

# CRS Chapters: An Overview

*Catholic Relief Services is building a national network of CRS Chapters* to mobilize Catholics and others of goodwill to end global poverty. These chapters\*—comprised of parishioners, diocesan groups and other community members—are taking critical and meaningful actions to address global poverty and advocate on behalf of our global family. Engaging in CRS Chapters empower volunteers to live out their call as missionary disciples and become champions for the families and communities that CRS serves.

## What will CRS Chapters do?

As communities of people committed to ending global poverty and transforming our world, chapters will take monthly actions that advance CRS' mission to assist those who are poor and vulnerable around the world.

**ADVOCACY:** Chapters address the systemic causes of global poverty through advocacy; developing strong relationships with their members of Congress through letters, phone calls, and visits; as well as writing letters to the editor and op-eds in local media outlets. These advocacy efforts engage and educate lawmakers, helping to influence policy changes for critical issues like migration and hunger.

**COMMUNITY GIVING:** Chapters respond to the immediate needs of our human family around the world through giving activities such as CRS Rice Bowl, emergency relief funds and other creative giving opportunities that match a community's interests and skills. These activities allow CRS to be agile and respond to urgent needs around the world as well as help CRS leverage additional funding to reach even more people.

## What are the benefits of joining a CRS Chapter?

CRS Chapter members are catalysts of global impact, invited to live out their calling as missionary disciples and people of goodwill by engaging in a movement to end global poverty. Members learn about important humanitarian issues; develop essential skills in leadership, advocacy and community engagement; and receive specialized training and support from CRS staff. Chapters are connected to regional, state, and national networks of CRS champions, magnifying their impact to advance policy changes for a more just and peaceful world.

## How does a CRS Chapter get started?

A CRS community engagement manager works with local leaders to invite a group of interested people to attend a Chapter Launch Workshop and a series of orientation trainings. After the orientation, chapters come together once a month for the national conference call featuring expert guest speakers, Q&A, best practice sharing and ongoing training. Individual chapters then meet at least one other time each month for fellowship and to plan their actions around community giving and advocacy.

## Who leads a CRS Chapter?

Each chapter will select one or more members as a chapter leader who will mobilize and organize chapter members in taking concrete actions to address pressing global issues. Chapter leaders receive additional training and accompaniment by CRS staff and have the opportunity to accept additional leadership roles on regional, state or national levels.

*\*Chapters are formed through audience-specific groups: CRS Chapters for adults, CRS High School Clubs, and CRS University Chapters.*