.

Risks to food and nutrition are now heightened by an invasion of fall armyworm, a pest that can destroy crops. The U.S. Agency for International Development estimates that Kenya could lose half its maize crop—its most important—and face a massive food crisis in the coming months, with 80 other crops in danger, including fodder.

Ongoing political unrest in parts of Ethiopia's Oromia region has led to an increase in the number of refugees in Marsabit County, Kenya. At least 500 people cross the border into Kenya daily, with more than 10,000 refugees already in Marsabit, according to local government and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. Water availability and sanitation is a challenge for refugees and host communities. Livestock disease has increased, affecting livestock prices in Kenya's North Eastern Province.

## CRS RESPONSE

### Drought crisis response

CRS is responding in the counties of Kwale, Kilifi, Turkana, Isiolo and Samburu, by supporting access to water for households and livestock, hygiene promotion, livelihood recovery efforts and improved livestock health. The project, expected to reach 15,500 families, is implemented through our local Church partners and county governments. Completed and ongoing support includes:

- Providing 7,000 people with hygiene support by training 100 community leaders and sharing radio messages, posters and other communication materials. Hygiene promotion is ongoing.
- Distributing hygiene kits and water purification tablets to 2,150 households, including 1,810 female-headed homes, reaching 12,900 people.
- Installation of roof catchments in 5 schools in Samburu, supporting 1,570 children.
- Repairing and maintaining water infrastructure for 1,500 families.
- Rehabilitating 4 community boreholes and developing a new shallow well in Turkana and Isiolo, giving 6,250 families water access.
- Safe drinking water for 1,120 families in Kwale.
- Buying and distributing high-quality feed to 7,600 livestock farmers in 5 counties.

- Reaching 6,800 farmers through seed fairs.
- Restocking 1,620 households with livestock (6,540 goats and sheep).
- Providing vaccinations for 188,080 livestock and deworming for 122,230 livestock in Turkana, Samburu and Isiolo.
- Providing irrigation equipment, farming tools, seeds, greenhouses and water source development. Some 57 irrigation groups have been identified and assessments conducted on areas of support.

### Marsabit response

CRS is working in conjunction with the Catholic diocese of Marsabit and the county government to offer emergency medical assistance to 10,000 refugees. Some services of this 1-month response include:

- Distribution of treated mosquito nets to 4,000 families.
- Distribution of hygiene kits to 3,000 women.
- Providing vaccination and other medical-related services for refugee and host communities.

## UGANDA

### DISPLACEMENT

#### CONTEXT

Uganda has received about 180 refugees a day since January 1 as South Sudanese people continue to flee violence between their government and opposition forces. Uganda has accepted more than 1 million refugees who are now living in settlements in northwestern Uganda, across the border from South Sudan. Most are women and children.

Uganda is unique in its openness and hospitality toward refugees. They are free to move about, work and establish businesses. And they receive land to build shelter and grow food. But Uganda's resources are stretched, and there is a great need for safe shelter, clean water and sanitation, and viable livelihoods.

CRS is working in the Bidi Bidi refugee settlement in Yumbe District in northwest Uganda, which hosts 287,000 people. Since January, only family members of those already in the settlement have been accepted in Bidi Bidi. Other new arrivals are relocated to other settlements in the West Nile. With continuing conflict in South Sudan, the influx of refugees is expected to continue. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and the Ugandan government are working with humanitarian groups and host communities to support refugee families long term.

#### CRS RESPONSE

CRS' comprehensive response includes shelter, water and sanitation, and livelihoods support. Our programs benefit the South Sudanese refugee communities as well as vulnerable Ugandans. An estimated 30 percent of our programming supports Ugandans, while 70 percent supports the refugee community.

CRS prioritizes support for those with specific needs—pregnant women, the elderly, female-headed households, unaccompanied minors, and people with disabilities. We are supporting 115,000 people in Bidi Bidi settlement.



Through CRS cash-for-work activities, refugees and host community members have built shelters, and water and sanitation systems. *Photo by Oscar Leiva Marinero/Silverlight for CRS*

#### PRIORITIES

##### Shelter

- Built 725 semi-permanent shelters in Yangani and Ombечи, in Bidi Bidi camp, and planning to build another 500. Our shelter model is preferred by the UNHCR. We are one of the few agencies providing semi-permanent homes at this large scale. As part of the shelter support, we provide tools, construction materials and technical assistance to ensure homes are built using disaster-resilient techniques. Construction teams comprise both South Sudanese refugees and local Ugandans. This helps build community relations and shared benefits from the humanitarian programming.
- Awaiting local government approval of designs for the construction of two schools in Yumbe, and hope to complete them by year-end.

##### Water, sanitation and hygiene

- Constructed a new water supply system with 15 taps for 2 villages in the Ayivu sub-zone.
- Provided 1,200 latrines for refugee families.
- Installed a generator and constructed a hybrid water system to benefit 8,345 people.
- Safely decommissioned 185 latrines.
- Trained 6,950 people in health and hygiene practices.
- Provided vocational training to youth, on skills that will be in demand locally and that they can use if they return to South Sudan.

##### Livelihoods

- Organized seeds and tools fairs benefiting 4,600 refugee families, as well as Ugandan vendors of seeds, tools and livestock. CRS provided refugees with vouchers of about \$36 per person—\$165,000 total—to buy seeds, tools and livestock from local suppliers.
- Provided training in backyard gardening to help families grow food for home consumption and as a source of income.
- Helped refugees learn the unique aspects of agriculture in Uganda through training led by local farmers and business owners, and provided livestock support.
- Formed 18 micro-savings groups with 410 members, including 300 women, from both the refugee and host communities, to promote savings, commerce and social cohesion.
- Through cash-for-work, employed hundreds of contractors and laborers—70 percent from the refugee community and 30 percent from the Ugandan community—for shelter, and water and sanitation system construction, such as wells, water infrastructure and latrines.



## BANGLADESH REFUGEE CRISIS

### OVERVIEW

Bangladesh continues to manage a massive humanitarian crisis. Since August 2017, in neighboring Myanmar, Rohingya people have been targeted by extreme violence—including killings, rape and the burning of villages—that has caused mass displacement. More than 688,000 Rohingya have fled Rakhine State, bringing the total number in Bangladesh to 900,000. They need essentials, including shelter, food, clean water, living supplies, protection and child safety. Their return to Myanmar seems unlikely in the short term as most of the refugees fear for their safety.

The refugee settlements have grown rapidly and spontaneously, leading to extremely congested shelters vulnerable to flooding, landslides and other hazards. The risks are especially high with the arrival of the cyclone season.

### CRS RESPONSE

CRS is working with our partner Caritas Bangladesh to provide 360,000 people with comprehensive support. Priorities include:

#### Essential living supplies

- Blankets, sleeping mats, kitchen sets and other supplies.

#### Safe shelter

- Providing 6,100 safe, dignified shelters with support from local carpenters.
- Demonstrating disaster-resilient construction improvements.
- Offering additional support to families with specific needs.

#### Water, sanitation and hygiene

- Constructing 187 gender-segregated toilet and bathing facilities.
- Installing 19 wells with solar-powered pumps.
- Training volunteers, and developing messages to promote sanitation and hygiene.
- Facilitating water and sanitation infrastructure maintenance.
- Providing female hygiene supplies.
- Distributing 750 hygiene kits.



Through a CRS cash-for-work activity, Rohingya refugees used local materials to build structures such as drainage and terraces to mitigate erosion and flooding in the refugee settlement. *Photo by Christopher Reichert/CRS*

### SETTLEMENT IMPROVEMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT

CRS and Caritas Bangladesh piloted a site-improvement project to help communities prepare for the cyclone and flood season. Using data from the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees that identified areas vulnerable to flooding and landslides, and low-lying and steep areas, CRS and Caritas provided vital improvements to the congested, unsafe settlement, including cement-lined drainage, waste collection bins, bathing spaces, terraced steps, latrines, pathway lighting, improved shelters, retaining walls, wells, sandbag pathways and bamboo bridges. The improved pathways and lighting are particularly important for the elderly and others with specific needs.

Subcontractors provided technical expertise, and residents received

cash-for-work to install 1.3 miles of community infrastructure, such as retaining walls, pathways and drainage, which help mitigate flooding and landslides. Residents also participated in demonstrations and received technical support so they could help their vulnerable neighbors build shelters. Shelter kits were provided, including bamboo, rope and wire, to help families strengthen their structures.

In less than a month, the pilot community of 791 residents upgraded all 182 homes and built 20 bathing spaces. The pilot was cost-effective—at \$484 per family—and replicable, building on local knowledge and using local materials. Community leadership will mobilize labor for future shelter upgrades and maintain the refugee settlement.

#### Protecting women and children from trafficking and violence

- Sharing protection and anti-trafficking messaging.
- Training community members to counsel and provide referrals for specialized help.
- Constructing 6 child friendly spaces where children can play and learn safely.
- Educating men so they can advocate on behalf of women.

# 900,000

ROHINGYA HAVE FLED MYANMAR  
FOR BANGLADESH

**CRS** faith.  
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES action.  
results.

## PHILIPPINES

## TYPHOON

**CONTEXT**

Super Typhoon Haiyan wreaked devastation across the islands of Leyte and Samar on November 8, 2013, claiming more than 6,300 lives and leaving infrastructure and neighborhoods in ruins. At least 1.1 million homes were damaged or destroyed.

Among the most devastated areas was the coastal district of Anibong in Tacloban, on Leyte, where the typhoon washed away or destroyed most homes and local infrastructure. The damage was so severe, and the risk of further destruction so high, that the Philippines government declared it a no-dwell zone and required residents who had lived there for generations to relocate.

The Anibong Resettlement Project is supporting 900 of the most vulnerable families, helping to restore their lives and livelihoods in a safe, sustainable and dignified new community. We have designed this planned community with essential infrastructure—including water, sanitation, electricity, drainage and solid waste management—and education, markets and community spaces. We are also working closely with families to design and build disaster-resilient homes the families will own—often their first experience of homeownership.

The resettlement is located in Tacloban city, in the neighborhood of Bagacay. It is 4.5 miles from Anibong district and close to key facilities and public transportation. CRS worked closely with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Palo to identify and buy the land. CRS began the extensive earthwork needed prior to construction in December 2017, and began building houses in April 2018. Completion is scheduled for June 2019.



A three-dimensional model of the Anibong resettlement site. CRS took a participatory approach to tailor the project to the unique needs of the residents. *Photo by Charlie David Martinez for CRS*

**OUR INNOVATIVE APPROACH**

**Community participation** To ensure the community continues to thrive long after CRS has gone, the families have formalized a homeowners association with an elected board of directors. CRS is training and mentoring the board in community governance, financial management, and facilities and infrastructure maintenance.

**Creating a close community**

We are using innovative digital technology to assign plots of land. Each family's weighted preference for their location, plot size and neighbors is cross-referenced against the preferences of all 900 families. Plots are then assigned to

minimize potential conflict, enhance community cohesion, and facilitate natural growth and modification of housing units over time.

**Land tenure** CRS has partnered with a Philippines national social housing corporation to enroll each family into a home loan program with low interest rates and monthly payments. We also help families navigate the government land tenure system, ensuring they are able to provide and submit all the documents required to obtain a title to their land. Without this support, most participants would never be able to own a home.

**‘Through a grassroots effort, we’re helping vulnerable families achieve the dream of home ownership in a safe and healthy community—in many cases for the first time in their lives.’**

—Matt McGarry, CRS Philippines Country Representative

 **faith. action. results.**