



2024 ANNUAL REPORT
***Building Resilient
Communities Together***

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Foreword



Abena Amedormey
Country Representative

As I reflect on our journey through 2024, I am inspired by the stories of resilience and transformation that we have helped shape in the lives of the people we serve. This year's annual report, themed **"Building Resilient Communities Together,"** reflects the remarkable progress we've made through our partnerships, collaboration, and shared commitment to supporting the most vulnerable populations in Ghana.

For more than six decades, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has walked alongside the people of Ghana, responding to their immediate needs and empowering them to overcome the systemic challenges that perpetuate poverty and inequality. In 2024, our efforts, guided by the core values of the Catholic Church and the principles of Integral Human Development, have focused on creating lasting change. Our work across sectors such as health; Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH); agriculture, livelihoods, and landscapes; youth and peace-building; and emergency is a direct reflection of our commitment to building stronger, more

resilient communities where every individual has the opportunity to thrive.

This year, together with our partners, we invested **\$5.1 million** across a wide range of programs, directly impacting over **27,500 individuals** and indirectly benefiting an additional **365,905**. These figures not only represent the scale of our work but, more importantly, the tangible, lasting change we are creating together. From improving health systems to enhancing access to clean water, strengthening agricultural livelihoods, and empowering youth, the impact we've made is deeply felt across communities in Ghana.

The theme of this year's report also emphasizes the importance of Goal 17 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Partnerships for the Goals. It reminds us that no single organization or group can solve the complex challenges of poverty and inequality on their own. It takes all of us – the government, local communities, faith-based organizations, civil society organizations, development partners, and the private sector – working together to create sustainable solutions and lasting impact.

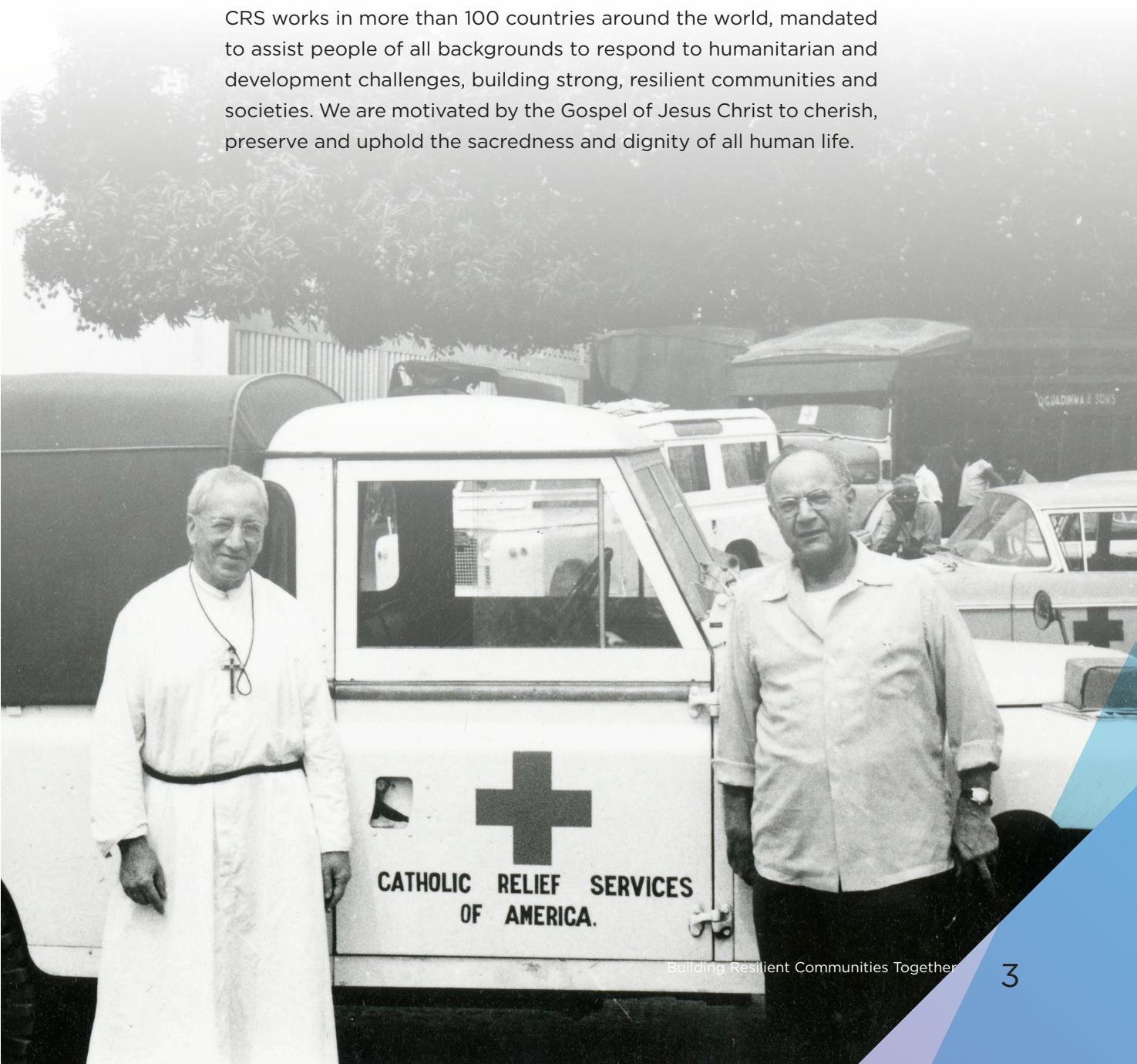
I am deeply grateful to the Government of Ghana, our donors, the Catholic Church in Ghana, civil society, development, and private sector partners for the successful collaboration in 2024!

Let us carry this momentum forward – toward a world where every person not only survives, but truly thrives in a just, peaceful, and resilient society. Together, we can build a brighter future for all.

Who We Are

Since 1943, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has been carrying out the commitment of the Catholic Bishops and the Catholic community of the United States to assist the poor and vulnerable overseas.

CRS works in more than 100 countries around the world, mandated to assist people of all backgrounds to respond to humanitarian and development challenges, building strong, resilient communities and societies. We are motivated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ to cherish, preserve and uphold the sacredness and dignity of all human life.



CRS IN GHANA:

67 Years

OF PARTNERING FOR
SUSTAINABLE GROWTH





Our work in Ghana dates back to 1958, one year after the country's independence. For over six decades, we have served communities in rural Ghana by delivering essential support and aid to the poor and vulnerable.

CRS' relief and development work in Ghana is carried out through sector-specific programs in emergency response, health, agriculture, education, youth and peacebuilding, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

Guided by our vision for **a world in which all people reach their full God-given potential**, we work in collaboration with the Government of Ghana, the Catholic Church, civil society organizations, and private sector partners to address complex, multidimensional, and systemic nature of poverty, vulnerability, and injustice in Ghana.

CRS is registered with the Department of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection as a Non-Governmental Organization.

Our 2030 Goals

Our goals and priorities reflect the evolving needs and capabilities of the people we serve and our local partners. We build on our current strengths while challenging ourselves to stretch and grow, and evolve our organization and role.

Across all of our goal areas, we practice a **preferential option for the poor and prioritize reaching the most vulnerable and marginalized** among our sisters and brothers around the world.



Goal Area

1

All People
Live in Just
and Peaceful
Societies

Goal Area

2

All People
Survive and
Thrive in
the Face of
Disasters

Goal Area

3

All People
Achieve
Dignified
and Resilient
Livelihoods
in Flourishing
Landscapes

Goal Area

4

All Children
Reach Their
Full Health and
Development
Potential in Safe
and Nurturing
Families

Goal Area

5

All Youth Are
Empowered
to Thrive

The Year in Numbers

In 2024, CRS Ghana, with the support of our cherished donors and partners, achieved remarkable milestones. Working across **11 regions** and **51 unique districts**, we directly touched the lives of over **27,500** individuals and indirectly improved the lives of an additional **365,905**.

These numbers represent not just the scale of our work, but the transformative impact we are achieving together – creating lasting change for communities throughout Ghana.



Health

Projects - 2
Project Participants (Direct) - 9,310
Project Participants (Indirect) - 51,616
Regions - 4
Districts - 16



WASH

Projects - 4
Project Participants (Direct) - 12,461
Project Participants (Indirect) - 110,664
Regions - 7
Districts - 12



Agric, Landscapes & Livelihoods

Projects - 1
Project Participants (Direct) - 4,145
Project Participants (Indirect) - 21,347
Regions - 4
Districts - 10



Youth and Peacebuilding

Projects - 2
Project Participants (Direct) - 1,701
Project Participants (Indirect) - 179,078
Regions - 7
Districts - 13



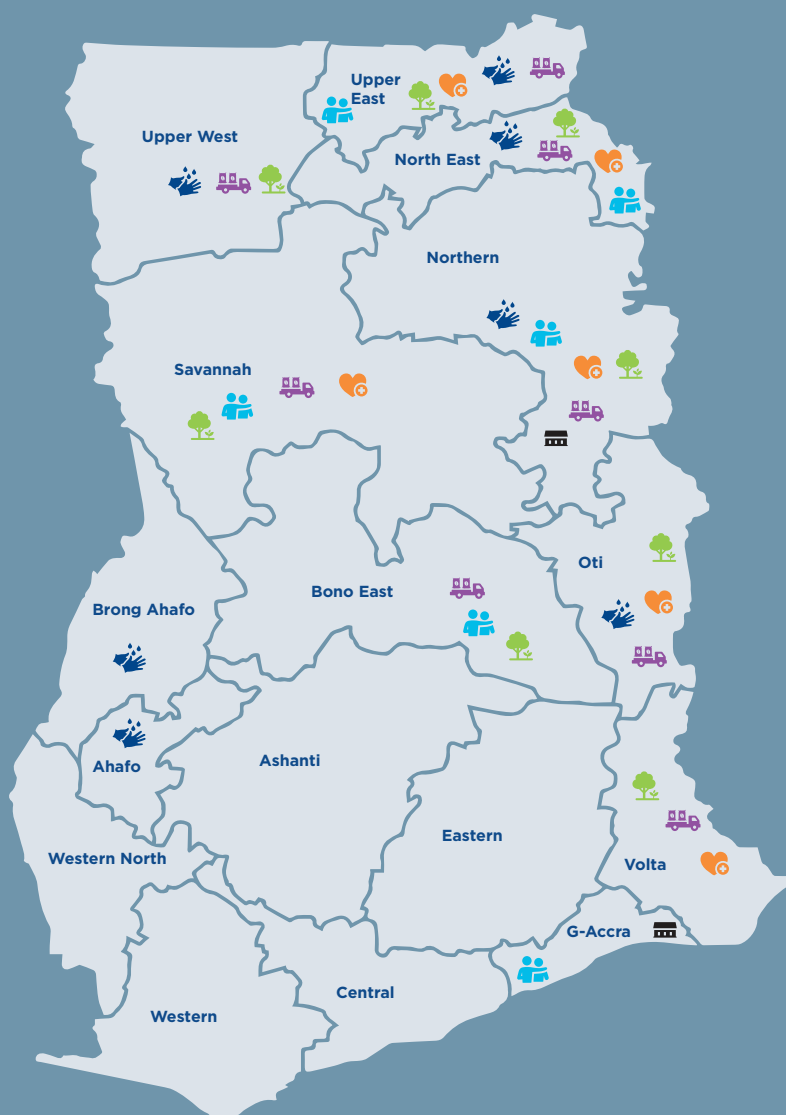
Emergency Response

Projects - 1
Project Participants (Direct) - 330
Project Participants (Indirect) - 3,200

Our Footprints in Ghana

CRS Ghana continues to expand its reach across the country, driving change one region at a time. As we broaden our support across the country, we maintain a primary focus on the five Northern Regions of Ghana, where developmental disparities are most pronounced.

Our main office is located in Accra, with a field office in Tamale. Additionally, field staff are stationed at the district level, providing active support and technical assistance to local partners in the implementation of our programs.



	CRS Office
	Health Program
	WASH Program
	Youth & Peacebuilding Program
	Agriculture, Livelihoods & Landscapes Program
	Emergency Response

Overview of our Programs

CRS Ghana implements an array of programs, reflecting our commitment to addressing the varied needs of Ghana's most underserved populations.

Our programming is underpinned by a conceptual model called Integral Human Development (IHD), which places the dignity of the human person (particularly our project participants) at the center of all that we do. This is based on the idea that human development must be holistic and multidimensional, and that personal well-being can only be achieved in the context of just and peaceful relationships and societies.

In addition to the IHD model, CRS Ghana employs a Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) across all its programming areas to ensure our initiatives reshape gender norms and address gender-related challenges.

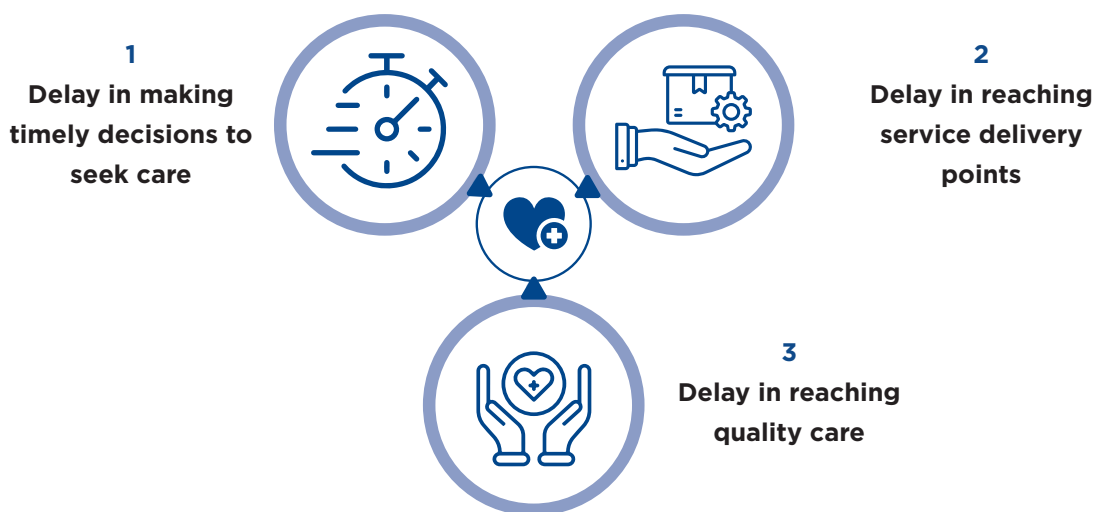
Here is an overview of our program portfolio:





Our Health Portfolio

CRS Ghana is focused on strengthening health systems and improving maternal and newborn health, with a commitment to advancing Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as a crucial step toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3: Good Health and Wellbeing. Despite ongoing efforts by the Government of Ghana and local partners, the country still faces high maternal and neonatal mortality rates, largely due to the three delays:



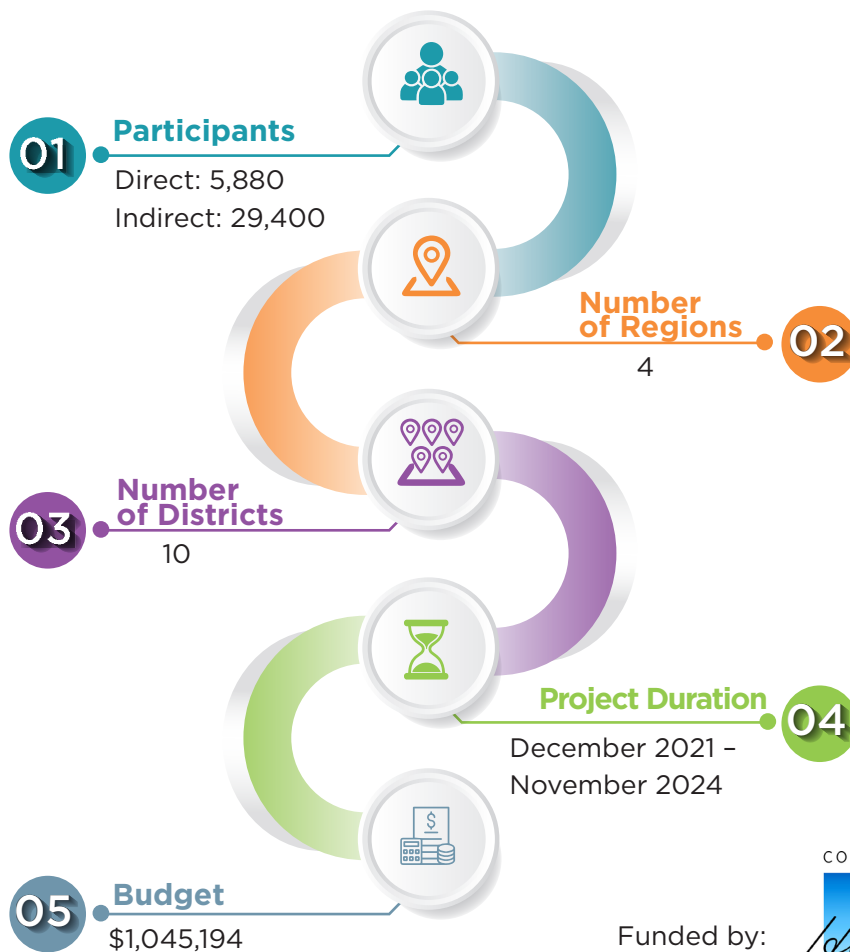
To address these challenges, CRS collaborates with the Ministry of Health (MoH), Ghana Health Service (GHS), and National Ambulance Service (NAS) at the national and decentralized levels.

Our health programming also focuses on Early Childhood Development (ECD), which provides a critical foundation for lifetime education, physical and mental health, and social well-being. The Nurturing Care Framework, adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank in 2018, highlights the importance of a stable environment provided by caregivers to ensure children's health, nutrition, protection, and early learning. Yet, many children worldwide lack the necessary care and support in a nurturing family environment.

Projects Implemented in 2024:

1. Strengthening the Capacity of Women Religious in Early Childhood Development (SCORE ECD III) Project
2. Holistic Opportunities for Positive Engagement in Maternal and Child Health (HOPE-MCH) Project

Strengthening the Capacity of Women Religious in Early Childhood Development (SCORE ECD III) Project



Funded by:  CONRAD N. HILTON FOUNDATION



Background

In Sub-Saharan Africa, more than two-thirds of children under five are falling behind in their cognitive and social-emotional development (Black et al. 2016). To address this challenge, the SCORE ECD III project, funded by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, works with Catholic sisters in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Zambia to provide quality, essential early childhood development (ECD) services to caregivers of children aged 0 to 3 years.

The project aims to create a nurturing environment for children aged 0 to 3 by using a multi-dimensional approach. It equips caregivers with essential skills through the Care Group Model, addresses maternal mental health with the Integrated Mothers and Babies' Course (iMBC), promotes economic empowerment via Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC), and fosters family relationships using the 'Strengthening Marriages and Relationships through Communication and Planning' (SMART) Couples approach.

In Ghana, the SCORE ECD III project is implemented in collaboration with the Ghana Health Service and the Conference of Major Superiors and Religious of Ghana. The project covers the Savannah, Northern, North East, and Upper East Regions, with a total budget of \$1,045,194.

Key Project Highlights

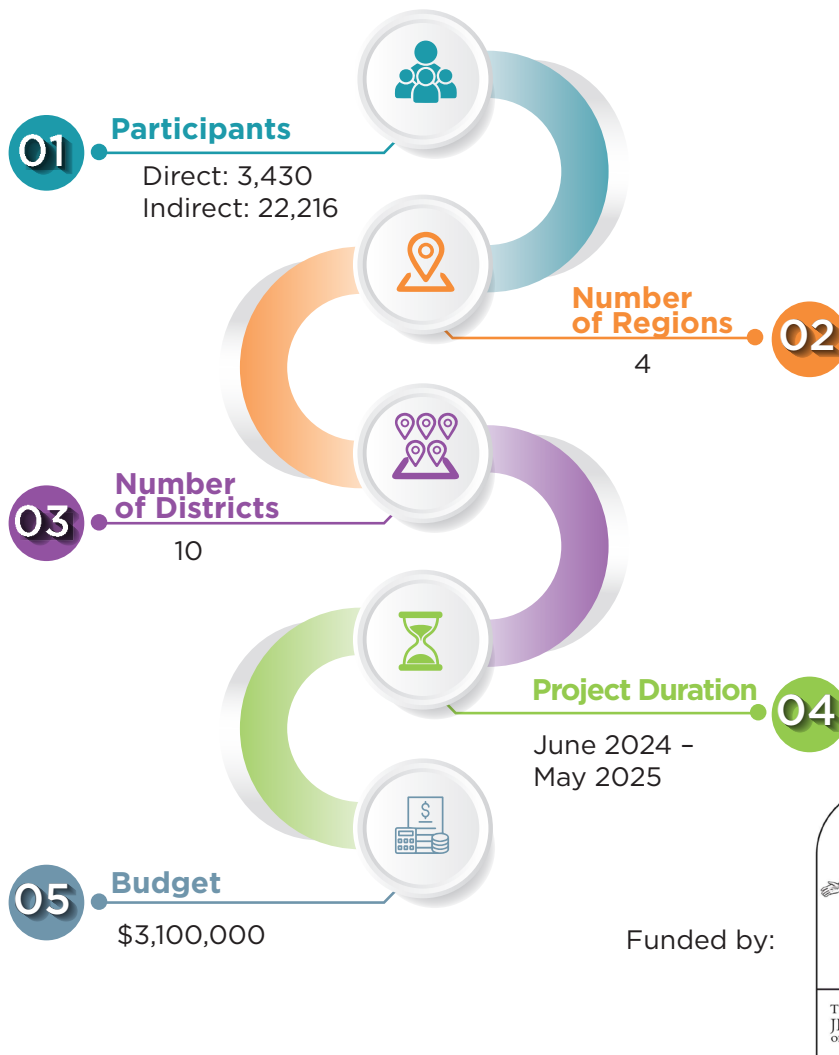
1. The project successfully introduced male-only ECD care groups to promote male involvement in providing nurturing care for their children. As a result, 71.2% of women reported being accompanied by their male partners for antenatal care visits, and 65.1% for postnatal care, an increase from 40% and 31% at baseline.
2. The project's IMBC and ECD interventions have improved caregivers' knowledge, attitudes, and skills in nurturing care. Evaluation results showed a significant increase: 81.5% of mothers accessed antenatal care (up from 73%), 77.1% received postnatal care over four times (up from 68%), and 92.8% of infants aged 0-5 months were exclusively breastfed (up from 70%).
3. The SILC scheme has improved caregivers' access to resources for health, nutrition, child welfare, and business needs. A total of 3,095 participants (216 men and 2,879 women) have mobilized GHS 2,218,430.00 (USD 148,688.33). From this, GHS 432,826.00 (USD 29,009.78) was loaned to members for various needs, along with a social fund contribution of GHS 66,662.00 (USD 4,468).
4. The SMART Couple strategy has strengthened marriages, fostering collaborative decision-making, increased male involvement in childcare, and more equitable household responsibilities. Endline results showed a rise in male participation in early stimulation, education, and healthcare (69.6% compared to 55% at baseline), improved equity in workloads (49.1% compared to 37%), and better attitudes towards equitable control and use of household resources (64.2% compared to 41%).
5. Through ongoing capacity building in advocacy, networking, and resource mobilization, partner sister congregations have enhanced their ability to mobilize financial resources from private donors, communities, and internally generated funds to establish dedicated ECD spaces in health facilities across Tinga, Chamba, Walewale, and Saboba. This initiative has increased the total number of ECD spaces to eight.



Felicia Akabang,
a participant of the
SCORE ECD III project

Thanks to SCORE ECD III, my son is thriving, and I've grown as a mother. This project not only saved his life but also equipped me with the tools to ensure his well-being. I've learned how much proper nutrition can transform lives, and now I'm dedicated to sharing this knowledge with my community.

Holistic Opportunities for Positive Engagement in Maternal and Child Health (HOPE-MCH) Project





Background

The HOPE-MCH project, funded by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, addresses the rising incidence of maternal and child diseases and deaths in Ghana, with a focus on rural Northern Ghana. According to the Ghana Statistical Service, there was a national average of 40 deaths per 1,000 live births for children under five in 2022.

The HOPE-MCH project tackles this worrying trend by increasing access and use of maternal and newborn services for children under three years old, their mothers, and pregnant women in the most marginalized rural communities in the Upper East, Savannah, North East, and Northern regions of Ghana.

The project is implemented in collaboration with the Hunger Project, MAP International, the Ghana Health Service, and the National Ambulance Service to provide over 230,000 individuals with enhanced care at 100 health facilities across 10 districts in the target regions.

Key Project Highlights

1. The project conducted community entry in 100 communities across the 10 implementing districts, introducing its objectives to local leaders and residents, and building support for successful implementation.
2. The project successfully completed a comprehensive structural assessment of 100 health facilities, enabling the identification and selection of key facilities to receive targeted upgrades under the health infrastructure improvement component. This assessment laid the foundation for enhancing healthcare delivery by prioritizing upgrades for facilities in greatest need.
3. Together with partners, the project organized a Simple Measurement of Indicators for Learning and Evidence-based Reporting (SMILER+) workshop, which led to the development of a robust MEAL system to enhance evidence-based reporting and support effective monitoring of progress.
4. The project facilitated introductory visits to Ghana Health Service and National Ambulance Service offices across the implementing districts, strengthening collaboration and ensuring coordinated efforts for the successful delivery of project objectives.



Belinda,
a participant of the HOPE-MCH Project

Thanks to CRS' "Helping Mothers Survive and Babies Breathe" training, the midwife at Pelungu Health Services helped me deliver my baby safely, even when complications arose. I'm grateful for their support and pray they can train more midwives to help reduce the death of babies and maternal mortality.



Our Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) Portfolio

Over the past decade, CRS Ghana has prioritized WASH as a key area of focus, addressing the critical needs of the communities we serve. Our approach has evolved to meet global standards, significantly contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Through our WASH portfolio, we offer technical assistance and capacity building to government departments and the private sector, enhancing the WASH service chain and ensuring sustainable delivery.

At the institutional level, CRS partners with local government and sector ministries to enhance WASH conditions in schools and healthcare facilities. This includes constructing and rehabilitating infrastructure such as boreholes, latrines, incinerators, bathrooms, and mechanized water systems.

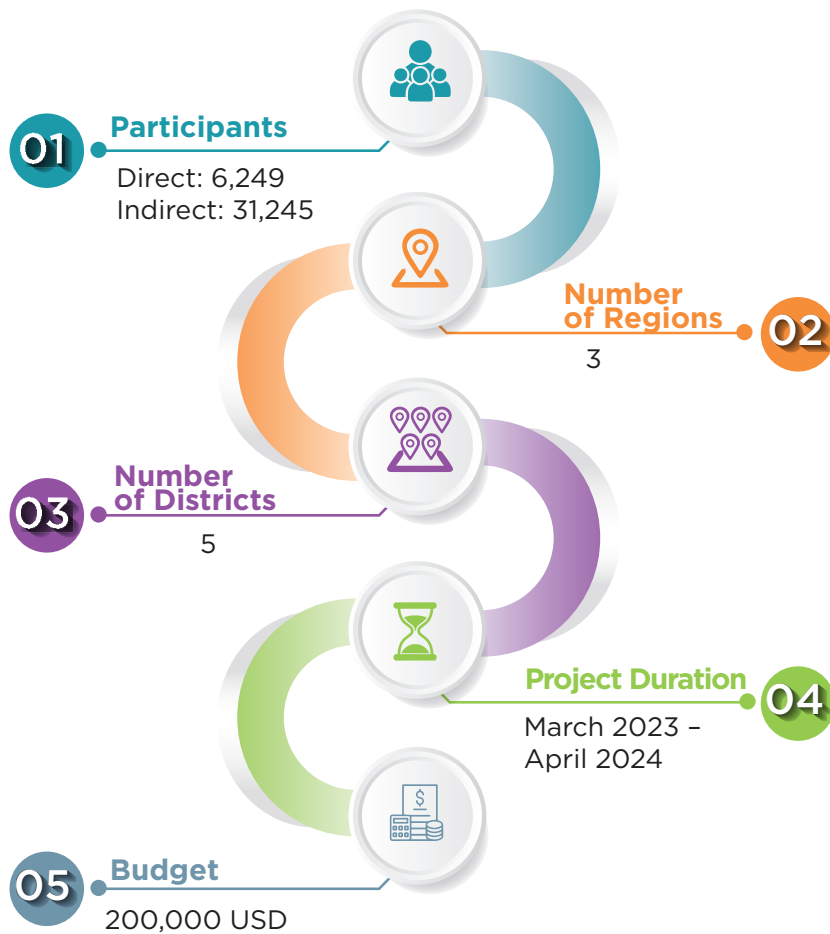
Additionally, CRS employs Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) approaches, such as Community-led Total Sanitation (CLTS) and audio-visual tools, to encourage better sanitation practices and increase demand for improved sanitation products and services.



Projects Implemented in 2024:

1. Improving Water Access in Northern Ghana (IWANG) Project
2. Integrated WASH and Agriculture for Resilient Communities (IWARC) Project
3. Enhancing Access to Safely Managed Sanitation (SafeWASH) Project
4. Integrated Community Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Improvement (ICOWASH 2.0) Project

Improving Water Access in Northern Ghana (IWANG) Project



Funded by:





Background

In Ghana, only 44.3% of the population has access to improved water services, leaving the majority, especially in rural areas, dependent on unsafe water sources. In the Northern Regions, where poverty rates are high, limited access to safe water places a disproportionate burden on women and children, severely affecting their well-being.

In response to this challenge, the IWANG project, funded by Water Access Now (WAN), aims to improve access to safe water in underserved communities, health facilities, and schools within CRS' operational areas.

In 2024, the IWANG project successfully expanded water access to approximately **6,249 people** in the Northern, North East, and Bono Regions of Ghana. The project was implemented in collaboration with the Ghana Health Service (GES), Ghana Education Service (GES), and the Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs).

Key Project Highlights

- The IWANG project significantly improved water access by drilling **17 boreholes** across eight districts in the three project target regions. These districts – Mamprugu Moaduri, West Mamprusi, Chereponi, Yunyoo-Nasuan, Saboba, Nanumba North, Nanumba South, and Berekum West – now benefit from reliable, sustainable access to clean water.
- A total of **113 individuals** (59 males and 54 females) were trained as the water and sanitation management team (WSMT) to oversee the operation and maintenance of the borehole facilities within the communities.

This training ensures that the communities can manage the boreholes independently, fostering community-led ownership and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the water infrastructure.

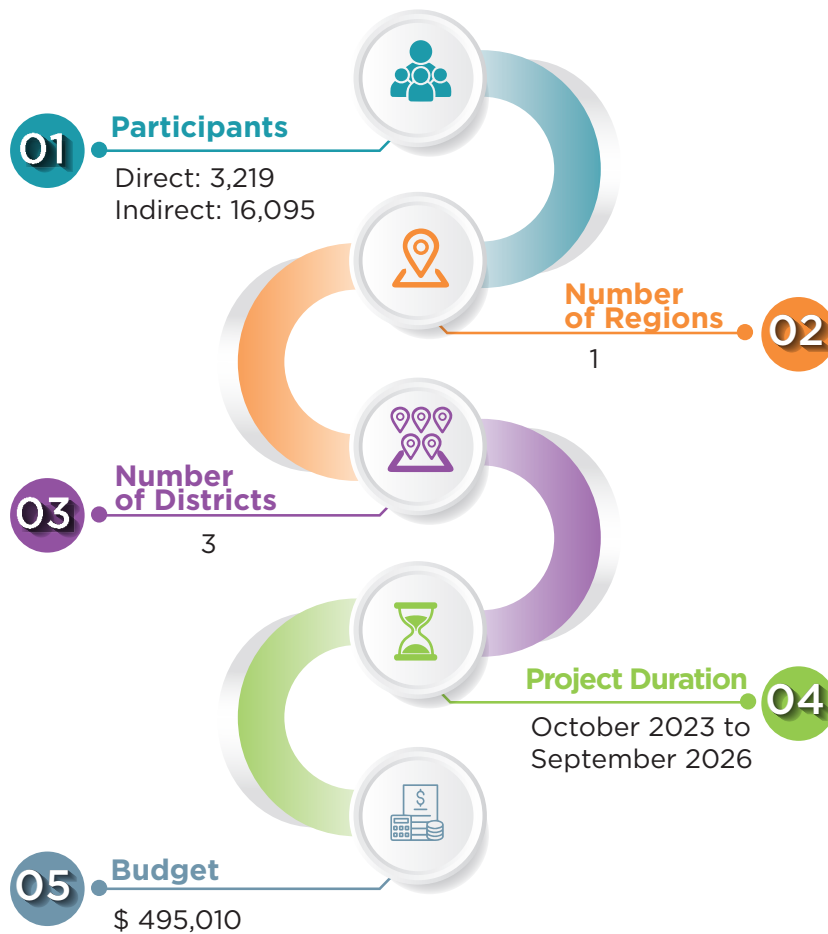


Salifu Yidana

Lead, Municipal water and Sanitation Team
- West Mamprusi Municipal Assembly

For years, Yakazia Titari community struggled without access to safe water, as multiple attempts to drill a borehole failed due to poor groundwater conditions. The situation left residents especially the vulnerable mostly women and children, relying on distant and unsafe water sources. Through the IWANG project, a breakthrough came. Today, for the first time, the community has access to clean and safe water. This achievement has improved health, reduced the burden on women, and restored hope marking a significant milestone in our municipality's efforts to ensure safe water for all.

Integrated WASH and Agriculture for Resilient Communities (IWARC) Project



Funded by: 



Background

The IWARC Project is a three-year initiative with funding from the CRS discretionary funds. IWARC focuses on climate-smart and sustainable agriculture, landscape restoration, and WASH interventions to address the degradation of water resources within the Nawuni sub-catchment of the White Volta River Basin of Ghana.

Over the three-year period, the IWARC project will play a pivotal role in finalizing the management structure and registering the White Volta River Basin Watershed Fund. In addition, it will drive advocacy campaigns and implement nature-based solutions that aim to safeguard the White Volta River Basin, ensuring long-term water security for the communities in Tamale Metro, Savelugu Municipality, and Kumbungu district in the Northern Region of Ghana.

The IWARC project is implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Ghana Education Service, Water Resources Commission, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).

Key Project Highlights

1. Implementation of Improved Agricultural Practices

- The project established four demo farms to train over 400 smallholder farmers in Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices, empowering them to adopt more sustainable and climate-resilient farming methods.
- The project trained 26 community-based advisors, enabling them to deliver vital agricultural extension services to the local farmers and significantly enhancing the community's agricultural support system.

2. Enhanced Integrated Water Resource Management

- The project successfully launched and registered the “White Volta Basin Watershed Fund,” a crucial initiative aimed at bridging the funding gap to combat pollution of the White Volta and ensure access to clean water and environmental sustainability.
- Organized a roundtable dialogue among the steering committee and key stakeholders (Government agencies, Non-profit Organizations and private sector actors) to garner support for the successful implementation of the White Volta Basin Watershed Fund and address the urgent need for pollution control and clean water access.
- The project established two community-based nursery centers for indigenous tree species. These species were selected for their adaptability to floods and droughts, as well as their resistance to grazing animals, to support buffer protection and restoration.
- A total of 26 concrete pillars have been installed along the White Volta Basin to offer buffer protection..

3. Increased access to safely managed WASH services

a. Waste Management

- Established two plastic waste buy-back centers in Tamale, providing local residents with the opportunity to responsibly dispose of plastic waste, thereby contributing to a cleaner and more sustainable environment.
- Trained 15 service providers (vacuum truck operators and water tanker drivers) on the use of the iCESSPOOL App (a digital platform for WASH services) to enhance the delivery of water and sanitation services.

b. Facilitating WASH facilities in Communities and Schools

- Facilitated the adoption of 74 household latrines, improving sanitation and health in the communities.

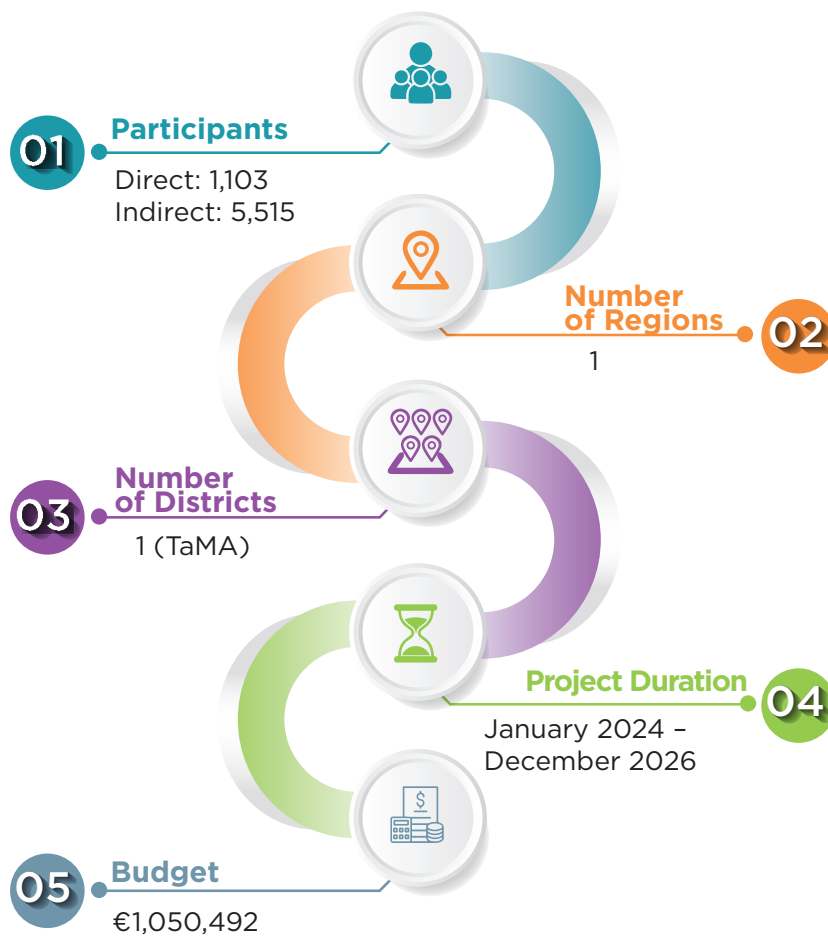
- Trained 15 sanitation entrepreneurs to facilitate demand creation and supply of household toilets.
- Formed and trained 13 WASH Clubs and equipped 39 WASH mentors, 26 School Management Committee/Parent Association Executives, and 13 Ghana Education Service officers on the CRS “Wash in Schools” (WinS) strategy to champion WASH implementation in schools.
- Trained 24 Sanitation Advocacy Group members to champion WASH activities in their respective communities.



Yakubu Musah,
*Community Based Advisor and Farmer,
Dalun-Kumbungu District*

The climate-smart agriculture training has transformed my farming. My crops are now greener and healthier, promising higher yields. Thanks to the IWARC Project, my farming practices have significantly improved.

Enhancing Access to Safely Managed WASH Services in Greater Tamale (Safe WASH)



Funded by:



Background

Residents of the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly (TaMA) face significant challenges in accessing safely managed Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services. These challenges include widespread open defecation, the improper disposal of liquid waste in unauthorized locations such as drains and forests, and the lack of effective regulation and monitoring of service providers. Again, public toilets are poorly managed, and solid waste, particularly plastics, is inadequately handled.

Against this backdrop, the Safe WASH project aims to increase the adoption of safely managed WASH services within TaMA in the Northern Region, thereby improving public health, sanitation, and overall quality of life for its residents.

The three-year project is funded and implemented by CRS, Woord en Daad, and GMB. Other partners include the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly and Perfsan.

Key Project Highlights

- The project has successfully constructed 32 toilet facilities across the four project communities (Sakasaka, Salamba, Nyohini, and Kukuo), benefiting 174 people in 69 households.
- An additional 35 toilet facilities have been built in other communities within Tamale, benefiting over 180 people.
- A total of 72 handwashing stations have been set up in schools to promote hygiene practices.
- Two plastic collection sites have been established at the Sakasaka cluster of schools and one in the Sakasaka community to promote proper waste management and raise environmental awareness.
- 10 WASH clubs, including one cluster WASH club, have been formed and trained on improved sanitation and hygiene behaviors, with a total of 198 participants (64 males and 134 females).
- Four sanitation entrepreneurs and four sales agents have been successfully trained by the project and are now actively contributing to the implementation of activities by providing safe and affordable WASH products in the communities.
- The project facilitated stakeholder and expert engagement in the review of sanitation by-

laws of the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly.

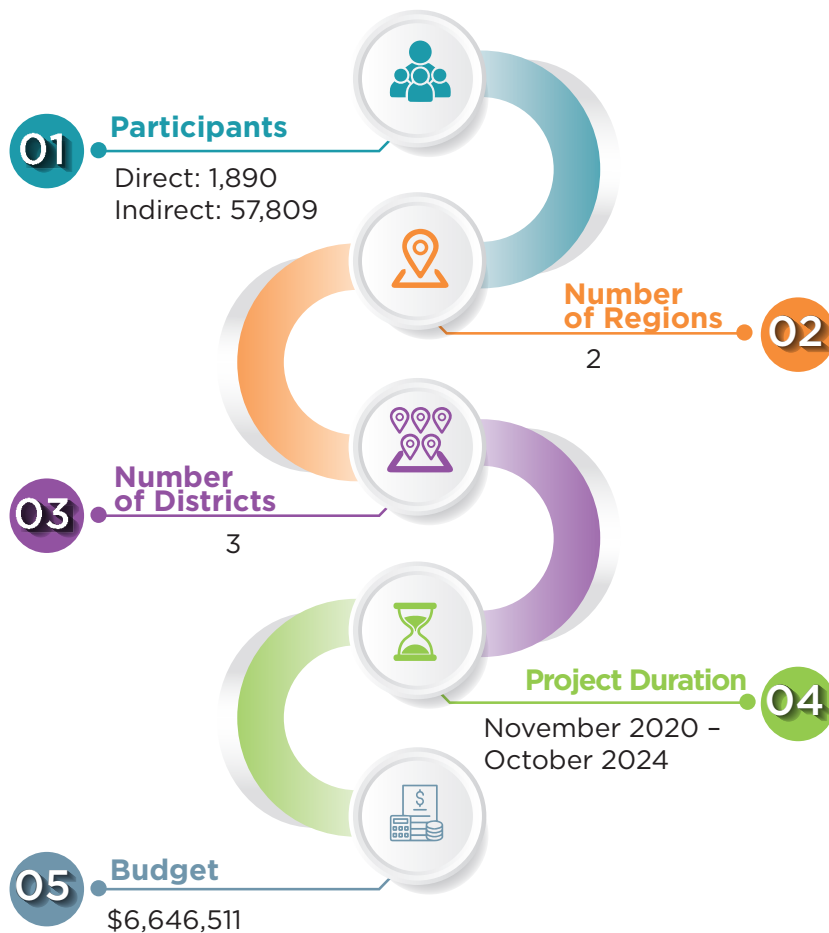
- A total of 13 existing sanitation-related regulations were comprehensively reviewed, and 2 additional regulations were introduced to adequately address water and sanitation issues within Tamale.
- The project supported both TaMA and the Northern Regional Coordinating Council (NRCC) in conducting the legal review and gazetting of the by-laws, as well as in carrying out public sensitization and awareness campaigns through radio and television.



Alhassan Abdulai,
a participant of the Safe WASH Project

Having a toilet at home has changed our lives. We used to worry about infections, especially after my wife's illness. Now, we feel safer and healthier. It's not just about convenience; it's about protecting our health and that of others.

Integrated Community Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Improvement (ICOWASH 2.0) Project



Funded by: THE LEONA M. AND HARRY B.
HELMSLEY
CHARITABLE TRUST



Background

ICOWASH 2.0 is a three-year project that builds on the progress made in strengthening WASH systems under ICOWASH 1.0 and the Integrated Sanitation, Hygiene and Nutrition for Education (I-SHINE) projects.

Funded by the Helmsley Charitable Trust, ICOWASH 2.0 seeks to improve access to water and sanitation services for vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations in three main districts – Talensi, West Mamprusi, and Mamprugu Moaduri in the Northern part of Ghana. The overarching goal is to improve the health and well-being of over 306,000 people (children and adults) in the above-mentioned districts.

ICOWASH 2.0 is implemented in collaboration with the Ghana Education Service (GES), Ghana Health Service (GHS), Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs), along with the Regional Coordinating Councils.

Key Project Highlights

- ICOWASH 2.0 made a positive impact on vulnerable households by constructing 240 new latrines. This improved sanitation and contributed to better health outcomes in the

communities.

- The project implemented low-cost latrine technologies, resulting in a 30% reduction in costs.
- The project installed 17 smartTAPs on limited mechanized water systems, promoting efficient water use and accessibility.
- 15 new motorbikes were procured for district partners to enhance monitoring efforts and ensure the sustainability of project interventions after closure.
- The project introduced the Sanitation Mobile Sales Van (MSV), which helped improve access to sanitation products and services in rural communities. This initiative not only addressed the challenge of limited access to sanitation materials but also promoted hygiene awareness and behavior change by providing education and demonstrations on proper usage.
- The project developed 10 operational documents, providing comprehensive frameworks and tools to enhance WASH implementation in communities, schools, healthcare facilities, and market-based sanitation initiatives, ensuring sustainability and scalability.
- The project showcased the ICOWASH model, WASH in Communities model, WASH in Healthcare Facilities model, and WASH in Schools model at the National Learning Alliance Platform (NLLAP) and the Mole WASH Conference, an annual event organized by the Coalition of NGOs in WASH. The presentation highlighted the best practices and lessons learned to encourage broader adoption.



Sandra Anabire,
IPC Focal Person, Datuku Health Center

Staff and patients can now benefit from safe and hygienic environment, leading to better health outcomes and increased confidence in health care delivery.



Our Agriculture, Livelihoods & Landscapes Portfolio

A key focus of our programming in Ghana is the development of the agricultural sector, aiming to enhance livelihoods and create sustainable opportunities for the communities we serve. With over 75% of the rural population relying on farming for both food and income, we believe that improving agriculture can offer a vital pathway to prosperity for the poor and vulnerable in these communities.

CRS Ghana therefore employs the following strategic approaches to drive growth and prosperity under the Agriculture, Livelihoods, and Landscapes portfolio:

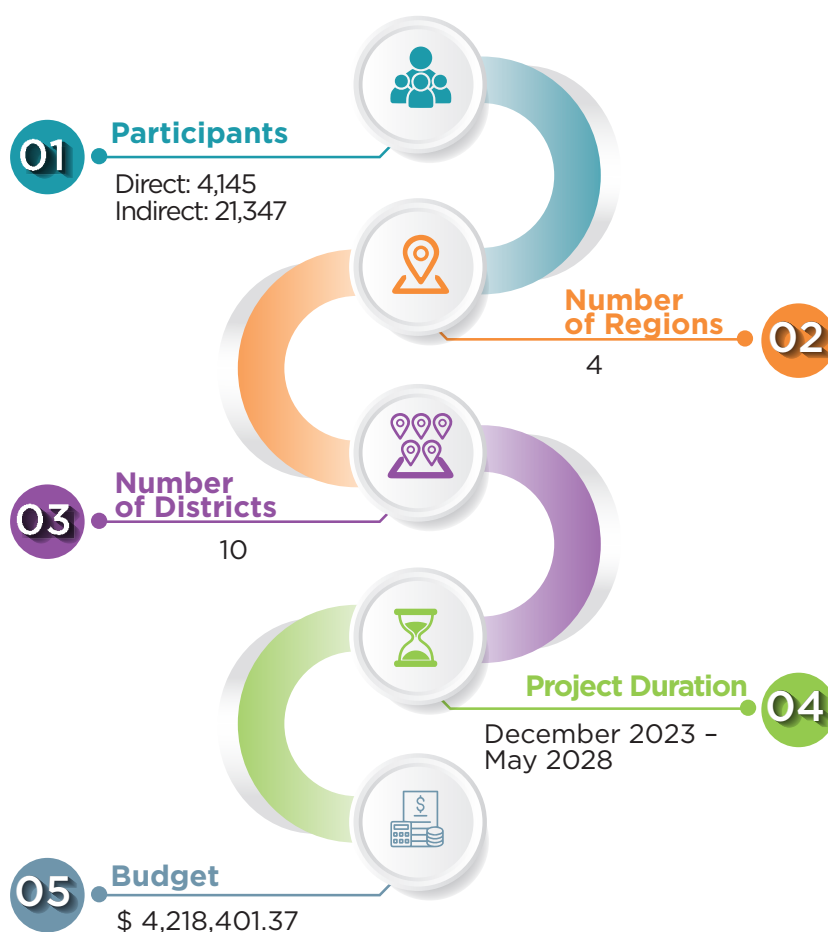


Through this portfolio, CRS Ghana supports families and underserved communities in rural Ghana to overcome poverty (SDGs 1 & 8), achieve food security (SDG 2), and thrive in a sustainable and healthy environment (SDGs 3, 12 & 13).

Projects Implemented in 2024:

1. Harnessing Agricultural Productivity and Prosperity for Youth (HAPPY) Project

Harnessing Agricultural Productivity and Prosperity for Youth (HAPPY) Project



Funded by:





Background

The HAPPY project is designed to leverage the growing demand for rice, soybeans, tomatoes, and poultry to create 326,000 jobs for young people, particularly rural youth, women-led businesses, and individuals with diverse abilities.

HAPPY aims to equip young people with skills and tools needed to unlock job opportunities in production, agro-processing, extension advisory services, distribution, and marketing. The project seeks to increase food production by 189,000 tons, boost the productivity of the four value chains by 20%, and generate USD209M in savings on the national import bill by 2027.

HAPPY is a four-year project funded by the Mastercard Foundation and implemented by a consortium of partners, including CRS, Agri Impact Ltd., the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Ghana Enterprises Agency, and the Millennium Development Authority. CRS implements the HAPPY Project across 10 districts in the Upper East, Upper West, Northern and Northeast Regions of Ghana.

Out of the 326,000 jobs, CRS is tasked with creating 19,325 dignified and fulfilling jobs for young people (70% of which should be women and 5% persons with disabilities).

Key Project Highlights

1. Onboarding & Capacity Building of Project Participants

- A total of 10,705 (6,589 female, 4,116 male) youth were onboarded to benefit from the HAPPY project in 2024.
- Trained 3,473 (2,246 female, 1,227 male) individuals in good agricultural practices, business management skills, SILC, and gender-responsive agricultural programming.
- Trained 10 (3 female, 7 male) HAPPY tech ambassadors under the program to integrate digital solutions in agriculture, enabling youth to use technology to boost agribusiness.

2. Job Creation and Financial Stability

- CRS has so far created 4,145 (2,427 female, 1,718 male) decent jobs for youth engaged in soybean and rice value chains.
- The project successfully introduced SILC to participants, resulting in the formation of 221 groups across the 10 project districts. These groups, comprising 5,060 members (3,454 females and 1,606 males), have collectively saved GHS 222,091.00. Additionally, 828 loans have been disbursed to members and contributed GHS 17,556.60 in social funds.

3. Promoting Environmentally Friendly Agriculture

- CRS adopted plant-based pesticides (166 liters of neem oil extract) to promote environmentally friendly farming. These were applied on community demonstration farms, which serve as learning centers where farmers learn best agricultural practices.
- 1,386.2 hectares of land kept in productive use for the soybean and rice value chains.



Abaayume Ajuidiok,
a farmer and participant of the
HAPPY Project

I gave up on agriculture after a bushfire razed down my 50-acre rice farm in 2021. The HAPPY Project brought renewed hope to me because of the support it has provided so far. I made the right decision to return to farming by opting for 15 acres, and now my farm is doing well.



Our Youth and Peacebuilding Portfolio

Ghana's population is growing at a rapid pace and is projected to reach 52.5 million by 2050. The youth, aged 15 to 35, make up a significant portion, representing about 38% of the population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). This demographic shift presents a significant challenge for the country, as the government's efforts to create jobs have not kept pace with the rising number of young people entering the labor market. The national unemployment rate is 13.4%, but it is much higher among youth, reaching 32.8%. This situation poses a major threat to the peace and security enjoyed in Ghana, as the youth may become vulnerable to various vices in their struggle to make ends meet.

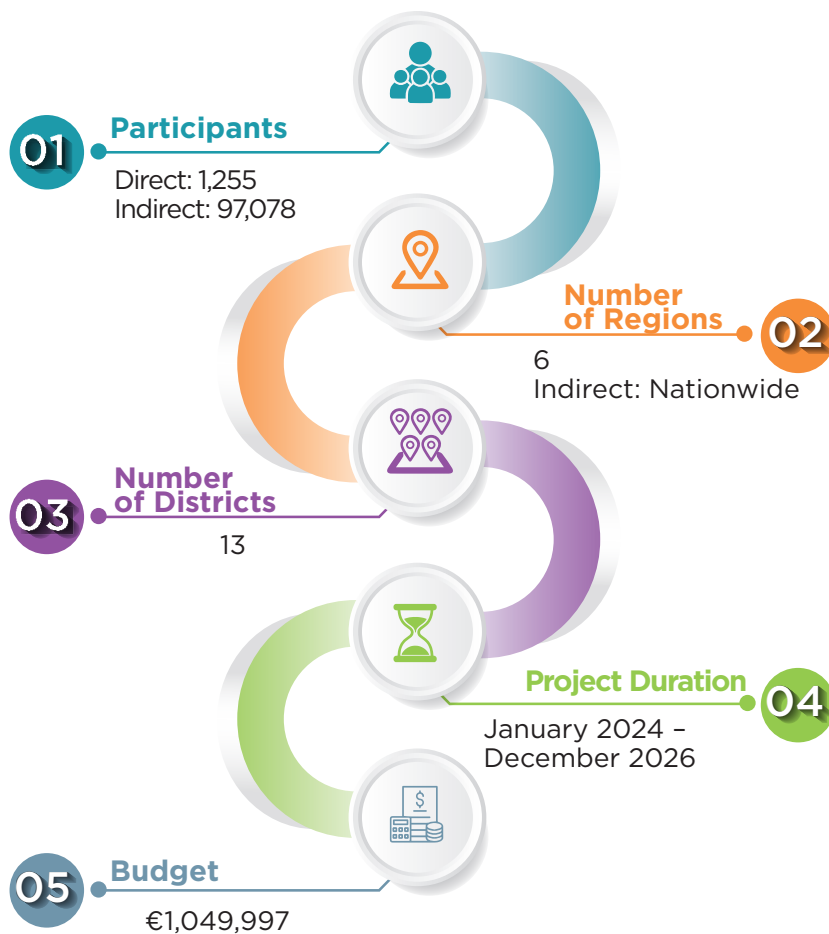
Furthermore, the rising threat of violent extremism in the Sahel region, the influx of refugees fleeing instability in neighboring countries, internal ethnic conflicts, and the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs), among other factors, are undermining the country's strong social cohesion, tolerance, and security.

CRS under this portfolio implements a range of comprehensive programs, including livelihood support, skills development, and capacity-building initiatives for state-owned security services, to address these challenges.

Projects Implemented in 2024:

1. Prevention of Violent Extremism through Social Accountability (PoVETSA) II Project
2. Gender Equitable Masculinities Plus (GEM+) Project

Prevention of Violent Extremism through Social Accountability (PoVETSA) II Project



Funded by:



Kingdom of the Netherlands



Background

PoVESTA II aims to build on the successes of the first phase of the project by scaling regional training, awareness, advocacy, and engagement efforts to Prevent Violent Extremism (PVE) and Terrorism in Ghana.

Funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented in collaboration with the National Peace Council (NPC) and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), the second phase of the project seeks to foster mutual trust between security agencies and civilians in preventing violent extremism, promote good governance, and support the attainment of a peaceful and socially cohesive society.

Specifically, the project seeks to aid:

- National peace and security actors improve their capacity to understand, contextualize, and implement Social Accountability mechanisms.
- Improved security agencies and civilian engagement in vulnerable communities to strengthen inclusive, accountable, and responsive governance.
- Strengthen mutual trust and understanding between security sector actors and civilians to prevent violent extremism and terrorism.

Key activities of the PoVESTA project are carried out at the national level while facilitating regional engagement in the Upper West, Upper East, North-East, Savannah, and Northern Regions.

Key Project Highlights

1. Conduct training on PVE for women, men and youth

- A two-day training session was organized for 69 youth (35M, 34F) from April 3rd to April 4th, 2024, in Tamale, focusing on PVE in Ghana. The training aimed at mobilizing young people as agents of change in preventing the spread of violent extremism and promoting inclusive, peaceful societies.
- Additionally, a three-day capacity-building and sensitization workshop on PVE was organized from 19th to 21st June 2024 for 41 national security services (37M, 4F) from the five regions of northern Ghana. The workshop brought together personnel from the Ghana Police Service, Ghana Armed Forces, Ghana Immigration Service, Ghana Prisons Service, Ghana Fire Service, and the National Investigation Bureau. Participants improved their skills in community engagement and trust-building, fostering stronger collaboration between security actors and civilian stakeholders. They also developed actionable plans for implementing effective PVE measures within their operational contexts.

2. Conduct dialogues, awareness and information sharing on Act 999, hate speech, VE and terrorism

- Given the negative impact of hate speech and polarized narratives on elections and the general political environment, part of the project funding was dedicated to sensitizing citizens, particularly political parties, on hate speech, vigilantism and related offences, violent extremism, and political tolerance. The activity was conducted in five regions – Northern, Upper West, Upper East, North- East, and Savanna – and targeted functional executives of political parties, youth wings of political parties, women's wings of political parties, groups previously affiliated with vigilantism, and civil society organizations. A total of 179 participants (118M, 61F) took part in the activity from 15th -22nd October 2024

3. Organize a peace pact with political parties before the 2024 elections

- As part of efforts toward ensuring peaceful presidential and parliamentary elections in Ghana in 2024, the PoVETSA II project supported the signing of the 4th Presidential Election Peace Pact in Accra. The event was held on November 28, 2024, marking the fourth in the series since 2012, under the theme: *"Pursuing Peaceful Elections, Non-Violence, and Justice."* The primary objective of the peace pact is to ensure that presidential candidates commit to maintaining peace before, during, and after the elections and resolve any election-related disputes through democratic means.

4. Provide training to media institutions on conflict sensitive reporting before, during and after 2024 elections

- A training for media institutions on conflict sensitive reporting, information disorder and the role of the media in promoting peaceful elections was conducted across the five northern regions – North East, Northern, Savannah, Upper East, and Upper West. A total of 148 journalists (117M, 31F) were trained from 19th -27th August 2024. As a result of the training, the 2024 electioneering campaigns were observed to be more peaceful, with media focusing on issues and policies rather than hate speech and incitement of violence, as seen in previous elections.

5. Organize roundtable dialogues between Fulbe community members, host communities and security sector actors (Specifically: Ghana Immigration Service and Ghana Police Service) to promote the acceptance and inclusion of Fulbe members in society

- From September 3-6, 2024, CRS Ghana, under the PoVETSA II project, organized the first dialogue with 300 (162M, 138F) Fulbe community members, host communities, and security sector actors. The dialogue provided a platform for constructive and peaceful engagement, fostering a socially cohesive relationship between these groups. It was followed by a training session on the Early Warning and Response Mechanism (EWRM) for the 13-member (9M,4F) mediation committee in the Adaboya community, as well as a separate training for 25 (20M, 5F) personnel from the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) at the Paga and Navrongo border posts, focused on GIS operations and understanding violent extremism.
- The project facilitated the second dialogue for 72 (55M, 17F) people in Paga between the Fulbe community, the host community, and security sector actors. This engagement aimed to foster peaceful coexistence among various groups in the Kassena Nankana district and mitigate the risks of violent extremism. The activity employed a three-pronged approach, consisting of a dialogue session for 72 participants (55M, 17F), training for the 28-member (20M, 8F) mediation committee and key conflict resolution actors, and a football match as a bonding activity.

6. Strengthen early warning and early response systems to report potential threat of VE and conflict before, during and after 2024 elections

- The early warning and early response training was organized in two clusters: the northern sector from 22nd-23rd July 2024 and the southern sector from 15th-16th July 2024. The expected outcomes of the training were achieved, leading to the establishment of regional early warning and response groups for the southeastern and northern sectors of Ghana.

7. Conduct radio talk shows to educate citizens on their role in the implementation of the NAFPCVET to prevent VE

- The project organized a media engagement to educate the public about the

National Framework for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism (NAFPCVET) in Ghana. The media discussion aimed to sensitize the public about their roles and responsibilities in implementing the NAFPCVET, as well as the ongoing review process of the framework. An estimated 1,000,000 listeners were reached across the five project implementing regions.

8. Support the revision of the NAFPCVET

- The project supported the Ministry of National Security in the ongoing revision of the NAFPCVET in Ghana, with support provided in the Upper West and Eastern regions through consultative workshops. The overall aim of this initiative was to strengthen Ghana's capacity to prevent and counter violent extremism and terrorism by enhancing and updating the NAFPCVET.

9. Conduct school outreach activities on PVE and terrorism

- On May 29 and July 18, 2024, a school outreach program focused on preventing violent extremism and fostering social cohesion was organized for 650 (323M, 327F) students at Tamale Senior High School and Karaga Senior High School, respectively. The program aimed to raise awareness about violent extremism and build resilience against extremist ideologies by developing students' critical thinking skills. It also promoted tolerance, understanding, and respect among students from diverse backgrounds.

10. Media Engagements on the PoVETSA II Project

- As part of efforts to promote peaceful elections before, during, and after the December 2024 elections, a national dialogue was organized in commemoration of International Peace Day. The dialogue, themed *"Peace Beyond Election 2024: The Role of the Citizen,"* aimed to engage the public in discussions on the importance of maintaining peace and stability beyond the elections. It provided a platform for constructive, in-depth engagement among policymakers, civil society organizations, state actors, and other key stakeholders to address critical national issues.



Robert,
staff of Ghana Immigration
Service, Paga.

The PoVETSA II project helped ensure peaceful December elections, with a football match between community members and security personnel symbolizing unity. This event built trust, bridged gaps, and prevented violence, reinforcing the project's impact.

Gender Equitable Masculinities Plus (GEM+) Project



Funded by: 



Background

In Ghana, traditional gender roles often grant men greater power and opportunities, while restricting women and young people. Men are typically seen as the primary breadwinners, while women are expected to fulfill caregiving responsibilities. These norms contribute to domestic violence, unequal power dynamics, and social exclusion, ultimately weakening community cohesion.

Against this backdrop, the GEM+ project aims to promote peaceful expressions of masculinity, helping men and boys recognize that true masculinity is not defined by violence or domination. The project addressed harmful gender norms and promoted positive masculinity through peer-led trainings, youth-led man-box radio shows, community GEM dialogue sessions, and spotlight awards. These efforts encouraged critical thinking, provided safe discussion spaces, and empowered participants to advocate for gender-transformative change in their communities.

GEM+ was funded through CRS' discretionary funds and implemented in collaboration with Youth Empowerment for Life (YEFL) in five border communities in Ghana's Upper East Region: Nania, Gware, Nakolo, Chania, and Sakaa.

Project Highlights

1. GEM+ successfully transformed gender norms through the “Gender Balance Tree” tool, enabling participants to identify and challenge inequalities. As a result, one female participant, for the first time, saved money to purchase a refrigerator for her home, defying the traditional belief that only men should provide for the household.
2. The project directly engaged 446 participants and reached 82,000 people through radio discussions on gender, masculinities, social cohesion, and peacebuilding.
3. Additionally, the project organized peer-led outreaches to educate women’s savings groups on gender equality and healthy relationships. These efforts fostered peace, social cohesion, and gender equity, creating more inclusive and resilient communities.
4. At the end of the project, 13 project participants (4F, 9M) were awarded for exhibiting positive masculinity behaviors in their communities. The awardees included shortlisted project participants from each of the communities.
5. The GEM+ project collaborated with the PoVETSA project to conduct prevention of violence extremism trainings for project participants in all 5 project communities from the Upper East region. This activity strengthened participants’ knowledge on preventing violence with an emphasis on different types of conflict, how to analyze conflicts, and effective communication strategies for conflict management.



Jeremiah Alagiko,
a participant of the GEM+ Project

“

I didn't know that bathing children or washing their clothes was also the duty of a man. I used to think my only job was to provide food, but GEM+ taught me that supporting my wife leads to progress in the home.

”



Localization, Partnership, Advocacy and Influence

a. Local Leadership and Partner Capacity Strengthening

Background

Local leadership is central to CRS' Vision 2030, with the firm belief that the goals of Vision 2030 can only be achieved through collaboration with other stakeholders and the integration of local leadership at every level of our work. We are confident that by investing in people and strengthening local institutions, we empower them to lead their own development, enhancing program impact and fostering sustainable solutions. The core argument for local leadership is that vibrant, sustainable local institutions are better able to provide consistent and quality services and affect systems level change. CRS Ghana has therefore developed and launched its Local Leadership Strategy for 2024 – 2029 to walk with our partners – hand-in-hand – on an exciting and fulfilling journey toward three outcomes where:

- i. CRS invests in local organizations' capacity strengthening and sharing (skills, knowledge, and attitudes).
- ii. CRS successfully strengthens local partner organizations' systems, structures, and policies to achieve local leadership goals.
- iii. CRS is recognized by donors and local partners as a thought leader and go-to organization for Local Leadership.

This strategy is embedded in our programming, business processes, partnership principles, and funding approaches.

Key Highlights

To track our commitment and hold ourselves accountable to delivering on the strategy, CRS is using three key performance indicators to document these incremental changes in local leadership

KPI 1: Number of documented examples where local partner capacity was strengthened as a result of significant contribution of CRS

- **Holistic Organizational Capacity Assessment (HOCAL) for Partners:** CRS facilitated a HOCAL for the Catholic Diocese of Ho Diocesan Development Office. The assessment

covered 10 capacity areas, including governance, strategy and planning, human resource management, financial and physical resource management, programming, and gender equality integration to strengthen partner capacity in these areas. The assessment culminated in the development of an action plan for addressing capacity gaps identified during the assessment and budget to implement relevant activities.

- **Advocacy Essentials Training for Partners:** CRS organized capacity building for partners on advocacy essentials and developing advocacy strategies and plans. This engagement provided an opportunity to validate an advocacy toolkit designed by CRS to support partner organizations to become more visible and impactful. Participants included representatives from three categories of organizations: **Church partners** - National Catholic Secretariat, NABOCADO, and Caritas; **National NGOs/CSOs:** APDO, WUZDA, NORSAAC, YEFL, Independent Minds, CONIWAS, Ghana Federation of Persons with Disability, and CECOTAPS; **INGOs:** WaterAid, etc.
- CRS conducted financial capacity-strengthening training for partners and 11 subrecipient organizations, with the goal of improving their understanding of financial management principles, compliance standards, and operational efficiency.

KPI 2: Total value (USD) directly secured from donors/government by local partners because of significant contribution by CRS.

CRS Ghana supported the Tamale Metropolitan and Sagnarigu Municipal Assembly in developing and operationalizing City-Wide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS) Plans. These plans were designed to mobilize investments and guide the implementation of WASH in both localities. In total, the two assemblies have received over GHS **3,680,000.00 (equiv. \$ 246,648.79)** investment for CWIS implementation from various WASH stakeholders.

Tamale Metropolitan Assembly (TaMA):

- The Rotary Club contributed to improving water access in the Tamale Municipality by providing 20 boreholes at a cost of GHS 1,400,000.00.
- The Local Government Ministry supported water access by constructing 16 boreholes at a cost of GHS 1,120,000.00.
- GIZ conducted training sessions on e-waste management for scrap dealers.
- UNICEF has proposed implementation support starting in 2025.
- WASH-FIN 2, WSUP and TaMA have met to identify collaborative support areas to avoid duplication for the full operationalization of the iCESSPOOL App for fecal sludge management.

- Caritas Ghana in collaboration with CRS' IWARC and SafeWASH Projects, Cesspit Emptying Association, and Solid Waste Service Providers are implementing activities in the plan to enhance waste management.
- Zoomlion Company Limited is executing waste management activities in the plan funded through the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly Common Fund.
- The European Union Sustainable Cities Initiative plans to intervene in water facility provision, waste management, and urban planning.
- Some institutions and students have initiated research on aspects of the CWIS Plan.
- Engagement with Baobab Financial Institution to explore financing opportunities for WASH initiatives.

Sagnarigu Municipal Assembly (SagMA):

- Global Communities invested in Sanitation Bazaar and training of Area Mechanics at a cost of GHS 32,000
- USAID/RING II support for school health education program, MICCS monitoring, meetings, and Logistics (laptop and motor bike) at a cost of GHS 70,000.00.
- USAID Enhancing WASH support (2 boreholes) at a cost of GHS 140,000.00.
- USAID Enhancing WASH support provided 4-seater WC toilets with water facilities at a cost of GHS 800,000.00.
- Enhancing WASH support for development of Municipal Water Safety and Quality Plan at a cost of GHS 25,000.00.
- Enhancing WASH support for development of Municipal WASH Investment Plan at a cost of GHS 90,000.00

KPI 3: Number of documented examples where CRS or partners contributed significantly to government decisions to adopt or revise public policies, methodologies, and tools that positively impact the poor and marginalized.

- **Five-Year strategic plan to support street-connected children and young persons in Ghana launched:** CRS collaborated with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and the Coalition of NGOs working with street connected children to develop a strategic plan that will coordinate the efforts of all stakeholders and assign responsibilities to various actors.
- **CRS' partners develop safeguarding policies:** Through CRS' facilitation of safeguarding assessments, orientations, training and accompaniment for both government and local partners, partners are at various stages of developing or updating their safeguarding

policies.

- **Revision of the National Framework on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism and Terrorism in Ghana:** CRS collaborated with the Ministry of National Security to review the framework which was developed in 2019. The review aimed to identify gaps and improve coordination among stakeholders for better implementation.
- **Water Fund features in National Water Policy (NWP)-2024:** Since 2021, CRS has collaborated with the Water Resources Commission to establish the White Volta Basin Watershed Fund and operational guide. Through ongoing advocacy with the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, the Government of Ghana committed to creating a sustainable financing and governance mechanism for water resources management, as outlined in the 2024 National Water Policy.

b. Empowering Partners Organizations Working on Emergency Responses (EMPOWER) Project



Funded by: 



Background

In 2023, CRS' West Africa Regional Office (WARO) launched the EMPOWER project to strengthen the capacity of local humanitarian actors for effective emergency response. Focused on local leadership, the project provides institutional support, capacity-building, accompaniment, and direct funding to local humanitarian actors.

The overall goal of the project is to enhance the readiness of Local and national organizations to manage humanitarian crises and emergencies while also promoting sustainable and community-driven development.

The project is implemented in collaboration with the Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocesan Development Organization (NABOCADO) and Caritas Ghana. Implementing partners can access up to \$150,000 from the EMPOWER Project for emergency response, with direct funding for capacity and institutional strengthening available upon request.

Key Project Highlights

1. Through the EMPOWER Project, NABOCADO received \$60,000 to support 330 Burkinabe asylum-seeker households in the Tarikom settlement center, Bawku West, Upper East Region, helping them transition from the United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)-provided wet feeding to self-sufficiency.
2. The project has successfully supported Caritas Ghana and NABOCADO to develop robust Emergency Response Plans, Resource Mobilization, and Communication Strategies, significantly enhancing their ability to respond promptly and effectively to disasters and emergencies in Ghana.
3. Through the EMPOWER Project, NABOCADO now has an Indirect Cost Recovery (ICR) Policy to enable them to complete and manage donor funds effectively and efficiently.
4. The EMPOWER Project has strengthened the capacity of Caritas Ghana and NABOCADO staff in WASH in Emergencies, enabling them to deliver effective WASH services in line with Core Humanitarian Principles and Standards during emergencies.
5. With support from the EMPOWER Project, both Caritas Ghana and NABOCADO have initiated institutional restructuring and developed strategies, policies, and protocols to enhance functionality and service delivery.



Lakma Seiya,
*a Burkinabe asylum-seeker
supported by the EMPOWER
Project*

When I thought I had nowhere to go, good people received us and put my children in school. That gave me strength.

c. Advocacy and Influence



Chairperson of CONIWAS, Ms. Beata presenting the citation to Jemilatu - CRS

In 2024, CRS Ghana was recognized with a citation for its financial and technical support to the Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS) for organizing the 'Mole 35 WASH Conference.'

As part of the conference, CRS showcased its flagship WASH projects at an exhibition booth, providing an opportunity for stakeholders to engage with CRS Ghana's work. CRS is an Executive Committee member of CONIWAS, providing support to the effective management of the coalition.



Our stories of
Transformation

Thriving against the Odds: Abdul-Latif's Climate-Smart Farming Revolution



Adam Abdul-Latif

*Over 400 farmers
empowered to
adopt sustainable
and climate-resilient
farming practices in
2024.*

Standing amid his thriving fields near the White Volta River Basin in northern Ghana, Adam Abdul-Latif surveys the fruits of his labor with pride. “I’m proud to be a farmer,” he declares with confidence. “I own my own house as a young farmer.”

But the path to success wasn’t always clear for Abdul-Latif, who grows an array of crops including okra, cabbage, lettuce, carrots and rice. Like many farmers in the Northern Region, he faced mounting challenges that threatened his livelihood and community.

“Climate change is the impending issue now,” Abdul-Latif explains, recounting a particularly devastating growing season. “About two to three months, we didn’t get rain. We planted, but most families’ crops failed. They didn’t get anything.”

With the support of the **Integrated WASH and Agriculture for Resilient Communities (IWARC) project**, Abdul-Latif and many stallholder farmers in the region, have been trained in climate-smart and sustainable agriculture which has turned their situation around.

He’s become particularly enthusiastic about intercropping with cowpeas, which provides multiple benefits. “When you grow your maize and plant cowpea on it, if the maize fails, you get cowpea, so you don’t lose at all,” he explains.

Through IWARC’s support, Abdul-Latif embodies the potential of climate-smart agriculture to transform not just farming practices, but entire livelihoods and communities across northern Ghana.

Daniel Bilman: A Father's Success Story with SCORE ECD III



Daniel Bilman

Daniel Bilman, a yam farmer from the Chamba district in the Northern Region, lights up with pride as he describes himself as the “biggest beneficiary” of the SCORE ECD III project. His wife, Faustina Nayelimol, serves as a lead mother in the project, volunteering to help other caregivers apply what they learn about early childhood development.

The project, **Strengthening the Capacity of Women Religious in Early Childhood Development (SCORE ECD III)**, funded by the Conrad Hilton Foundation, empowers Catholic Sisters to equip caregivers with the knowledge and tools needed to provide children under three with responsive care, proper nutrition, and psychosocial support during these critical early years. For Daniel and his family, the benefits of this initiative have been transformative.

Through weekly classes, Daniel and Faustina learned how to turn local staples like maize, beans, soybeans, and dried fish into nutritious meals for their children. Daniel, a father of three, quickly saw the positive impact these changes had on his children's health. “We grew these crops ourselves but didn't know the right way to mix them for a balanced diet. When I took my daughter for her check-up, the nurse noticed how much healthier she looked compared to my older children when they were the same age,” Daniel recalls.

The project also encouraged Daniel and Faustina to join community-based “Susu” savings groups. Daniel reflects on how, despite a bumper harvest, profits from

*5,880 caregivers
reached in 2024*

his crops would often disappear without being saved or reinvested. “School fees are now not a problem,” he happily shares. His weekly contributions to the savings fund have given him a new sense of financial security, and he’s even been able to reinvest some of his savings back into his farming business.

The soap production training, which the program also provided, has been another game-changer for Daniel’s family. “We no longer buy soap,” he explains with a grin.

As if these gains weren’t enough, a newly built early childhood development center in Chamba promises even greater benefits for Daniel’s youngest child, Angela. As she plays and socializes with other children, her physical, social, and cognitive skills will thrive in this new environment.

For Daniel, it’s clear: the SCORE ECD III program has been a turning point for his family’s health, finances, and future. As he proudly puts it, “I am the biggest beneficiary.”

Lakma's Triumph in Tarikom Refugee Camp

Gunfire erupted just as Lakma Seiya and her four children reached their farm in Burkina Faso. It was planting season, and the 56-year-old had brought her children to relax under the shade of a tree, as she always did, but on that morning, violence shattered their routine. Twenty-eight people were killed in their village, and with no time to gather her belongings, Lakma fled with her children. What followed was a three-month journey that would test her strength.



Lakma Seiya

***330 Burkinabe
asylum-seeker
households
supported under
the EMPOWER
Project***

Lakma's journey to safety was marked by hardship. Pregnant and carrying her weaker children on her back, she walked for months, sleeping in makeshift shelters. Along the way she gave birth to Jakiya, her youngest child, in the forest, and was temporarily housed by an elderly woman who took them in for a week. Eventually, they reached Widana, Ghana, where a friend helped them temporarily before they were relocated to Tarikom Refugee Camp.

Today, Lakma sits outside her shelter in Tarikom Refugee Camp, near Ghana's border with Burkina Faso. Jakiya, now 3 years old, plays nearby. Two years after escaping conflict, Lakma's family is among the hundreds of refugees receiving support from Catholic Relief Services Empower project.

Through the EMPOWER project, Lakma received financial aid, which she invested in rice and corn farming for food security. Her three eldest children are enrolled in school – a milestone she calls her greatest relief.

"When I thought I had nowhere to go, good people received us and put my children in school," Lakma says. "That gave me strength."

Though housing is temporary, and Lakma hopes for more livelihood support, she remains focused on her children's future. Each morning, she heats water for their baths before school, a small ritual symbolizing stability.

For now, Lakma measures progress in simple victories: her children's education, a reliable food supply, and the safety she once thought lost.

Redefining Roles: How GEM+ Transformed Jeremiah and Gladys' Marriage

When Jeremiah Alagiko first heard about the Gender Equitable Masculinities Plus (GEM+) project in his community of Chania, near Paga, he was skeptical. Like many men in his area, he believed household chores and childcare were solely a wife's responsibility but after attending sessions on conflict resolution and gender equality, something changed.



Jeremiah and Gladys

"I didn't know that bathing children or washing their clothes was also the duty of a man," Jeremiah admitted. "Before, I thought my only job was to provide food. But GEM+ taught me that supporting my wife leads to progress in the home."

His wife, Gladys, noticed the difference immediately. "When GEM+ had not yet come, he didn't help with bathing the children, washing clothes, or any household work," she said. "Now, he bathes them, sends them to school, and even sweeps outside. Our happiness has improved."

The couple's marriage, now in its ninth year, had previously been marked by silence and tension. "We used to struggle to even discuss things together," Gladys recalled. But through GEM+ workshops, they learned how to communicate without anger.

Jeremiah described their new approach: "If I come home late and she's asleep, I can wake her gently, and we'll talk. There's no more shouting."

Their transformation did not go unnoticed. Neighbours began asking why the couple no longer argued. "Some people came to ask how we now live peacefully," Jeremiah said. He now shares what he learned with others, hoping to spread the programme's impact.

When asked what they appreciate most about each other now, Gladys smiled. "The way he helps me – it makes me happy." Jeremiah, in turn, said her respect and warmth when he returns home, gives him peace.

Jeremiah has one hope for the future: "Let this project continue so others can learn what we have."



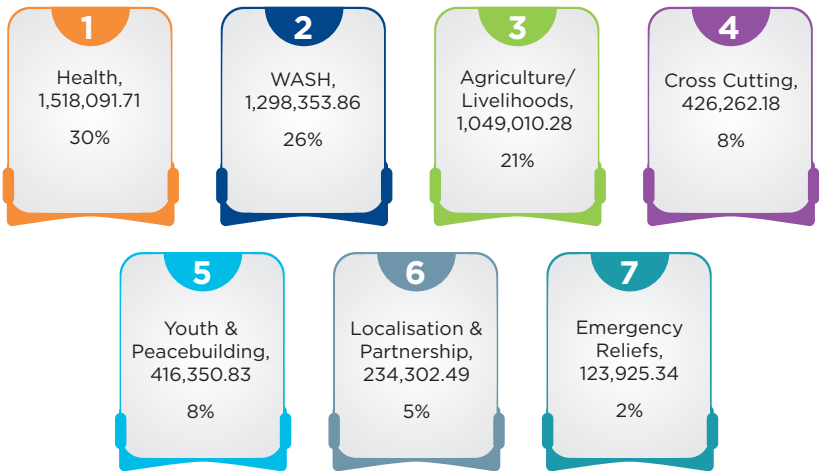
Financial Overview

Our work in 2024 was made possible through the generosity of various donors whose contributions enabled us to make lasting impact on the lives of the people and communities we serve across our program areas. Additionally, we utilized significant internal CRS funds to support project interventions and strengthen partner capacity, ensuring local leadership in the implementation of our initiatives.

A total of \$5.1 million was invested across our five programmatic areas, with funding from the Helmsley Charitable Trust, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Mastercard Foundation, the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Water Access Now, Woord en Daad, and CRS private funds.

Donor Support		
	Donor	Amount(USD)
01	Helmsley Charitable Trust	2,047,471.65
02	CRS Private Funds	1,216,490.79
03	Mastercard Foundation	795,077.40
04	Latter-Day Saint Charities	369,446.69
05	Conard N. Hilton Foundation	242,227.68
06	Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs	238,282.94
07	Water Access Now	147,735.07
08	Woord en Daad	9,564.48

Program Expenditure (NB: Currency: USD)





Spotlight: Journey of Hope



The Journey of Hope visit to Ghana provided CRS board members and executive leaders the opportunity to witness firsthand the impact of CRS' work in Ghana. The week-long visit, which took place from November 11- 15, 2024, was led by the Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill, Bishop of Victoria in Texas and Member of the CRS Board of Directors. It was an important moment for reflection on the strides made and the ongoing work necessary to achieve lasting change.

Highlights of the trip to Ghana included a visit to two historical sites in Accra, the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum and the Osu Castle; direct engagement with participants of the KAYAPORT Project and Private Agricultural Service Providers (PASPs) in Walewale in the North East Region; and a visit to the National Ambulance Service Emergency Dispatch Center in Bolgatanga, where an overview of the 'Rural Emergency Health Services and Transport for Systems Development (REST4D) Project' was provided.



Key Moments

A TOUR OF THE Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum & The Osu Castle

On their first day in Ghana, some members of the delegation visited two iconic sites in Accra – the Kwame Nkrumah Mausoleum and the Osu Castle. They were accompanied by the Regional Director for West Africa, Jennifer Overton, Wilfred Haruna, the Head of Operations in Ghana and other CRS Ghana staff.



Visit to the KAYAPORT Project Site

On 11th November 2024, the visiting team made their first stop in Walewale in the North East Region, where the 'Providing Livelihood Opportunities and Support for Kayayei Porters (KAYAPORT) Project was actively operating. The team interacted with five direct project participants who had received training in various skills, such as electrical work, dressmaking, weaving, hairdressing, and soap making.



Visit to PASP, Input Supply Shop and Warehouse

Another highlight of the visit was the opportunity to directly engage Private Agricultural Service Providers (PASPs) and tour their warehouse in Walewale in the North East region of Ghana. This experience provided the delegation with insights into the crucial role PASPs play in agricultural extension, market facilitation, and the local agricultural value chain. It also highlighted the impact of CRS' Agriculture, Livelihoods, and Landscape program in Ghana.

Visit to the **National Ambulance Service Emergency Dispatch Center**

in Bolgatanga



The delegation toured the National Ambulance Service Emergency Dispatch Center, an innovation by CRS' REST4D Project to enhance referral systems in Bolgatanga, Upper East Region. They visited the control room of the Emergency Dispatch Center (EDC) to examine its components and were given an overview of the REST4D intervention and its connection to the EDC.

Visit to NABOCADO





The delegation visited the Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocese (NABOCADO), highlighting the fruitful collaboration between CRS and NABOCADO in delivering impactful interventions that support local communities. As part of the visit, they toured several intervention sites, including the Tarikom Asylum Seekers Reception and Settlement Center, where they observed firsthand the positive changes resulting from the joint efforts of CRS and NABOCADO.

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For more information, contact:

Abena Amedormey
Country Representative
abena.amedormey@crs.org

Samuel Arthur
Communications Manager
Samuel.arthur@crs.org

Design and layout by:

Blackpencil Advertising

Photo Credits:

CRS
Laura Elizabeth Pohl
Rebekah Lamke
Sarah Asare-Darko



Connect With Us:

-  House No. F25, 8B Abafun Crescent, Labone
P.O.Box AN 6333, Accra North
-  +233(0)302 764743
-  crs.org | crsespanol.org
-  <https://web.facebook.com/CRSGhana>