



 **OCRS** | Ghana

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Cover Photo: Two women fetching water from a borehole provided by CRS in the Fio community of the North East region of Ghana. The photo was taken by Maaweh Tanga for CRS.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------|--|
| AEA | Agriculture Extension Agent |
| AGYW | Adolescent Girls and Young Women |
| CBA | Community-Based Advisor |
| CWIS | Citywide Inclusive Sanitation |
| DICCS | District Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Sanitation |
| FCRM | Feedback Complaints and Response Mechanism |
| GES | Ghana Education Service |
| GESSiP | Ghana Extension System Strengthening Project |
| GHS | Ghana Health Service |
| GTA | Gender Transformative Approach |
| IAWGE | Inter-Agency Working Group on Emergency |
| LMA | Last Mile Actor |
| MAG | Modernizing Agriculture in Ghana |
| MoFA | Ministry of Food and Agriculture |
| NABOCADO | Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocesan Development Organization |
| NVTI | National Vocational Training Institute |
| PPRSD | Plant Protection And Regulatory Services Directorate |
| PASP | Private Agriculture Service Providers |
| RICCS | Regional Inter-Coordinating Committee on Sanitation |
| SILC | Savings and Internal Lending Communities |
| SMART | Skills for Marketing and Rural Transformation |
| UHC | Universal Health Coverage |
| UNCHR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WARO | West Africa Regional Office |



FOREWORD

In 2023 Catholic Relief Services Ghana marked its 65th anniversary shining light on our decades of stewardship, service and impact in Ghana., It is my pleasure to present to you this 2023 anniversary annual report. . We remain absolutely grateful for the immense support we have enjoyed from you our dedicated partners in government, private sector, and civil society. Your partnership and collaboration have been critical in advancing CRS' vision of transformational change at scale and staying true to the values that guide the delivery of our mandate to the people and communities where we work.

This year, as in years past, we have remained guided by our agency vision of Catalyzing Transformational Change at Scale in delivering the most critical services in health; youth, migration and peacebuilding; agriculture, landscapes and livelihoods; Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH); and Emergency, especially at the last mile. We have focused on strengthening systems by leveraging existing capacities and, guided by our principles of subsidiarity as our North Star, strengthening the capacities of local organizations to ensure that development is happening as close as possible to the people it affects. Our use of the integral human development approach to development expresses our fundamental commitment to supporting communities to effectively respond to existing and emerging challenges, creating options for the poor and contributing towards the protection of their dignity.

In alignment with our agency's vision and our dedication to strengthening local leadership, we have increasingly invested and focused on local leadership to strengthen partner capacity at national and sub-national levels. CRS has facilitated engagements between local partners and donor agencies to practicalize our commitment to localization.

In 2023, CRS Ghana invested over \$5.9 million across five program areas in the Upper East, Upper West, North East, Savannah, Northern, Ahafo, Oti and Volta regions of Ghana, with some strategic focus on the Greater Accra region. We have achieved some remarkable results together this year and look forward to continuing to provide accompaniment to our local partners within the context of the evolving role of CRS in the humanitarian development sector. We look ahead with excitement at the opportunities for collaboration towards achieving transformational change at scale as we transition into 2024.

Daniel Mumuni
Country Representative

WHO WE ARE

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) was founded in 1943 to carry out the commitment of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to assist poor and vulnerable people through acts of charity and the pursuit of justice. Since then, the Agency, previously, known as the War Relief Service, has evolved into an international humanitarian organization with over 8,000 staff, working in over 100 countries and serving more than 100 million people annually.

CRS' relief and development work is accomplished through sector-specific programs in emergency response, health, agriculture, water, education, microfinance, peacebuilding, and partnerships. CRS emphasizes the principle of subsidiarity by accompanying local organizations to achieve their ambitions of being effective and dynamic catalysts of change for the people and communities they serve. We believe that by investing in people and strengthening local organizations, we support their ability to lead their development, increase the impact of their programs and services, and produce sustainable solutions.

The CRS board of directors is currently chaired by Most Rev. Nelson J. Pérez, with Sean L. Callahan as the President and Chief Executive Officer. Our headquarters is based in Baltimore, Maryland, United States.

In 2023, CRS marked 65 years of actively operating in Ghana. The Agency began operations in 1958, delivering essential support and aid to the poor and vulnerable in health, agriculture, WASH, education, emergency response, microfinance, youth, peacebuilding, and migration. The country program is registered with the Department of Social Welfare under the Ministry of Children Gender and Social Protection as a Non-Governmental Organization.



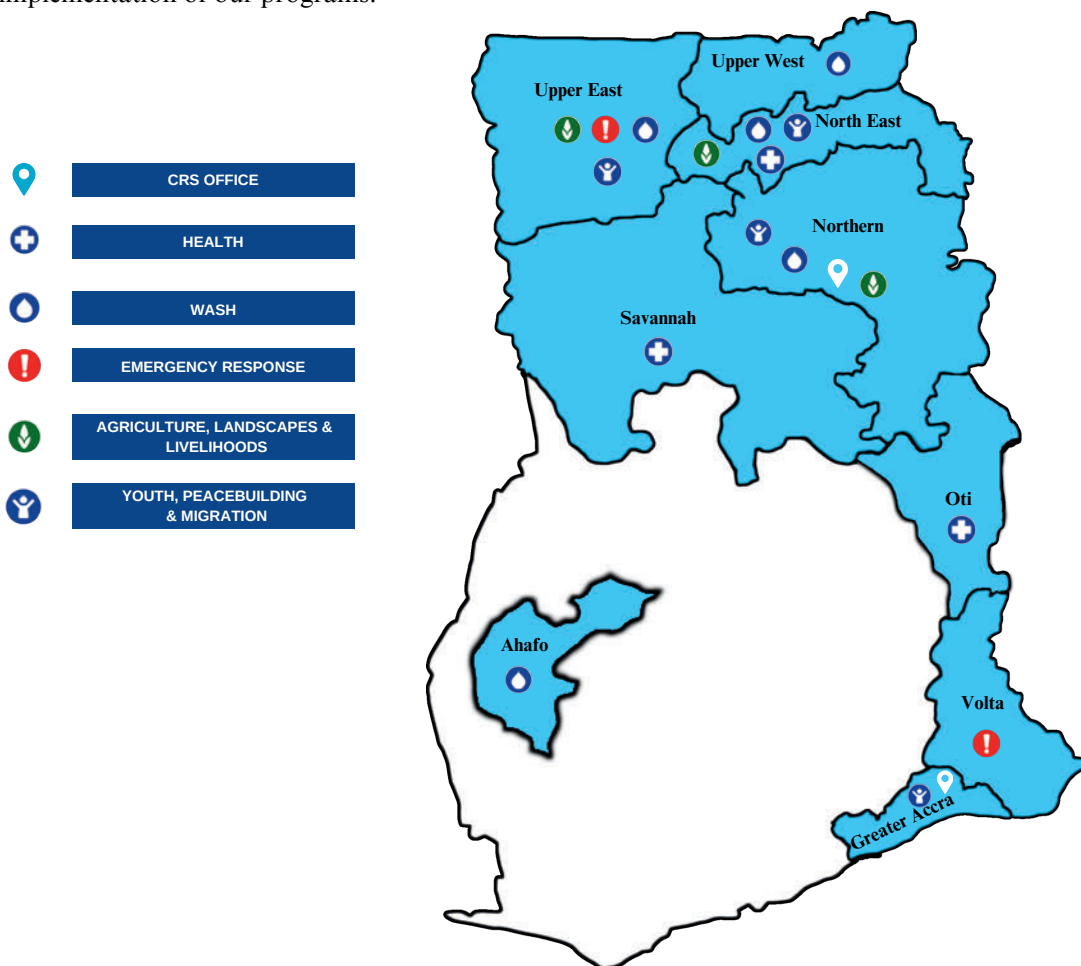
CRS' AGENCY VISION



WHERE WE WORK

CRS' operations in Ghana are national, with a primary focus on 5 northern regions of Ghana, where development disparities are most prevalent. However, our strength and ability to quickly mobilize to ensure that we can cover operationally across the entire country within a limited time, especially in emergency response.

The main office is in Accra and a field office in Tamale. There are also field staff at the district level actively supporting and providing technical backstopping to local partners in the implementation of our programs.



OVERVIEW OF OUR PROGRAMS

This section outlines the diverse program portfolio of CRS Ghana, highlighting key projects that were implemented in the 2023 fiscal year across the different regions, districts, and communities to bring development interventions and innovative solutions to the most in-need populations in Ghana. We also outline key results and achievements observed within the period of reporting.

CRS uses a holistic approach called integral human development to help people reach their full potential in an atmosphere of peace, social justice, and human dignity. This long-term, dynamic process facilitates collaboration across civil society and the public and private sectors. We engage people at every level – individual, family, community, regional, national, and international – to promote transformative and sustainable change at scale.

CRS adopts a Gender Transformative Approach (GTA) across all its programming areas to ensure its programs are focused on transforming gender norms and addressing gender constraints through its programs. The objective is to ensure gender transformative programming at the minimum to realize a world where equal opportunities are presented to both genders without limitation.





Photo by Maaweh Tanga/ CRS

OUR HEALTH PORTFOLIO

CRS is committed to strengthening health systems and improving maternal and newborn health by contributing to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) which is critical to achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3: Good Health and Wellbeing. Despite efforts by the Government of Ghana and local actors to achieve these goals, the country still faces high maternal and neonatal mortality rates due to the three delays:

1

Delay in making timely decisions to seek care

2

Delay in reaching service delivery points

3

Delay in reaching quality care

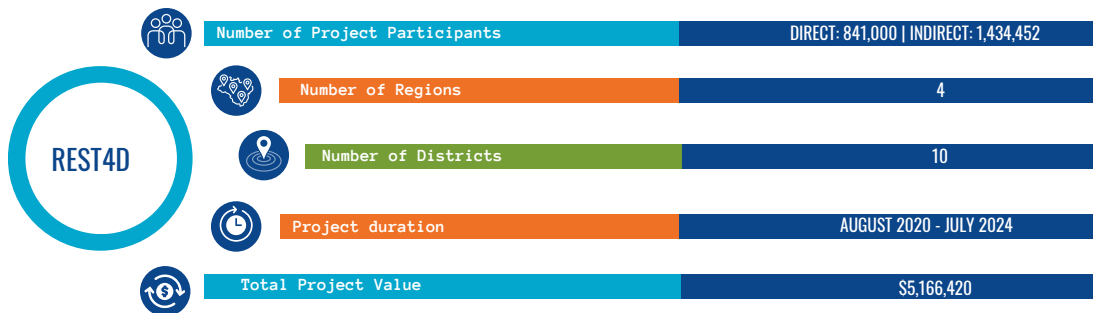
To address these challenges, CRS collaborates with the Ministry of Health (MoH), Ghana Health Service (GHS), and National Ambulance Service (NAS) at the national and decentralized levels.

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, emphasizes the need for a stable environment created by parents and other caregivers that ensures children's good health and nutrition, protection from threats, and opportunities for early learning. However, far too many children around the globe do not receive the care and support they need in a nurturing family environment.

RURAL EMERGENCY HEALTH SERVICE AND TRANSPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT (REST4D) PROJECT



Photo by Maaweh Tanga/ CRS



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

BACKGROUND

The Rural Emergency Health Service and Transport for Systems Development (REST4D) project is a 4-year health and community systems strengthening effort focused on creating community access to skilled Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) services from 2020 to 2024. The project prioritizes generating and documenting compelling evidence from implementation for increased project adaptive management, advocacy, and policy influence. With a budget of \$5,166,420 from the Helmsley Charitable Trust, CRS in collaboration with Ghana Health Service (GHS) and National Ambulance Service (NAS) nested the REST4D

intervention into existing decentralized government systems and structures for enhanced impact and sustainability. REST4D directly targeted 841,400 women of reproductive age, children under five years of age, and health service providers. An additional 1,434,452 people drawn from 200 communities in 10 districts in northern Ghana are indirectly participating in the REST4D activity.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- (1) Ensuring that maternal, child, and newborn services within the Community-based Health Planning Services (CHPS) program are improved.
- (2) Strengthening the decentralized health system
- (3) Advocating for the adoption and integration of successful REST strategies into the CHPS policy and guidelines.

The REST4D project is deploying key technical interventions such as maternal and newborn care, tele-mentoring and consultation, integrated mothers, and babies' course (iMBC), and health commodity and supply chain management.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. The CHPS Program has been strengthened in project districts in the North East, Upper East, Savannah, and Northern Regions through various capacity building of health staff to improve MCH services and provisions of medical logistics to support quality healthcare delivery at the facility level. This has led to an increase in MNCH outcomes over the period in its catchment areas. Specifically, 84% of deliveries of children 0-23 months were attended to by skilled health personnel in the third year of the project against a baseline of 71% (Client Satisfaction Survey & Effectiveness Review Survey).
2. Successfully advocated for the adoption and integration of REST strategies into the CHPS policy and guidelines.
 - The tele-mentoring strategy has significantly contributed to increased knowledge sharing among health staff, identification of innovative technological approaches to learning, and capacity building, especially for staff in hard-to-reach facilities which improved the quality of service delivery. Post-project effectiveness survey results showed that over 200 staff (87M, 114F) including enrolled nurses, Community Health Officers (CHO), and Community Health Nurses (CHN) were reached with tailored MCH capacity building lessons via tele-mentoring as against a target of 100 health staff for year three. All project district health

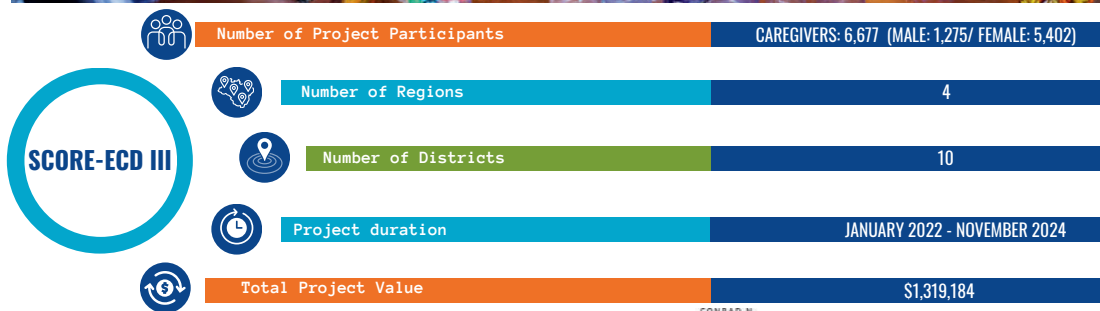
management teams (DHMTs) have adopted virtual learning groups and identified highly qualified health staff (non-mentees) to participate in learning sessions to enable them to continue with tele-mentoring sessions after the project exits.

- The health commodities supply-chain management (HCSM) strategy has been adopted by districts to facilitate the timely distribution of essential health commodities to last-mile CHPS facilities to bridge the gap that exists with the Global Fund's last-mile distribution where the delivery of medical commodities end at the district medical stores and hospitals. HCSM Strategy carted 108.20 metric tons of essential health commodities from district-based cross-docking stations (medical stores) to over 200 rural health facilities.
 - To ensure sustainability, beneficiary CHPS facilities have agreed to allocate a fraction of their internally generated funds (IGF) to pay for fueling health commodity vans (HCVs) thereby addressing the fueling challenges encountered by DHMTs.
 - Implemented a three-pronged strategy leveraging the low-dose high-frequency capacity-building approach to strengthen the clinical acumen of health staff for improved health service delivery. Within the reporting period, health staff benefited from an array of training including Infection Prevention and Control.
 - Mentors and coaches provided supportive supervision and on-the-job skills reinforcement to 100 mentees across 100 health facilities in all intervention districts. Successes of the mentors and coaches strategy have resulted in increased demand for MCH services in project communities with 90% of clients reporting satisfaction with the quality-of-service delivery and 84% of deliveries of children 0-23 months attended to by skilled health personnel in year three against a baseline of 71% (Client Satisfaction Survey & Effectiveness Review Survey).
4. Trained 230 health staff on effective usage of the new Maternal and Child Health (MNCH) records Book for comprehensive reporting.
 5. Most clients, specifically 90%, expressed satisfaction with their user experience at health facilities in project districts.
 6. Enhanced the timely referral of MNCH emergency cases. The REST4D project deployed the modified motor tricycle ambulances (MMTA) strategy in its operational districts. The 40 MMTAs facilitated 2,583 (1,657 EmONC related) referrals to the health facilities. Eighty MMTA drivers and 10 district implementation teams were trained on the operations and management of the modified motor tricycle ambulances.

7. Strengthened the capacity of community structures including the Council of Champions, Link Providers, community health volunteers (CHV), and model/ lead mothers to support in health service demand generation and initiate community actions for change.
8. Two hundred CHVs were trained on their roles and responsibilities in effective CHPS implementation resulting in the establishment of community-led infrastructure for CHPS zones. They facilitated the provision of resources for CHPS facilities.
9. In June 2023, the project championed and influenced the evaluation and integration of optimal REST methodologies. It distributed lasting best practices, acquired insights, and policy suggestions that could be utilized for policy modification. Furthermore, these REST4D national stakeholder engagements saw the participation of 27 stakeholders from the Ministry of Health and its execution agencies, including the Ghana Health Service, National Ambulance Service, Communities, and other decentralized government agencies and NGOs.
10. Facilitated the participation of 100 health staff in monthly tele-mentoring sessions for 6 consecutive months.
11. Trained 110 health staff on infection prevention and control.

These initiatives have enhanced capacity development within the health system and personnel in specified areas. These investments are anticipated to fortify and maintain the most effective strategies of the REST4D project in Ghana's health service delivery system.

STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (SCORE ECD) III PROJECT



Funded by:



BACKGROUND

The \$5.4 million Conrad N. Hilton Foundation funded SCORE ECD III project works with Catholic Sisters in Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, and Ghana, who are present at the nexus of vital health, education, and family-focused services in communities, and are often able to reach vulnerable groups who remain underserved by Governments. The Sisters reach out to caregivers of children aged 0 to 3 years old to provide essential ECD services to ensure these children live

in nurturing environments. The total budget for the SCORE ECD III project in Ghana is \$1,319,184.

The SCORE project reached 6,677 project participants and 629 non-project participants in FY23. The children of 6,677 caregivers (1 child per caregiver) also benefitted indirectly from the project due to the improved nurturing they received from the caregivers. The project reached the participants through the Integrated Mothers and Babies' Course (IMBC), ECD, and Strengthening Marriages And Relationships Through Communication and Planning (SMART) couples interventions.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. The IMBC and ECD interventions are improving family support with male involvement in maternal and child health (MCH) activities, and improved health and well-being resulting from the adoption of good health-seeking behaviors, dietary diversity uptake and utilization at homes, and promotion of WASH practices, especially handwashing, in their households.
2. Provided caregivers with resources to meet their health, nutrition, child welfare, and business needs with ease through the introduction of CRS' Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC) strategy. SILC participants totaling 2,386 (182 M/ 2,204 F) have cumulatively mobilized GHS851,078.00 (\$70,337.02), out of which GHS496,094.00 (\$40,999.50) was disbursed as loans to members. Some SILC participants who are market women used to borrow capital from creditors under unfavorable interest terms. They have now resorted to the SILC loans as a more dignifying alternative.
3. Strengthened marriages and relationships of by promoting joint decision-making and planning under the SMART couples' intervention. The 453 couples enrolled in the SMART couple intervention have indicated improvements in communication, mutual respect, joint decision-making, and rekindled love and peace in their marriages. This has provided children with a conducive nurturing environment to thrive due to the collective child nurturing and upbringing involving both parents.
4. Reached 629 non-project caregivers at the ECD spaces in Walewale, Damongo, Kongo, and Chereponi with messages on early stimulation, antenatal care/ post-natal care, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), maternal and infant nutrition, and play with infants, among others.

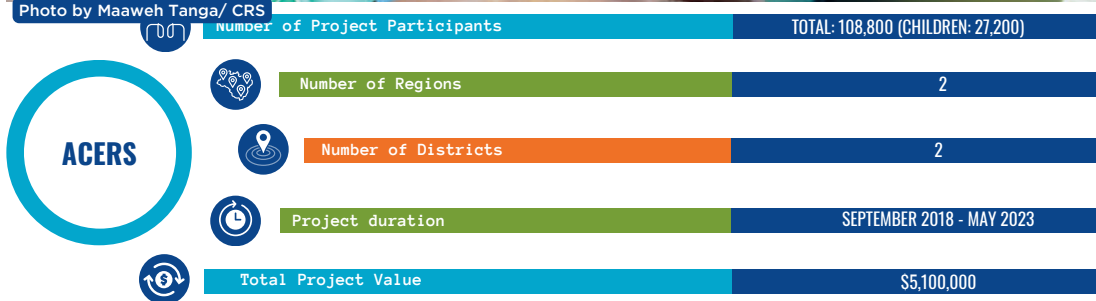
5. Leveraging the advocacy skills acquired through the project, master trainers in two project districts (Tinga and Chamba) independently secured private donor funding from philanthropists to construct ECD spaces in their respective districts.
6. Successfully developed human resource, finance, procurement, and safeguarding policies to streamline management and operational efficiency.

These activities have contributed to improved capacity building in collaboration with the Conference of Major Superiors and Religious Ghana (CMSRG), the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCS), and Ghana Health Service (GHS).

DEVELOPING ACUTE CARE AND EMERGENCY REFERRAL SYSTEMS (ACERS) PROJECT



Photo by Maaweh Tanga/ CRS



Funded by:



BACKGROUND

The \$5.1 million ACERS project funded with support from the American people through USAID, commenced in September 2018. The 4.8-year health systems strengthening project was implemented by CRS in collaboration with Ghana Health Service, National Ambulance Service, Regional Institute for Population Studies, and Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health sidHARTe - Strengthening Emergency Systems Program.

The goal of the ACERS project was to improve the health of expectant mothers and newborns by strengthening the healthcare system to provide prompt, high-quality Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC). The ACERS project deployed essential techniques like pregnancy schools, pro-poor and terrain-appropriate modified motor-tricycle ambulances, emergency dispatch centres and low dose high-frequency clinical capacity building approaches to generate demand for skilled health services, enhance Referral Transport and Dispatch Coordination (RETDIC), and improve the provision of definitive EmONC services to address systemic bottlenecks along the continuum of care hence the three delays in care seeking. The project has contributed to lowering Ghana's maternal and newborn mortality rates, particularly in the project areas.

The ACERS effort concluded in May 2023 following an enduring implementation of impactful and scalable strategies. From October 2022 to May 2023, the project prioritized deepening its sustainability measures, activated closeout processes and conducted an endline evaluation.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. Community Mobilization and Sensitization:

- Substantial increases were recorded in Pregnancy Schools Plus (PSP) membership among surveyed pregnant women in ACERS intervention subdistricts, from 1.6% in Gushegu at baseline to 21.5% at endline and 7.8% in Nkwanta South at baseline to 32.1% at endline.
- Mobilized and sensitized over 98,000 community members and 4,956 pregnant women from 100 rural communities on maternal and newborn health issues.

2. Improvement in Maternal and Newborn Health:

- ACERS increased knowledge on the need to seek timely care and to identify danger signs in pregnancy, delivery, and newborn periods. This resulted in antenatal care coverage increasing from 93% to 96%; facility deliveries increased from 47% to 73%, and postnatal care increased from 56% to 83%.
- Maternal knowledge on danger signs in pregnancy increased from 24% to 31%, and in neonates from 30% to 46%.
- The proportion of pregnant women who recently delivered and reported respectful maternity care increased from 32.39% to 72% in Gushegu and 23.16% to 82% in Nkwanta South.

3. Integration and Capacity Building:

- Integrated 74 community-based and 10 facility-based pregnancy and post-pregnancy schools into the healthcare delivery system at the sub-district and CHPS levels.
- The Referral Transport and Dispatch Coordination Centre Strategy (RETDICCS) introduced 22 community managed Modified Motor-tricycle Ambulances (MMAs), formed and activated Community Emergency Transport Committees (CETS), established two Municipal Emergency Referral Transport Committees (MERTS) and installed two Emergency Dispatch Coordination Centers in Gushegu and Nkwanta South. Since the launch of the strategy in November 2022, 346 emergency cases have been successfully referred.
- Enhanced the capabilities of 52 healthcare personnel from 13 CHPS compounds, one health center, and three municipal hospitals through the distribution of equipment across intervention areas, focusing on the following Quality Improvement domains: quality of care, patient experience, and readiness of health facilities.

QUICK FACTS

1. INCREASED DELIVERY USING EMERGENCY TRANSPORT

The proportion of women who recently delivered and utilized the emergency transport service improved from 0.35 percent and 1.32 percent to 54 percent and 44 percent in Gushegu and Nkwanta South, respectively. The RETDIC demonstrated excellence in enabling continuous and integrated referral support by addressing the second delay (delay in reaching health facilities).



2. INCREASED RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE

Due to this intervention, the proportion of pregnant women who recently delivered and reported respectful maternity care increased from 32.39 percent to 72 percent in Gushegu and 23.16 percent to 82 percent in Nkwanta South.





Photo by Maaweh Tanga/ CRS

OUR WATER, SANITATION & HYGIENE (WASH) PORTFOLIO

CRS provides technical assistance, including local capacity strengthening to government departments and the private sector towards WASH service chain enhancement and sustainability of service delivery. As a founding member of the global WASH Agenda for Change (A4C) platform, CRS' WASH program is deeply rooted in a systems approach to ensure continuity and sustainability of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services.

At the institutional level, CRS collaborates with local government structures and decentralized departments of sector ministries, to improve WASH conditions at schools and healthcare facilities, through the construction and rehabilitation of WASH infrastructure including boreholes, latrines, incinerators, bathrooms, and limited mechanized water systems.

CRS uses Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) approaches like Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) and audio-visual tools to stimulate community action on improving sanitation behaviors and create demand for improved sanitation products and services. Through a robust market-based sanitation approach, the demand created through CLTS is met with the supply of user-centered and affordable sanitation products and services in project communities.

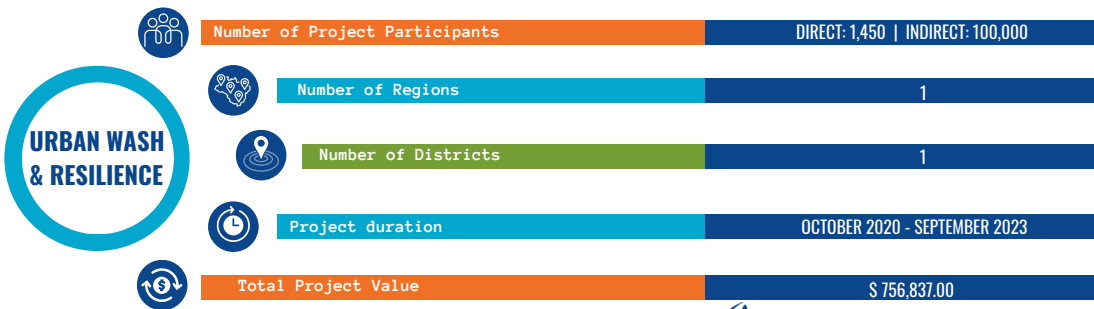
PROJECTS:

1. Urban WASH and Resilience Project
2. Improving WASH in Northern Ghana
3. Integrated Community Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (ICOWASH) 2.0 Project

URBAN WASH AND RESILIENCE PROJECT



Photo Credit: CRS



Funded by:



BACKGROUND

The Urban WASH and Resilience project, funded with internal CRS discretionary funds, improved the resilience, health, and well-being of residents of the Greater Tamale area. The project is in its second iteration, following the successful implementation of the Urban WASH

intervention from 2019 to 2020. In 2018, an urban sanitation landscape assessment in Tamale revealed high levels of open defecation due to the lack of public toilets that met safety standards, and limited household latrines.

To address these challenges, CRS implemented the first phase of the Urban WASH project which rehabilitated seven public latrines through a user-centered sanitation marketing approach and facilitated the construction of 230 household toilets. An effectiveness survey for the project revealed an 87% user satisfaction level for public toilets and a 61% increase in handwashing behavior among public toilet users. In addition, three toilets were certified as WASH-friendly. The second iteration of the Urban WASH and Resilience Project was implemented from October 2020 to September 2023. The project prioritized creating a sustainable and affordable impact in the sanitation and water security sectors through strategic partnerships with the local government and private sector. The project targeted three strategic objectives.

The project has the following objectives:

1. Water security challenges in Greater Tamale are progressively addressed.
2. Public, private, and NGO institutions, through the Alliance for City-wide Inclusive Sanitation Planning, collectively coordinate for enhanced water and sanitation services.
3. Households in Tamale are investing in and using private toilet facilities.

Following the successful implementation of the project, CRS has become the point of contact for most NGOs, both local and international seeking to enhance their understanding of the space and explore collaborations to operate in the Greater Tamale Area.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. Watershed Management and Conservation:

- Sensitized over 100,000 people on the challenges with watershed management and feasibility of the Water Fund.
- Restored three hectares of degraded land.
- Enhanced collaboration with the Water Resources Commission by reviving the Nasia and Middle White Volta sub-basin committees within the White Volta Basin.
- Established a community-level nursery to enhance and sustain conservation activities.

2. Sanitation and Waste Management:

- Operationalized two Citywide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS) Plans for Tamale Metropolitan and Sagnerigu Municipal Assemblies.
- Facilitated the construction of 1,003 gender and disability-friendly, improved household latrines.
- Collaborated with Caritas Ghana as an entry point for CRS Ghana WASH into the solid waste management area.

- Enhanced the regulation of vacuum truck operators in Tamale Metropolis and aided in establishing a community level plastic collection and buyback scheme.

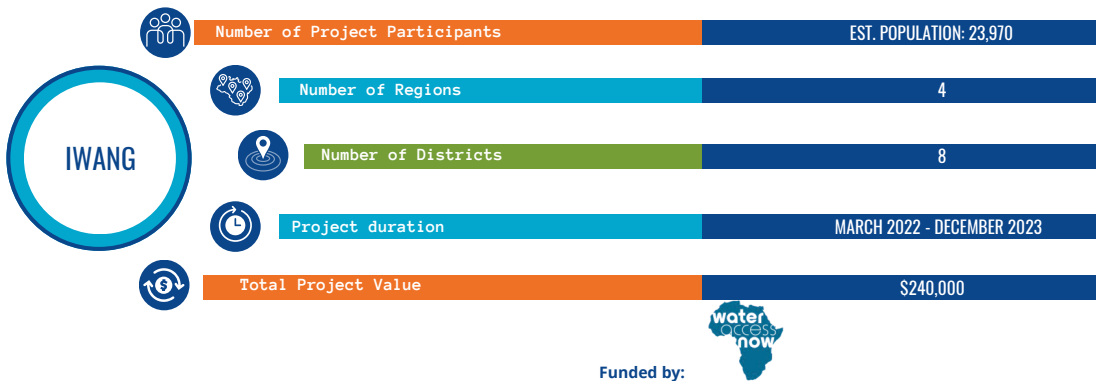
3. Community Outreach and Partnerships:

- Reached 1,450 participants directly and 100,000 participants indirectly.
- Partnered with Woord en Daad and GMB to jointly develop and commit to a project in Greater Tamale Area to increase access to safely managed WASH.

IMPROVING WATER ACCESS IN NORTHERN GHANA (IWANG) PROJECT



Photo by Maaweh Tanga/ CRS



BACKGROUND

The IWANG project is a rolling project with funding from Water Access Now (WAN) focusing on improving safe water access in communities, health facilities, and schools, particularly in

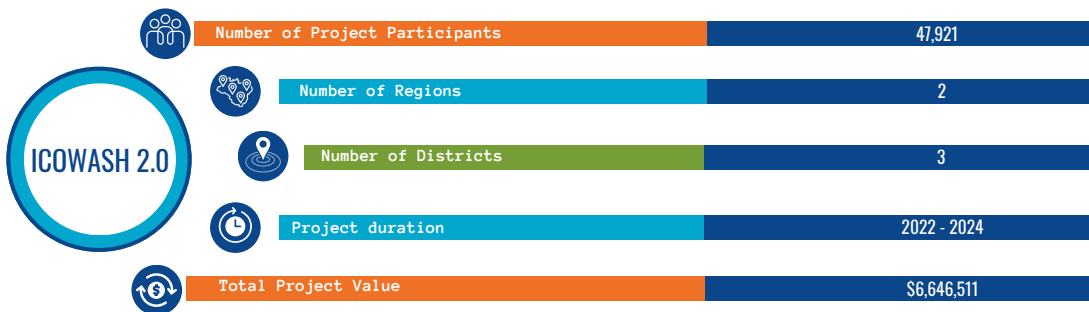
areas where other CRS programs are being implemented to ensure integration that brings more impactful results. The project collaborated with Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs), Ghana Health Service (GES), and Ghana Education Service (GES), in Saboba, Bunkpurugu, Yunyoo, Asunafo South, Builsa South, and Mamprugu – Moagduri districts, to expand water access to an estimated population of 23,970 people at a cost of \$240,000.

The water facilities have been very useful in facilitating the delivery of quality healthcare to institutions like health centers.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. The project has constructed 19 boreholes, with seven fully installed with handpumps and the remaining 12 at various stages of completion.
2. The project has also constructed (2) two solar-powered limited mechanized water systems serving an estimated population of 5,968 people in two healthcare facilities and other nearby households.
3. A total of 72 people (36 M/ 36 F) have been trained as water and sanitation management teams (WSMT) to support the operation and maintenance of the water facilities in communities.

INTEGRATED COMMUNITY WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE IMPROVEMENT (ICOWASH) 2.0 PROJECT



BACKGROUND

Funded by:

THE LEONA M. AND HARRY B.
HELMSLEY
CHARITABLE TRUST

ICOWASH 2.0 is a three-year integrated WASH project funded by the Helmsley Charitable Trust with a focus on improving access to water and sanitation services to vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations in three districts through the implementation of comprehensive packages of WASH communities, WASH in schools and WASH in Health Care Facilities interventions. Together with the provision of the requisite WASH infrastructure and implementation of SBCC

activities, the project is also intentional about documenting its strategies, approaches, lessons and innovations and sharing them with sector actors through targeted engagements. The project aims to improve the health and wellbeing of over 307,000 people (men, women, and children) in Mamprugu/ Moagduri, West Mamprusi, and Talensi districts.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. Communities Moved from ODF to Sanitized:

- In FY23, the project migrated 10 Open Defecation Free (ODF) communities to the sanitized level.
- The 10 sanitized communities have maintained the ODF status beyond 1 year and have made considerable progress in the management of animal feces, household solid waste segregation, and protection of water sources.

2. Supported WSMTs to Mobilize Resources for Facility Maintenance:

- Supported 75 Water and Sanitation Management Teams (WSMTs) to mobilize and safely keep GHS12,508 (\$1,034) for operation and basic maintenance of their water facilities.
- Resource mobilization is an indirect measure of the functionality of WSMTs to ensure the sustainability of water service delivery.

3. CRS Supported Communities Achieve WASH-friendly Certification:

- Fifty-four schools met the minimum standards for WASH infrastructure and behaviors and were certified and declared as WASH friendly institutions by DICCS and RICCS.
- These schools demonstrated continuous planning for the operation and maintenance of WASH infrastructure, sustained sanitation and hygiene behaviors among teachers and school children, and effective participation of communities in the implementation of WASH in schools interventions.

4. CRS Supported Health Institutions Meet Requirement for WASH-Friendly Certification:

- Ten additional health facilities met minimum standards for WASH infrastructure and behaviors and were certified and declared as WASH friendly institutions by DICCS and RICCS.

Such HCFs have demonstrated strict compliance to IPC requirements, continuous planning for operation and maintenance of WASH infrastructure, sustained sanitation and hygiene practices and behaviors among staff and clients as well as effective community participation in WASH service delivery.



Photo Credit: CRS



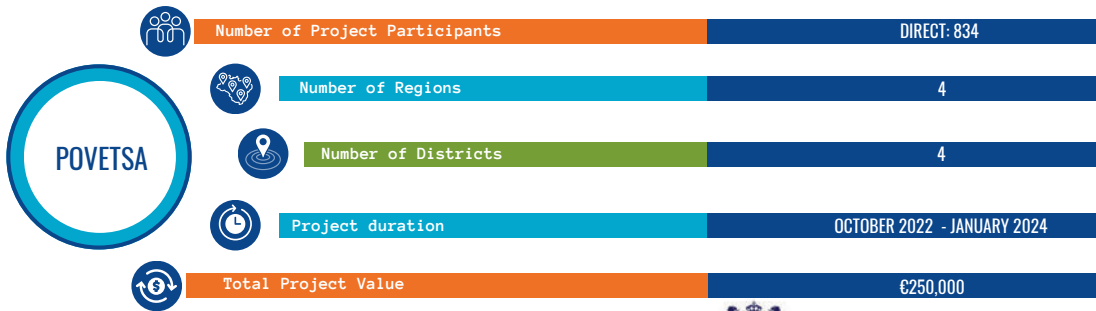
OUR YOUTH, PEACEBUILDING AND MIGRATION PROGRAM

Ghana is renowned throughout the West African Sub-Region as a beacon of democracy and peace. The high level of social cohesion, strong intercultural interaction, tolerance, and acceptance is however being threatened in recent times by the activities of violent extremists as is evidenced by an escalation of unrest in the Sahel region of West Africa. The influx of refugees fleeing the instability in the neighboring countries, as well as internal ethnic conflicts, tensions between farmers and herders also known as agro-pastoralist conflicts, and the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs), among other factors, are fueling inter-ethnic hostility and violent extremism.

While known to be a steadily growing middle-income economy with low political turbulence, Ghana's youth population is faced with serious issues of unemployment and underemployment. A situation that could potentially be exploited by the volatile security situation from the Sahel to the borders of the country.

This situation in Northern Ghana is even more dire, as young women and men face challenges in accessing employment, education, and healthcare. CRS implements cross-cutting programs that seek to address the issues of irregular migration, youth unemployment, insecurity, and violent extremism in Ghana.

PREVENTION OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM THROUGH SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY (POVETSA) PROJECT



Funded by: 
 Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

BACKGROUND

With funding from the Netherlands Embassy in Ghana, CRS is implementing the PoVETSA project in partnership with the National Peace Council (NPC) to translate an iterative learning process into a trust-building mechanism for Ghanaian national peacebuilding institutions, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), security services, and civilians. The project is being implemented

at the strategic level in Accra while facilitating regional engagements in Tamale in the Northern region, and Hamile and Paga in the Upper East and Upper West regions.

The overall goal of PoVETSA is to aid Ghanaian peacebuilding institutions improve public trust and build confidence in security services for the prevention of violent extremism.

Specifically, the project seeks to:

- Aid Ghanaian national peacebuilding institutions to improve their ability to contextualize and implement social accountability mechanisms and;
- Together with CSOs, strengthen their support for inclusive, accountable, and responsive governance.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. Enhanced Understanding of Power Dynamics:

- The Political Economy Analysis (PEA) workshop and Contextual Analysis of Civilian-Security Forces Challenges provided insights into how power dynamics impact development outcomes, particularly about the Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE).

2. Improved Civilian-Security Relationships:

- The two-day, national dialogue and peace forums with the National Peace Council, fostered dialogue, understanding, and collaboration among civilians and security personnel. This led to an improved relationship between civilians and security agencies, with key outcomes including the adoption of innovative approaches to handling issues and a platform for deliberating operational differences.

3. Empowered Stakeholders:

- Conducted Contextual Analysis of Civilian-Security Forces Challenges in Tamale, Nanumba North, Chereponi, and Karaga, which remain adaptive throughout the PoVETSA II project life cycle. The findings highlight a significant level of mistrust (41% among males and 21% among females) between civilians and security agencies, with specific instances of extortion, unlawful detention, and perceived unprofessional behavior reported by respondents.

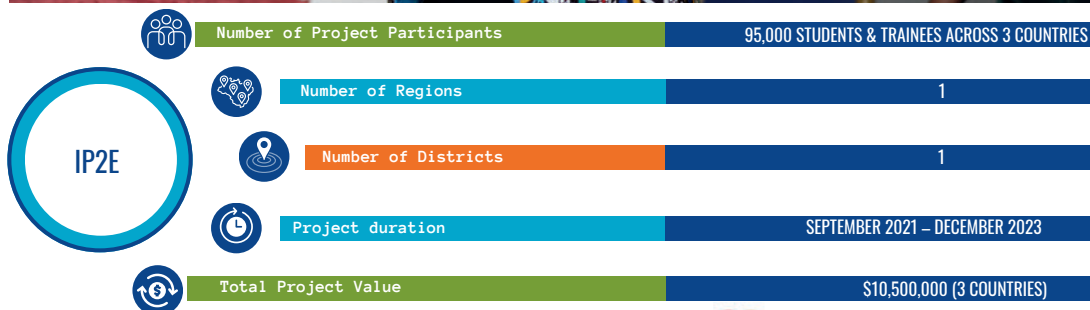
4. Prevention of Violent Extremism:

- Impactful training sessions were conducted for youth in Paga, Tamale, and border communities, focusing on preventing violent extremism. A simulation exercise connected theory to practice, benefiting ninety-three youth.
- Enhanced Media Reporting: Media personnel gained a deeper understanding of the dynamics of violent extremism and enhanced their skills related to responsible reporting, conflict-sensitive journalism, and de-escalation techniques.

INVESTORS AND PARTNERS EDUCATION TO EMPLOYMENT (IP2E) PROJECT



Photo Credit: CRS



Funded by:



BACKGROUND

CRS in partnership with Investors and Partners (I&P) rolled out the Education to Employment Project (E2E) to improve youth employability in Africa through improved access to quality education and training. The project falls under the COVID-19 Resilience Program (CRRP) of

the Mastercard Foundation and was implemented in Ghana, Senegal, and Cote d' Ivoire. CRS provided technical leadership and supported in inclusive education, training, and advocacy. Under IP2E, five education small, medium enterprises (SME): Code train, Garden City University College (GCUC), OpenLabs, Riohs College of Design and Knutsford University College, were supported to design social inclusion mechanisms to promote the inclusion of disadvantaged youth as educational institutions play significant role in providing skills training and expanding youth employment prospects.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. Policy Development:

- Developed policies on equality, diversity, accessibility, safeguarding, inclusion, and data protection, ensuring privacy and confidentiality of student data. The existing sexual harassment policy was also reviewed to include reporting guidelines.

2. Program Improvement:

- Conducted an annual course content review, adjusting the training program from one to two years. An Alumni tracker template was also developed for continuous engagement with alumni and their employers to improve program content.

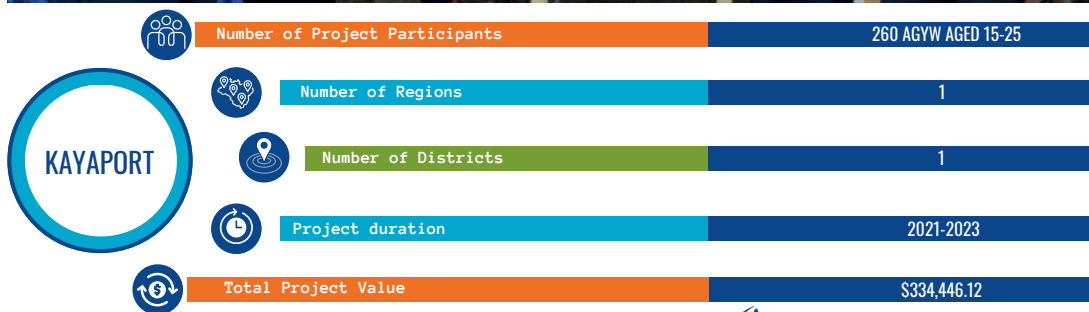
3. Inclusive Infrastructure:

- Provided disability-friendly access through the construction of ramps on campus and designated a washroom for females only, stocked with sanitary items.
- Scholarship and Attendance Management: Scholarship plans were reviewed to award about 70% to 80% scholarships to students. An attendance sheet was also developed to record attendance across all campuses.

4. Staff Training and Student Support:

- Conducted training on gender inclusion and coaching and mentoring for academic and non-academic staff. Established a career services unit for student mentorship, developed a job shadowing and internship policy manual, and a student manual for personal development planning.
- The Dean of Students is collaborating with the Women's Commissioner of the Students Representative Council (SRC) to roll out activities and programs that will support female students to be more assertive and show interest in technology.

PROVIDING LIVELIHOOD OPPORTUNITIES AND SUPPORT FOR KAYAYEI PORTERS (KAYAPORT) PROJECT



Funded by:



BACKGROUND

The Providing Livelihood Opportunities and Support for Kayayei Porters (KAYAPORT) project is a \$334,446 CRS funded project implemented in the West Mamprusi District of Ghana from 2021 to 2023. The project is contributing to tackling the persistent challenges related to the ‘Kayayei’ phenomenon, involving adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) migrating to

urban areas in search of informal work, often facing harsh and exploitative conditions.

The West Mamprusi District in the North East region still faces issues, such as poverty and limited economic opportunities with young girls leaving their communities to find employment in urban centers, often working as head porters under difficult conditions. The KAYAPORT project, drawing lessons from previous initiatives like the Youth LIFE (1.0 and 2.0) and APIMA projects, is directly targeting 260 AGYW aged 15 to 25, with community engagement, awareness campaigns, skills development, certification, and support networks from master trainers, trade associations, community leaders and parents, showcasing a nuanced commitment to creating sustainable and impactful change.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. Youth Targeting and Selection:

- The project successfully targeted and selected 260 youth for participation, out of 1,727 applications received. Despite initial dropouts, the target was met by selecting replacements from the waiting list.

2. Technical/ Vocational Skills Training:

- A total of 260 young girls were placed in an intensive six-month technical and vocational skills training program across eight trade areas.
- All participants successfully passed the assessment conducted by the National Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) and graduated.

3. Labor Market Assessment and Service Provider Selection:

- In collaboration with YEFL-Ghana, the project conducted a labor market assessment, identified 11 in-demand technical skills areas, and selected 34 service providers to provide skills training.

4. Capacity Strengthening on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV):

- The project strengthened the capacity of 120 participants on SGBV as part of activities to mark 16 days of activism against SGBV.

5. Community Engagement and Social Acceptance:

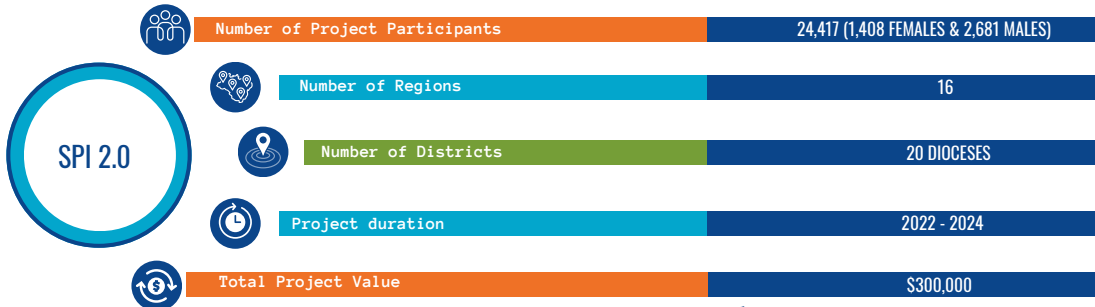
- The project engaged 1,300 community members in discussions to reduce migration pressure,

conducted SMART Couple training for 200 couples to foster social acceptance of AGYW's livelihood support, and facilitated a national stakeholder dialogue with the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection.

SAHEL PEACE INITIATIVE (SPI) 2.0 PROJECT



Photo by Maaweh Tanga/ CRS



Funded by:



BACKGROUND

The Sahel Peace Initiative (SPI) is led by the catholic church-and supported by CRS to address the rising security crisis in West Africa's Sahel region. The purpose of SPI is to reduce the incidence of violence by identifying and addressing the root causes of the crisis with the goal of ensuring improved levels of peace, social cohesion, and resilience for communities in the Sahel.

SPI in Ghana is focused on providing a comprehensive community-based service in collaboration with the local church. The project has chalked several milestones in line with the goal and strategic objectives of the project. The strategic objectives of SPI are to aid the youth to increasingly contribute to the local economy, strengthen local community support systems, and promote peaceful coexistence among competing tribal groups.

In FY23, a total of 24,417 participants of which 1,408 women and 2,681 men were reached. This was accomplished through 70 planned events and activities. The SPI project facilitated the mobilization of young people, religious leaders, traditional leaders, and representatives of government institutions from diverse religious backgrounds, ethnic groups, and political affiliations for events like peace fora, peace games, community service projects, joint celebration of religious festivals, as well as review meetings and training sessions.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. Conflict Mapping and Mediation:

- Embarked on a conflict mapping of the northern regions of Ghana, identifying 50 existing and potential violent conflicts across five regions.
- Established a 5-member mediation committee to restore peace in response to violent clashes between the Doba and Kandiga communities, reaching 1,643 individuals (380 females and 1,263 males).

2. Advocacy, Education, and Training:

- Organized six Dialogues on Trending Conflict Issues, reaching an audience of over 20,000 people throughout Ghana.
- Conducted four training workshops on Gender and Preventing Violent Extremism for a total of 125 people (123 women and 2 men).
- Organized an eight-day Training of Trainers workshop to train 50 Early Warning Monitors on Preventing Violent Extremism, with a total of 49 participants (29 males and 20 females).
- Organized a four-day Psycho-social Support Training which benefited 94 people (12 females and 82 males).
- Conducted three cohorts of three-day nationwide training workshops for women leaders in Ghana's four provinces, training a total of 136 women.

3. Community Engagement and Entrepreneurship:

- Supported 20 selected individuals in the Tamale Province to organize community-level dialogue meetings to raise awareness and discuss violent extremism.
- Conducted meetings engaging various stakeholders, involving a total of 1,881 participants (679 females and 1,202 males).
- Organized an Entrepreneurship and Soft Skills Training program which targeted 300 unemployed youth.
- Conducted a high-level advocacy meeting where the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference engaged with influential Catholic legislators, with 74 participants including 28 Catholic legislators and 3 female members of parliament (MPs).



EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM

The Sahel is grappling with a seemingly intractable conflict rooted in historical grievances, inequitable management of resources, poor governance, and a more recent interjection of violent extremists. As of May 2022, displaced persons have increased by 40% since 2021 to 2.4 million, with women and children composing more than 50% of those displaced. Violent extremists such as the Islamic State, local self-defense groups, and gangs are increasingly terrorizing civilians through attacks, kidnappings, and the imposition of unlivable conditions. The volatile situation in the Sahel and local prolonged conflicts in the northern parts of Ghana continue to challenge peace and security, with frequent spouts of humanitarian emergencies.

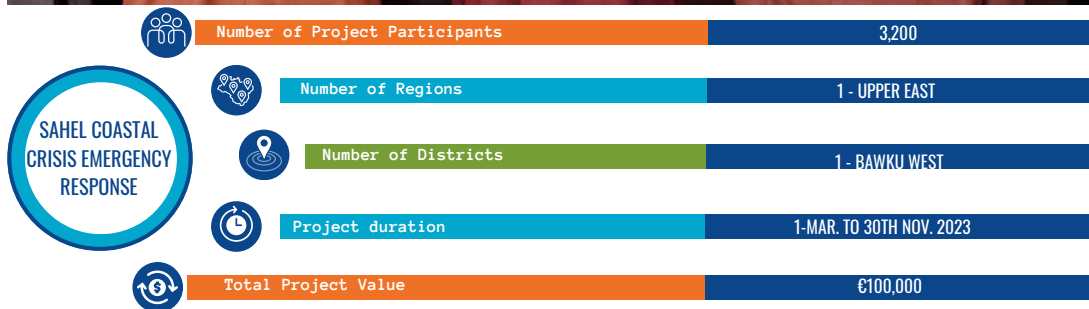
Similarly, perennial floods and natural disasters that wreak havoc across Ghana have informed the need for an emergency response portfolio. For some years now, heavy rains in neighboring Burkina Faso leads to high inflow of water into the Bagre dam necessitating a spillage of excess water. The excess water flows into the Volta river in Ghana, causing floods in communities along the river banks affecting farms and other livelihoods in Ghana every year.

These have necessitated an active emergency program to anticipate and effectively respond to provide critical relief care and services when disaster occurs or existing tensions escalate.

SAHEL COASTAL CRISIS EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROJECT



Photo by Joshua Abem/ CRS



SAHEL COASTAL
CRISIS EMERGENCY
RESPONSE

Funded by:



BACKGROUND

In collaboration with the Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Development Diocesan Organization (NABOCADO), CRS received funding support of \$100,000 from the W. O'Neil Foundation to support emergency enhancement of basic education for 3,200 asylum seekers and host community people in Tarikom in the Bawku West District. This is part of a 9-month response

to meet the immediate basic needs of people affected by the fallout from the Sahel Coastal crisis. Ghana began receiving small numbers of refugees from Burkina Faso as early as 2019, rising suddenly in July 2022 when between 750 - 1,000 Burkinabés arrived in the Upper East Region of Ghana, for an estimated total of 1,446 Burkinabés refugees. According to Ghana's Interior Ministry, over 4,000 Burkinabés fled to Ghana to seek asylum due to the attacks by Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs). Refugees entered the country through border towns in the Upper East and Upper West regions of Ghana. In December 2022, the government and UNHCR began formal registration of asylum seekers.

KEY EMERGENCY RESPONSE HIGHLIGHTS

1. Rehabilitation of two, 3-unit classroom blocks:

- Two 3-unit Classroom blocks (6 classrooms) with ancillary facilities (1 latrine and 1 urinal) were constructed to facilitate the enrollment of host and asylum seekers children into formal basic education.
- A total of 510 (300 asylum seekers and 210 hosts) children benefited from this intervention. Before CRS' intervention, the children of Tarikom were learning under trees.

2. Provided classroom equipment and learning materials:

- Furnished classrooms with 120 dual desks, 7 tables, and chairs, benefiting 510 children and 7 teachers to make classrooms conducive for teaching and learning.
- A total of 510 children benefited from the provision of assorted writing aids such; as books, pens, pencils, sharpeners, and erasers to support Teaching and learning.
- Provided 6 cupboards to facilitate the safety of teaching and learning materials

3. Established Feedback Complaints and Response Mechanism (FCRM) Desk Set-Up:

- Sensitized 947 asylum seekers and 2,253 host community people in FCRM to ensure the inclusion of stakeholders' feedback.
- Constituted and trained a 14-member FCRM team which comprised 3 staff of NABOCADO, 3 staff of Tarikom Basic School, 3 members of the School Management Committee (SMC), 2 asylum seekers, 2 host community members, 2 pupils, and 2 GES staff.
- Trained FCRM team on CRS safeguarding policy and how sensitive feedback is managed.

4. Developed Community Sustainability Plan:

- Supported the Tarikom Basic School to develop a facility management plan (FMP) to enable the SMC to undertake regular maintenance. Some key stakeholders who participated in the process include representatives from the Ghana Refugee Board, United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNCHR), NABOCADO, GES, District Assembly, Chief, Tarikom Refugee Camp Management team, and SMC.

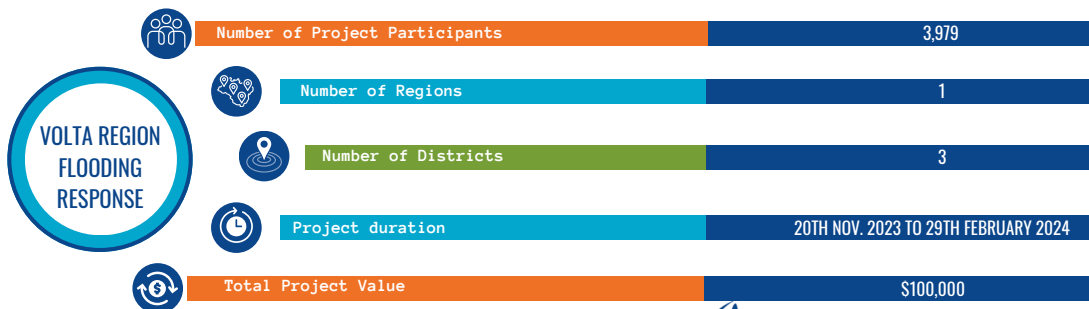
5. Monitored Rehabilitation and Handover of Facility:

- Monitoring of rehabilitation was conducted by experts from GES, District Assembly, CRS and NABOCADO to ensure quality and timely completion.

VOLTA REGION FLOOD RESPONSE (VRFR) PROJECT



Photo by Maaweh Tanga/ CRS



Funded by:



BACKGROUND

Heavy rains and high inflow of water into the Akosombo and Kpong dams' reservoirs necessitated a controlled water release operation by the Volta River Authority which began on the 15th of September 2023. It aimed at managing the water levels within the dams to safeguard their structural integrity from being compromised. Unfortunately, this led to extensive flooding

that affected nine districts: North Tongu, Central Tongu, South Tongu, Shai Osudoku, Asuogyaman, and Anlo all in the Volta Region of Ghana.

The flooding led to the displacement of about 26,000 individuals, causing significant property damage, threatening human lives. The impact was most severe in low-lying areas along the Volta Lake, where over 12,000 houses suffered severe damage or complete destruction. Given the scale of the disaster, development partners had to step in to support the government to meet the overwhelming needs of the affected population, which include food, shelter, clothing, and safe drinking water.

To augment the government's response to the disaster, CRS and Caritas Ghana working through the Akatsi Catholic Diocese rolled out the \$100,000 CRS discretionary funded Volta Region Flood Response (VRFR) project to provide immediate relief to flood-affected communities and ensure the restoration of their health and dignity. Working with the National Disaster Management Organization and the Inter-Agency Working Group on Emergency (IAWGE), CRS identified and distributed food, cash transfers and other non-food items to the displaced people.

KEY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

1. Relief Assistance and Support:

- In response to the Volta Region floods, CRS provided support to 571 households with cash transfers.
- Distributed food, and other non-food items like clothes to affected persons living in the safe havens across the four districts.

2. Health, Hygiene and Sanitation:

- CRS supplied assorted medicines to enhance health service delivery at one health facility.
- CRS distributed 1,920 water storage containers to 480 households to promote proper water storage and prevent the outbreak of water borne diseases due to reliance on contaminated.
- Additionally, 500 Aquatabs were distributed to the same households for water treatment to improved access to safe water for vulnerable flood-affected households.
- Sensitization on effective handwashing and hygiene practices for the residents of the safe havens to help improve their personal hygiene and prevent the outbreak of hygiene related diseases.



Photo by Maaweh Tanga/ CRS

OUR AGRICULTURE, LIVELIHOODS, & LANDSCAPES PORTFOLIO

The core strategy of CRS' agriculture programming is to provide a pathway to prosperity to enable those CRS serves to benefit from more prosperous and resilient agricultural livelihoods. As part of this approach, CRS supports families in their bid to leave poverty, attain food security, and achieve incremental gains in prosperity through three stages: Recover, Build and Grow. Each phase includes asset building, skills acquisition, risk reduction, and changes to systems/structures that support long-term resilience.

CRS Ghana's programming in Agriculture, Livelihoods, and Landscapes is anchored on two main pillars:

1. Sustainable Agriculture and Agricultural Value Chain Development and Market Systems Resilience.
2. Agricultural Landscape Restoration

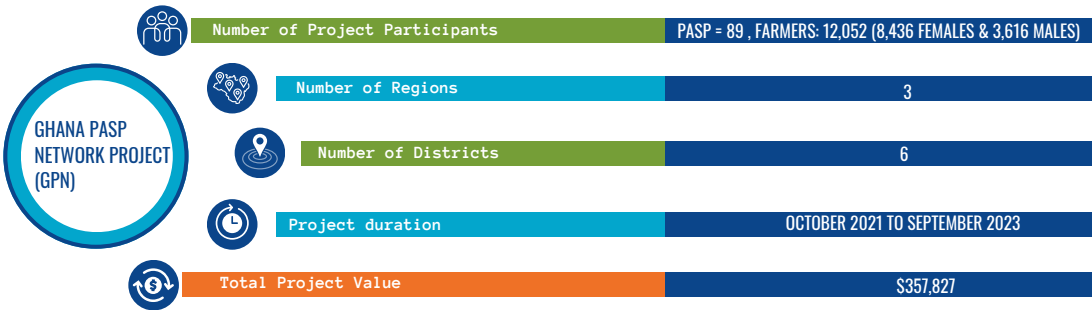
Sustainable livelihoods and climate change are mainstreamed across these two pillars. CRS Ghana's approach includes the deployment of the SILC concept to mobilize about 3,000 smallholder farmers into savings groups comprising of 21,563 members (15,741 women and 5822 men) with over \$277,536 in savings. The groups have also been entry points for supporting smallholder farmers to adopt improvements, facilitating linkages for input access, financial access, and output markets.

CRS' training model on Skills for Marketing and Rural Transformation (SMART) is an adult-friendly participatory learning methodology that is used to design and deliver training to equip adult learners mostly in agriculture with basic financial literacy and business skills. This enables them to make smart business and financial management decisions to build and grow their agri-enterprises.

GHANA PRIVATE AGRICULTURE SERVICE PROVIDER (PASP) NETWORK (GPN) PROJECT



Photo Credit: CRS



Funded by:



BACKGROUND

The Ghana Private Agriculture Service Provider (PASP) Network Project (GPN): The project was implemented from October 2021 to September 2023. GPN has a budget of \$250,000 from CRS discretionary funds and is a follow up to the ISEARCH and GESSiP projects, transforming

the CBAs into entrepreneurs that facilitate market-driven production of various agricultural value chains. This is to enable them to provide services beyond agricultural advisory services. Thus, the project further strengthened the capacity of CBAs and graduated 90 of them to the level of PASPs who have become entrepreneurs along the various levels of agricultural value chains including input dealership, advisory services, processing, aggregation, and market facilitation.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

1. Resource Mobilization:

- CRS used lessons from the project to inform the design of two promising proposals for Mastercard Foundation with a combined value of \$14 million, where the PASP model is at the center of the project's design.

2. Influencing Government Policies and Programs:

- The PASPs model has been shared with Global Affairs Canada (GAC) as a low-cost, self-driven, and sustainable extension approach because of the support they have been providing to the Government of Ghana to strengthen extension services as part of its Modernizing Agriculture in Ghana (MAG) Program. The funding support is expected to end this year with some sustainability challenges, hence the resolve by GAC to address it with innovation. They are interested in further discussions with CRS and the government on the potential to leverage and scale the PASPs model.
- CRS has contributed to influencing a draft National Agriculture Extension Regulation Framework through an earlier intervention – GESSiP, where the framework recognizes CBAs as an agriculture extension model in Ghana. GPN has built on that recognition.
- The project also supported the drafting of a National Organic Fertilizer Policy which was sponsored by AGRA and led by PPRSD.

3. Linkage of PASPs to extension services, training and technical support:

- The PASP model is a market driven model that facilitates input-output linkages across agricultural value chains. A total of 60 CBAs have been linked and are receiving technical support from the Agriculture Extension Agents (AEAs).
- Recruited and trained a total 90 of PASPs (8 F, 82 M), 85 certified (8 F, 77 M). A total of 6 district, 3 regional and 1 national PASP networks have been established with a constitution

and elected boards.

- By September 30, 2023 30 PASPs earned a combined total of GHS77,285.00 (\$7,025.91) in commissions.
- A total of 30 FAs and Private Service Providers (PSPs) have also been selected and linked to the District Departments of Agriculture for technical support on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs).

4. Savings and Internal Lending Communities (SILC):

- CRS has a unique version of the popular VSLA called Savings for Internal Lending Communities (SILC), which was introduced to the project participants and communities to facilitate self-selection, formation, and training of groups on the SILC methodology by the PASPs. They also profiled, assessed, and trained existing SILC groups.
- Using the SILC approach, over 970 savings groups were active, comprising of 21,563 members (15,741 women and 5822 men) with over \$277,536 in savings.
- The project organized training for SILC groups on group dynamics and internal accountability mechanisms. It provides mentoring and coaching for SILC groups and organizes inter-community learning visits to very functional SILC groups.

5. SMART Skills to Facilitate Adult Learning:

- CRS's training model on Skills for Marketing and Rural Transformation (SMART) is an adult-friendly participatory learning methodology that was used to design and deliver training to equip adult learners mostly in agriculture with basic financial literacy and business skills. This enables them to make smart business and financial management decisions to build and grow their agri-enterprises.
- CRS deployed this methodology to equip women and youth-led SMEs with these critical skills to enable them to make the right business and financial management decisions for financial inclusion to access the critical financial resources to start, build, and grow their enterprises in agriculture and adjacent sectors.

6. Digitalizing Agriculture:

- CRS has also worked with various partners and state institutions to deploy digital platforms for training last mile actors (LMAs) and facilitating their access to critical information services including market information. Some of the platforms and tools include the MERGDATA platform of Farmer Line (a local agric-tech private sector partner) where

about 100,000 smallholder farmers have been profiled, onboarded onto the platform, and accessing critical services.

- Working with relevant state agencies, CRS has also used digital classrooms to deliver training and sensitizations to LMAs across various issues including agriculture, WASH, and Health. The digital classroom was deployed, working closely with the digital platform partner and relevant state agencies for the profiling and onboarding of the LMAs, digitizing training content, and disseminating the training and sensitization. This re-enforced the traditional trainings and sensitizations that are delivered directly to the LMAs through the SILCs.



Photo by Maaweh Tanga/ CRS

LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND PARTNER CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

BACKGROUND

CRS has made a bold commitment to local leadership, focusing on empowering local communities and institutions by supporting their development to be more effective and impactful to serve the common good. CRS operationalizes this localization agenda in its programming based on the Catholic Social Teaching principle of Subsidiarity, which emphasizes the importance of addressing issues at the most local level possible. The agency pursues local leadership on the premise that positive and lasting solutions to poverty and injustice can only be achieved through strong collaborative relationships across civil society and public and private sectors.

In Ghana, CRS has co-created and implemented initiatives that reflect the different components of local leadership like the 5-year USAID funded ACERS project which focused on Health Sector systems strengthening to deliver Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care. Under the ACERS project, CRS strengthened referral transport and dispatch coordination among state actors in the referral network particularly, GHS and NAS. Based on this initiative, the Government of Ghana through NAS has scaled the Emergency Dispatch Centers to three additional regions and one district.

These initiatives and the learning from implementation serve as foundations for an evolving Local Leadership Strategy to embed localization in our programming, business processes, partnership principles, and funding approaches. To track our commitments and hold ourselves accountable for delivering them, the CRS Ghana Country Program used the three key performance indicators (KPI) developed by the Agency and WARO to document these incremental changes in local leadership.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS



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

- Three Diocesan Development Offices supported technically and financially to develop Strategic Plans to support growth, fundraising, and sustainability.

- Under the Empowering Partner Organizations Working on Emergency Responses (EMPOWER) project, CRS' three-pronged capacity strengthening approach (capacity building, institutional strengthening, and accompaniment) was used to build the capacity of local humanitarian actors (CARITAS and Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Dioceses) to respond to emergencies.
- CRS facilitated exposure visits for Ghana's Water Resources Commission for a water fund training in Kenya. This enhanced their knowledge in responding to funding opportunities for source water protection. The Water Resources Commission received technical support to develop a business case for the Black Volta River basin.
- Through a series of capacity building in Advocacy and Influencing under the SCORE ECD III project, some sister congregations successfully advocated for logistical support from Government and Private sector funding of more than \$5,000 to establish Early Childhood Development centers in 2 districts.



KPI 2: Total value (USD) directly secured from donors/ government by local partners as a result of significant contributions by CRS.

- CRS supported the Tamale Metropolitan and Sagnerigu Municipal Assemblies to develop and operationalize two Citywide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS) plans which served as blueprints to guide the implementation of WASH interventions in those areas. Various organizations are contributing to the implementation of the plans.
- CRS facilitated engagements with two Dutch organizations, Wooden en Dad and GMB, to contribute to the operationalization of the plans with an amount of 765,674 Euros.
- CRS secured funds from the Netherlands Embassy in Ghana to implement the Prevention Of Violent Extremism Through Social Accountability (PoVETSA) II Project.
- Through the EMPOWER project, NABOCADO secured about \$500,000 from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for implementing the emergency response project for FY23 and FY24 while CRS provides accompaniment to the partner.



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.

- CRS supported the Water Resources Commission to establish the White Volta River Basin Watershed Fund for a sustainable stream of funding and enhanced governance for the watersheds.
- CRS provided technical and financial support for the development of an operational guide as part of the of establishing the White Volta River Basin Water Fund.
- CRS' ICOWASH model has been referenced in the revised Rural Sanitation Model and Strategy for consideration by WASH sector players.
- CRS, GES, and GHS jointly developed WASH-friendly Certification tools for use in schools and healthcare facilities at the decentralized level.
- CRS collaborated with the GES to develop guidelines for producing reusable sanitary pads for women and girls in remote communities. The Ghana Standards Authority is reviewing the guide to establish national standards for the production of reusable sanitary pads.

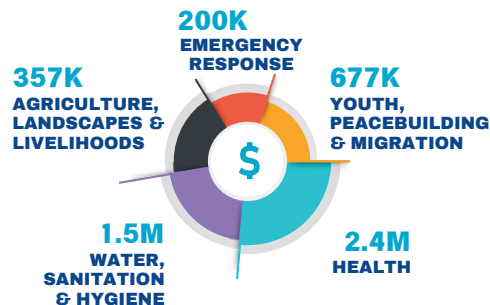
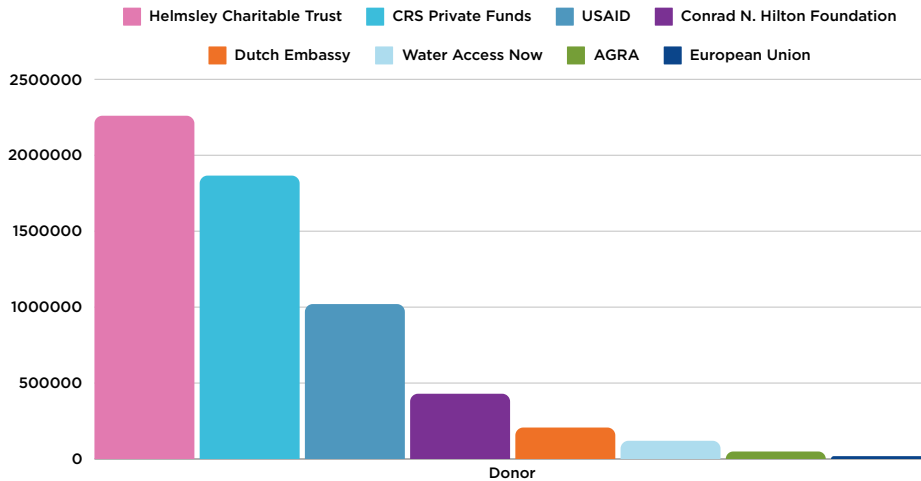


FINANCIAL REPORT

BACKGROUND

In FY23, CRS work was supported and facilitated by the generosity of a diverse range of donors that funded strategic investment in the lives of the participants and communities where we work, across our programmatic areas. We also leveraged substantial internal CRS funds to support project interventions and partner capacity strengthening to ensure we leverage local leadership of our interventions.

A total amount of \$5.9 million was invested across our five programmatic areas, from Helmsley Charitable Trust, USAID, Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Netherlands Embassy in Ghana, Water Access Now, AGRA, European Union, and CRS private funds.





CRS GHANA: 65 YEARS OF SERVICE, INNOVATION AND, IMPACT

BACKGROUND

In September 2023, CRS Ghana marked 65 years of service, partnership, and impact in Ghana with key events to mark the milestone. The agency has operated in the country since 1958, one year after Ghana's independence. Having invested immensely and contributed significantly to different sectors of Ghana's economy, CRS Ghana is very popular among Ghanaians and fondly remembered for the flagship school feeding initiative which saw the agency deliver food to children in school as a strategy for increasing enrolment and retention. This initiative has since been scaled by the national government to all public basic schools across Ghana.

65 years down the line, CRS continues to invest in the most critical areas of need and works in some of the most deprived communities of Ghana. The CRS Ghana Country program has a significant presence and results in the areas of health; agriculture, livelihoods and landscapes; youth peacebuilding, and migration; and WASH. The theme of the anniversary celebration was "65 years of service, innovation and, impact."

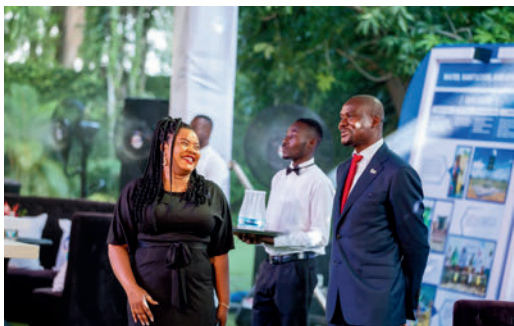


Photo by Maaweh Tanga/ CRS

GALLERY



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