



The Country Representative of the CRS country program in Cameroon and the Chad country Christophe Droeven exchanges with the President of the National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon, Archbishop Andrew Nkea. Photo by Mabel Chenjoh/CRS.

Advancing Local Leadership in the Right Way (ALLRight) project

Context

Local leadership is one of the most important elements in the CRS Vision 2030 strategy, without which, the agency's ambitious goals cannot be achieved. Supporting local partners to build and strengthen their leadership and capacity ensures that CRS' work respects the dignity of each person and community and uplifts CRS' approach of accompanying local institutions. To consolidate efforts to advance local leadership, CRS created the ALLRight Fund in 2021 to Advance Local Leadership in the Right way. The Fund promotes shared learning across CRS, ensures allocation of the investments needed to fulfill CRS commitments to the Grand Bargain and to Caritas Internationalis sister agencies, and supports achievement of key performance indicators for local leadership. CRS country programs across the world are eligible to apply for ALLRight funding to advance capacity strengthening initiatives with strategic local partners.

ALLRight in Cameroon

With the advent of Boko Haram terrorist activities in Northern Cameroon, sporadic influxes of refugees from the Central Africa Republic in Eastern Cameroon, and the Anglophone crisis in the Northwest and Southwest, Cameroon faces unprecedented humanitarian challenges that have further aggravated the development needs of large

QUICK FACTS

Project budget	\$607,169
Strategic Partner	The National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon (NECC)
Project timeline	May 2022 – September 2024

swaths of the population. As international donors look for cost-efficient means of serving more people with fewer resources, while also pursuing accelerated localization agendas, supporting local partners to become prime recipients of public donor funding is key.

Since the early 2000s, CRS Cameroon has supported the capacity strengthening of the National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon (NECC) to assist NECC to become a local leader in development and humanitarian work in Cameroon. In 2020, CRS intensified the capacity strengthening efforts with funding from USAID/PEPFAR to gradually transition the KIDSS project, serving more than 60,000 participants affected by HIV, to NECC and to prepare NECC to become a prime recipient of USAID funding for the next project in 2023. Since

May 2022, the ALLRight Fund has solidified CRS' ongoing commitment to NECC by continuing to support NECC to improve its organizational systems, policies, and procedures to meet donor requirements; increase its resource mobilization and influence capacity; and develop strong Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning systems.

NECC's strategic vision



In 2021, discussions during the Annual Cameroon Bishops Conference emphasized a renewed focus on humanitarian action and development initiatives at the national level to make a significant contribution in uplifting human dignity and improving the quality of life for Cameroonians affected by armed conflict and poverty. As part of NECC's proposed Strategic Plan for 2022 -2026, NECC is striving to align its activities with the Sustainable Development Goals as it seeks to become a leading national development and humanitarian organization in Cameroon. The bishops are committed to restructuring the National Episcopal Conference of Cameroon to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the contributions of the Catholic Church in Cameroon towards improving living conditions for the population.

CRS is committed to supporting NECC to achieve this vision. In 2015, CRS and NECC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that highlights the broad and timeless nature of Partner Capacity Strengthening (PCS) interventions conducted in collaboration between CRS and NECC.

ALLRight project goals

The goal of the ALLRight project is that NECC is set-up to become a leading local organization for humanitarian and development programming in Cameroon. This goal will be measured through the following Strategic Objective (SO) and Intermediate Results (IR):

- SO 1: NECC has strengthened capacity to effectively develop, win, and manage sustainable PEPFAR and other donor funded projects in Cameroon
- IR1: NECC has improved organizational systems, policies, and procedures that meet donor requirements.
- IR2: NECC has improved organizational and influence capacity for mobilization of PEPFAR and other donor funds
- IR3: NECC has a functional and sustainable MEAL system.

NECC's HOCAL-OVC findings

In 2020, NECC was one of the first organizations to use CRS' Holistic Organizational Capacity Assessment Instrument (HOCAL) for OVC, specifically to serve as a baseline of NECC's organizational capacity to serve as a transition partner for the KIDSS project and to inform development of a capacity strengthening action plan. Based on the assessment findings, CRS has led a robust capacity strengthening initiative with

NECC. This includes development and/or revisions of policies, capacity building of staff on key competencies, financial resources for new software and equipment to ensure strong financial and MEAL systems, and robust accompaniment in project management, HIV technical interventions, and donor representation, among other areas.

While the KIDSS project has funds to support NECC to address areas of improvement identified using the HOCAL-OVC assessment, given the trend of shrinking PEPFAR allocations each year, external donor funds are not sufficient to provide the robust accompaniment needed to fully execute the entire action plan and ensure high quality project implementation after the end of CRS' prime KIDSS project award in March 2023. As such, the ALLRight Fund Project has already served to supplement funding received from USAID/PEPFAR for capacity strengthening and will continue to fund CRS staff time and critical activities to strengthen NECC as an institution after the end of KIDSS.

Results

Since the start of the ALLRight funding in May 2022, the project has achieved the following results:

- Creation of a Projects Unit under the NECC Secretariat to oversee and ensure the quality of programs and operations across the conference, with particular emphasis on the ongoing transition of the KIDSS project.
- Development and submission of the NECC proposal to USAID for the CoSMO project (Consolidating Systems and Services for the Management of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Cameroon), a 5-year, \$33 million award.
- Participation of key NECC staff in a resource mobilization training, a communications training, a Proposal development training (PROPACK I) led by CRS
- Development of a MEAL Plan for NECC to ensure achievements can be measured and documented.
- Development of policies and procedures related to specific domains (procurement, Human Resources, safeguarding, drug supply chain management).



A group photograph of heads of service, Program Managers, and staff of the National Episcopal Conference during a training on project design organized by CRS. Photo by Mabel Chenjoh/CRS.