

November/December 2018

# GLOBAL EMERGENCY UPDATE

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



## LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN



A Honduran migrant family travels through Chiapas, Mexico. Photo by Miguel Juarez Lugo/Alamy

### **HONDURAS, GUATEMALA, EL SALVADOR AND MEXICO**

Families from Honduras are fleeing gang violence and chronic poverty fueled by climate change. They are traveling across Guatemala and El Salvador toward Mexico and the United States. CRS is working closely with our partners to supply shelter, food, basic health services and legal advice to ensure their dignity and human rights.

### **HONDURAS, GUATEMALA AND EL SALVADOR**

Families living across the Dry Corridor of Central America are facing long-term drought, exacerbated by climate change and environmental degradation. Almost 3.5 million people need emergency assistance. CRS is providing cash-for-work and livelihoods support, and helping build communities' drought resilience.

**VENEZUELA** An economic and social crisis in Venezuela has seen thousands of citizens leave the country amid food shortages, hyperinflation, currency devaluation, the collapse of the health system and social unrest. CRS focuses on the needs of the most vulnerable, supporting our partners to help struggling people in Venezuela, and migrants in Brazil, Colombia, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago.

## EAST AND SOUTH ASIA



On the island of Sulawesi, an earthquake triggered a deadly tsunami. *Photo by Mohammed Hafiz/CRS*

**INDONESIA** A 7.5-magnitude earthquake struck the island of Sulawesi on September 28, triggering a tsunami. The disaster caused more than 2,000 deaths. Homes, shops, mosques and hotels collapsed, were swept away or suffered extensive damage. Most homes have structural damage. Potentially, 2 million people have been affected. Relief operations are well underway as CRS and our partners access hard-to-reach areas and meet the urgent needs of the most vulnerable.

**PHILIPPINES** Close to 100 people died when Typhoon Mangkhut hit the Philippines on September 15. More than 200,000 homes were reported damaged or destroyed, thousands of people have been displaced, and farmers and fishermen have been severely affected. CRS and our partners' response includes cash assistance to help families buy essential household, shelter and hygiene supplies. We are also providing key messages to help people rebuild their homes using disaster-resilient techniques.

**INDIA** Tropical Cyclone Titli struck on October 11, bringing strong winds and heavy flooding. It is estimated that 7.3 million people have been affected across the states of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, where homes have been damaged or destroyed, and roads submerged. CRS and our partners are responding with shelter kits, and living and hygiene supplies.

**BANGLADESH** Cox's Bazar district is at the center of a pressing humanitarian crisis. Since August 2017, widespread violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State has caused 700,000 Rohingya people to flee to Bangladesh, bringing the total Rohingya refugee population in Bangladesh to nearly 1 million. As of October 2018, CRS had assisted Caritas Bangladesh to support more than 263,000 Rohingya refugees with shelter, water and sanitation, disaster risk reduction and protection programming.

## EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA

**SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS** Now in its seventh year, Syria's internal armed conflict has displaced nearly 700,000 people in the first half of this year alone, while 5.6 million have sought refuge in neighboring countries. CRS and our partners provide comprehensive support to communities and families across the Middle East, with education and counselling assistance, shelter, living supplies, food, medical assistance, and hygiene and sanitation.

**IRAQ** Iraqi forces have retaken most ISIS-held areas, since it first captured Mosul 4 years ago. Now, 4 million Iraqis—many of whom lost everything—have returned home to areas in urgent need of restored education, housing repair and livelihoods recovery. CRS and Caritas Iraq have helped more than 300,000 people with a range of support, including education, livelihoods, shelter and essential living supplies.

**YEMEN** Fear of famine looms as fighting and air strikes have escalated drastically, including in the main port of Hodaydah. Eight million people are dependent on food aid for survival, and the United Nations has warned that an estimated 14 million are on the brink of starvation. CRS is working with its local partner Islamic Relief Yemen to provide urgent, life-saving nutrition, water and sanitation, hygiene, health care and cholera prevention.

## AFRICA

**UGANDA** Ongoing violence between South Sudan's government and opposition forces has caused more than 1 million South Sudanese people to flee into neighboring Uganda, where resources are stretched. In the Bidi Bidi refugee settlement

where over 287,000 people live, CRS is supporting the most vulnerable families with shelter, infrastructure improvements, water and sanitation, and livelihoods recovery. CRS programming also assists the local Ugandan host community.



## HONDURAS, GUATEMALA AND EL SALVADOR

## DROUGHT



Much of Honduras' staple corn crop has been lost to drought. *Photo by Rafael Ochoa/Xinhua/Alamy*

## CONTEXT

Families living across the Dry Corridor of Central America are facing a long-term drought that has parched agricultural land and withered crops. With the area prone to drought or extreme precipitation, people living there are among the region's most impoverished and chronically undernourished.

The area has experienced several severe droughts over the past 10 years, and almost 3.5 million people are in need of emergency assistance. Average annual temperatures in Central America have risen by 1.8 degrees Fahrenheit in the past 50 years, while rainfall patterns have become more erratic and total rainfall has decreased. Most people in the region rely on rainfed agriculture, and the drought has exhausted their food reserves.

According to the government of Honduras, 65,500 families—or about 327,000 people—are affected across 74 municipalities. The hardest-hit departments include Lempira, Francisco Morazán, La Paz, Choluteca, El Paraiso, Intibucá and Valle. An estimated 53,000 families need humanitarian assistance.

## 70 percent

PRICE RISE IN CORN, THE MAIN  
SUBSISTENCE CROP

Key CRS findings in Honduras:

- Farmers reported losses of 75 percent for corn and 76 percent for bean crops in the year's main crop cycle.
- The primary income sources are agriculture, and manual labor in agriculture and construction.
- Subsistence farming families depend on their harvest, and on wages earned from local agricultural work or temporary labor during the coffee harvest.
- Prices for corn, the primary subsistence crop, have risen dramatically.
- Food is urgently needed, especially for vulnerable groups such as children, breastfeeding women and the elderly.



## CRS AND PARTNER RESPONSE

CRS has a long history of working in countries across the Dry Corridor—Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador—and we work with local partners and communities in the areas severely affected by the drought.

In **Honduras**, CRS' Water-Smart Agriculture and Blue Harvest are the two primary agricultural projects, with a focus on water and soil conservation for about 1,300 corn, bean and coffee farmers. CRS also works across Intibucá through the McGovern-Dole Food for Education Program, providing daily school meals to about 54,000 children.

In **El Salvador**, CRS and Caritas help farmers cope with ongoing challenges related to climate change and degraded agricultural areas, and have trained staff in soil fertility and drought mitigation practices to help farmers improve their overall resilience.

In **Guatemala**, CRS is uniquely positioned to respond with a huge presence across the affected areas, and extensive agricultural programming over more than a decade.

CRS will expand its response to this crisis in the following ways:

- Providing cash-for-work opportunities as a source of income for these families as the November-December harvest season begins. These activities will focus on natural resource restoration in critical watershed areas, soil conservation (terracing, contour lines, drainage) and reforestation around local water sources.
- Restoring livelihoods through livestock and seed fairs, which help people access agricultural assets and means for earning an income.
- Strengthening livestock—often a family's most valuable asset—through key interventions including vaccination services, veterinary care and livestock fairs.
- Building increased drought resilience for the next planting season in January.

HONDURAS | GUATEMALA | EL SALVADOR | MEXICO

## 'MIGRANT CARAVAN' CRISIS



Desperate families travel across Mexico as part of a caravan of thousands fleeing violence and poverty. *Photo by Lexie Harrison-Cripps/Alamy*

## CONTEXT

In Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador, gang violence and drug cartels are escalating, causing thousands of families to flee north. Many live in constant fear. They also struggle with chronic poverty, recently failed harvests due to environmental degradation and climate change, and a lack of job opportunities.

In October, thousands of people crossed from Honduras into Guatemala, either with or without official documentation, and thousands are now entering Mexico. They come to Mexico seeking humanitarian visas, shelter, asylum or transit permits to enable them to reach the United States border.

Governments are stopping those without proper identification and turning them away at the El Salvador-Honduras border or the Guatemala-El Salvador border. More than 5,000 people have crossed into Mexico, and another 2,000 into Guatemala. About 1,000 Hondurans are still waiting to leave their country.

National and international organizations, as well as people living along the route, have provided shelter, food, basic health services, legal advice and hygiene kits to ensure the dignity and human rights of those fleeing deadly and desperate conditions. Humanitarian organizations are paying special attention to vulnerable families who travel with children, people with disabilities, and the elderly.

## CRS AND PARTNER RESPONSE

The Catholic Church has played a critical role in supporting migrants during this humanitarian crisis and has served more than 5,000 people at various locations, from the Mexican city of Esquipulas, near the border with Honduras, to Guatemala City, and now in the small Guatemalan town of Tecún Umán on the border with Mexico.

CRS staff in Guatemala have identified the most pressing needs facing people on the move. They have also asked migrants at a migrant shelter in Guatemala City about their reasons for fleeing, their trajectory and plans, and their sense of safety and protection.



A Honduran migrant family leaves Mapastepec city in Mexico. *Photo by Miguel Juarez Lugo/Zuma Wire/Alamy*

CRS has outlined a strategy to raise awareness about the humanitarian crisis so that key actors—such as the Church, CRS partners, government entities and civil society actors—recognize that migration is the consequence of structural problems that can be addressed through ethical decision-making based on principles of human dignity and the need for investment in children and families.

CRS Guatemala and Mexico continue to monitor the situation through regular communication and coordination with Church partners, the migrant shelters of the Scalabrini Missionaries of San Carlos in Guatemala City and Tecún Umán, Caritas, and the Pastoral Human Mobility network in Guatemala and Mexico.

CRS Guatemala has sent volunteers from the Guatemala City office to provide relief to staff of the Scalabrini migrant shelter in Guatemala City who have been working around the clock since the crisis began. CRS is monitoring the flow of migrants through Guatemala into Mexico, and the response of international organizations, and has provided this information to the Humanitarian Network led by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

## VENEZUELA

## POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS

## CONTEXT

Since 2015, Venezuela has been facing an economic and social crisis. In 2016, the drastic fall in the price of oil, the country's main export, led to food shortages, hyperinflation, the collapse of the health system and social unrest. Food shortages have had an especially devastating impact. Venezuelans have lost an average of 24 pounds per person since 2017. And, of 15,000 children under age 5 being monitored by Caritas Venezuela during the last year, 65 percent showed signs of a nutritional deficit, and another 13 percent are living with acute malnutrition.

The Venezuelan government has devalued its currency by 96 percent and named the new money Bolívar Soberano, or Bs. Today, the minimum monthly salary is Bs. 1,800, or US\$29. This has had a significant impact on small and medium-sized businesses—which cannot afford to pay salaries—and has led to nearly 40 percent of all Venezuelan stores closing, and many reducing their number of employees.

In late August, Ecuador opened a humanitarian corridor and relaxed passport restrictions for Venezuelans, whose arrivals had reached 2,500 people per day. Ecuador and Peru have become countries of passage for most refugees, crossing thousands of miles of cold Andean mountain passes. Peru, however, has recently gone from accepting more than 5,000 Venezuelan refugees daily, to establishing a more restrictive passport requirement for entry.



Volunteers prepare lunch for migrants from Venezuela at a church offering free meals and basic medical aid in Cucuta, Colombia. Photo by Nicolò Filippo Rosso for CRS

## CRS REGIONAL SUPPORT OF CARITAS AND PARTNER RESPONSE

## Venezuela

Across 14 dioceses in 10 states, and in the capital of Caracas, Caritas Venezuela is focused on health and nutrition. At least 74 parishes are conducting ongoing malnutrition screening. As of October 2018, the following has been achieved:

- 16,845 children under age 5 and 700 pregnant women were screened.
- 9,889 malnourished children under age 5 and 309 pregnant women are receiving food and medicine.
- Specialized food supplements for the treatment of malnutrition in children have been imported.
- 302 clinics were organized, attended by 14,136 patients.
- 14 dioceses have a basic stock of medication.
- 1,051 community soup kitchens are operating and have served close to 100,000 meals.

In September, through an in-kind donation from Edesia Nutrition to CRS, Caritas Venezuela received nutritious food shipments that will treat 1,800 at-risk children. The number of church volunteers in Venezuela has doubled in the past year. Many volunteer doctors and nurses are donating their time to provide primary care. Other volunteers have scoured neighborhoods searching for children who need assistance, training community members to make low-cost water filters for drinking and inviting people to become a part of a movement that

now serves thousands of bowls of soup each week.

## Colombia

CRS supports Caritas Colombia to provide shelter, and household and hygiene supplies to Venezuelan migrants. With CRS capacity support, Caritas Colombia was awarded a U.S. State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration grant for these activities. The Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance is supporting Caritas Colombia to provide protection and cash assistance to meet migrants' living needs, and provide health support, and water, sanitation and hygiene.

## Brazil

Caritas Brazil has begun distributing prepaid cash cards to help 1,600 Venezuelan refugees buy critical supplies such as food, hygiene items or prepared meals. At Caritas Brazil's Center of Assistance, 100 Venezuelans receive legal aid and psychosocial support per day. A U.S. Department of State-supported project of Caritas Brazil will complement the government's relocation of Venezuelans, with reception support at Caritas sites across Brazil.

## Trinidad and Tobago

CRS partner Living Water Community in Trinidad attends to 150 Venezuelan migrants per week with food and cash assistance for diverse needs, including housing, medical or living expenses.



## INDONESIA

## EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI

## CONTEXT

Distributions of CRS and Caritas relief supplies are underway for thousands of families following the devastating 7.5-magnitude earthquake that struck the island of Sulawesi on September 28, triggering a deadly tsunami. The disaster caused more than 2,000 deaths, and over 10,000 people were seriously injured. Potentially, 2 million people have been affected across 85 districts, and over 211,000 are displaced in 980 evacuation centers or informal camps, with many more staying with relatives or friends.

Homes, shops, mosques and hotels collapsed, were swept away or suffered extensive damage. In the most heavily affected coastal areas, CRS and our partners noted that up to 80 percent of houses had been destroyed. Displaced families are widely dispersed, making it hard to confirm their numbers and locations.

Many families have land that is no longer usable. The earthquake caused liquefaction—when saturated soil loses strength, shifting structures significant distances from their original locations. Some 67,000 people need immediate emergency shelter and household items, and about half of those will require longer term recovery and reconstruction support.

Some 92,000 displaced people on 359 sites do not have access to toilets and more than 3,300 on 10 sites do not have access to water. Solid waste management is a major concern. The rehabilitation and cleaning of wells are key priorities to improve access to safe drinking and washing water.

Some markets and banks that had closed after the disaster have since reopened. While the Governor of Sulawesi welcomed offers of international assistance, humanitarian access to affected areas remains restricted and international nongovernmental organizations need authorization to send staff in.



Community members construct temporary shelters for those whose homes were destroyed. Photo by Maria Josephine Wijastuti/CRS

## CRS AND CARITAS RESPONSE

CRS emergency responders are working closely with Caritas Indonesia (locally known as Karina) and other local partners to access hard-to-reach areas and meet the urgent needs of the most vulnerable. Several Caritas Internationalis member organizations are supporting a coordinated response implemented by CRS and Karina. Local CRS and Karina staff members are among the most seasoned in responding to crises, given the cyclical nature of disasters in their country, and are working tirelessly to get aid to those most in need. CRS hopes to assist 44,000 people over the next 3 months.

For the first phase of the response, CRS identified 13 priority areas across the districts of Palu, Sigi and Donggala, where we are aiming to provide immediate relief to over 7,400 families. This will take place through direct supply distribution or through cash assistance.

CRS procured essential food and household items for 6,000 families, 2,000 kitchen sets and 9,000 tarpaulins. CRS and our partners have already distributed 3,926 kits of household and hygiene supplies. We have identified three villages to receive emergency shelters, assisting about 1,500 families, and 551 of these have already been built. To facilitate access to water, CRS and our partners have procured 17 water tanks. Five 2,000-liter water tanks have now been installed at informal evacuation sites, assisting about 1,224 people.

CRS will procure 140 kits of tools and protective gear to support community efforts to clear debris.

CRS and our partners are prioritizing:

- Transitional shelters—new, rehabilitated or rented—with latrines and/or bathing facilities, using cash assistance.
- Disaster risk reduction activities.
- Cash assistance for families to buy critical supplies.

“ We saw the ground splitting, with mud and water coming out. We walked with our neighbors, and kept walking. We slept under the sky that night, as we brought nothing.

Umi Sumbajono, recipient of CRS/Caritas hygiene supplies, Jono Oge village

## THE PHILIPPINES

### TYPHOON MANGKHUT

#### CONTEXT

Close to 100 people lost their lives during Typhoon Mangkhut—known locally as Ompong—which made landfall in the Philippines on September 15. With sustained winds exceeding 124 mph, Mangkhut affected more than 3 million people across northern Luzon island. More than 200,000 homes were reported damaged or destroyed. The hard-hit areas are heavily agricultural, with 288,000 farmers and fishermen severely affected. Some farmers have reported losing 90 percent of their impending rice harvest. About 236,000 displaced people were still living in evacuation centers at the end of October.

#### CRS AND CARITAS RESPONSE

CRS is working with its local Caritas partners in Benguet and Cagayan provinces, two of the hardest-hit areas, and have provided the following:

- Jerry cans and water purification tablets to 311 families in Benguet.
- Cash assistance for 1,229 families in Benguet and Cagayan to buy household, shelter and hygiene supplies. Additional cash transfers are planned for the most-affected families in both provinces.

CRS and our partners are prioritizing shelter needs in Benguet, where families are unable to return home due to the risk of landslides and land instability, which have resulted in the area being designated a no-build zone. This support is taking place through conditional cash transfers to families who were displaced by landslides and those who have been asked by the local government to move out of their homes because of the high risk of further landslides. The 6-month cash assistance will enable families to temporarily rent safe and dignified shelter while awaiting more lasting solutions.



Ramilyn Estimada, right, and her family took refuge in her aunt's home when theirs was destroyed. CRS is helping families like Ramilyn's with water purification and shelter kits. *Photo by CRS staff*



It's difficult and heartbreaking, but life must go on.

Ramilyn Estimada, who lost her home in Tuba, Benguet province

In Cagayan, CRS is working with the Diocesan Social Action Committee, other diocesan partners and the local governments to provide unconditional and unrestricted cash assistance to families whose homes were destroyed during the typhoon. This will enable them to buy some materials to repair their homes. CRS and our partners are also providing key messages to help

people rebuild their homes using disaster-resilient techniques.

CRS continues to implement relief activities with local Diocesan Social Action Committee staff and volunteers in the city of Baguio and in Cagayan. CRS has coordinated the delivery of cash assistance with local government and other humanitarian responders.



More than 200,000 homes were reported damaged or destroyed. *Photo by CRS staff*

## BANGLADESH

## ROHINGYA REFUGEE CRISIS

## CONTEXT

Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh is at the center of a pressing humanitarian crisis. Since August 2017, widespread violence in Myanmar's Rakhine State has caused 700,000 Rohingya people to flee to Bangladesh, bringing the total Rohingya refugee population to nearly 1 million. Of these, about 600,000 are living in the Kutupalong-Balukhali expansion site, the world's largest and most densely populated refugee camp.

The refugee population initially settled on a hilly landscape that was quickly deforested. Efforts have been made to improve the area as well as to resettle families in better planned, less congested settlements.

## CRS AND CARITAS RESPONSE

CRS is supporting Caritas Bangladesh to provide vital shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, living supplies and protection assistance within Kutupalong's planned and improved sites using a community-led approach. Given the dynamic operational context, CRS and Caritas Bangladesh are continually adapting project plans—including designs, locations and timeframes—to meet the refugees' most pressing needs, while maintaining high-quality programming. This flexibility enables the team to quickly respond to urgent needs. As of October 2018, CRS had assisted Caritas Bangladesh in supporting more than 263,000 Rohingya refugees.

## Shelter

- Distributed 7,390 shelter kits with technical construction support.
- Provided pre-monsoon tie-down kits to 171,697 households.
- Provided transitional shelter to 2,909 households.
- Completed 677 midterm shelters.
- In discussions with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees to build 1,500 midterm shelters in Chowkali, a new area of land being developed near Teknaf.



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

- Relocated 43,640 refugees for landslide and flood risk mitigation and infrastructure development.

## Water, sanitation and hygiene

- Constructed 219 latrines, 18 deep tube wells and 150 bathing areas.
- Distributed hygiene kits to 12,000 households.
- Promoted hygiene, including hand-washing and safe water handling.
- Provided supplies and trained community volunteers on cash-for-work activities, including cleaning latrines and bathing spaces, repairing wells and managing solid waste.

## Household supplies

- Distributed stoves and refilled liquid petroleum gas for 12,000 households.

## Disaster risk reduction and site improvement

- Designed and implemented disaster risk reduction plans with communities.
- Engaged the community in drawing maps that were then digitalized onto mapping software for ease of planning and implementing programs.

- Made ongoing improvements to drainage, paths and retention walls.
- Planted trees, shrubs and grasses, and installed street lights.
- Constructed peripheral drainage and discharge points.
- Led discussions on the design of structurally sturdy learning facilities that can be used as safe communal shelters in an emergency.

## Protection

- Activities for children are being supervised at six child friendly spaces. Plans are in place to develop a further five.
- Through the Barefoot Counselor project, community discussions were held to define concepts of protection, violence, trafficking and gender-based violence based on the communities' own understanding.
- 25 volunteers from the Rohingya community will be trained on communication techniques, confidentiality and protection principles, and on conducting household visits in the camp.
- Caritas Bangladesh received funding to build and operate three women friendly spaces, which are expected to start up in the next few months.



**INDIA**  
**CYCLONE**
**CONTEXT**

Tropical Cyclone Titli struck India on October 11, with wind gusts exceeding 100 mph. The storm brought heavy rains, with some areas receiving more than 11 inches in 24 hours. The strong winds, and flooding from heavy rains and overflowing rivers, damaged homes, farmland, roads and bridges. The hardest-hit states are Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, with reports of 7.3 million people affected, 6 million in Odisha alone. To date, 24 deaths have been reported.

Roads between villages are submerged and have been washed away in many places. Affected villages can only be reached on foot. Homes are severely damaged—tin and thatched roofs blown away and walls collapsed. In Odisha's Gajapati District, it is estimated that as many as 1,200 homes are damaged. Most houses in the affected areas are made of mud, or a mixture of mud and cement.

People were evacuated to cyclone shelters and schools. However, school shelters are overcrowded, and offer no privacy for women. Huge damage has been reported to public infrastructure, including roads, electricity and water supply. Crops have been heavily damaged in all the affected districts, leading to loss of livelihoods for people dependent on agriculture. The livelihoods of daily wage laborers and small farmers have been decimated.

Local markets were not badly impacted and are functional, and there is no shortage of supply from central markets, so food and shelter materials are available.

Immediate needs include temporary shelter, mosquito nets, safe drinking water, food, and hygiene and living supplies.



Most houses in the affected areas are made of mud, or a mixture of mud and cement.  
 Photo by Padmakeshari Sahoo/CRS

**CRS RESPONSE AND ADDITIONAL NEEDS**

CRS is working with local partners to support families in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh with the following:

- Living supplies, including mosquito nets and blankets, for 2,000 families.
- Hygiene kits and supplies, including buckets, soap and water purification tablets, for 2,000 families.
- Shelter kits for 3,500 families.

Looking ahead, CRS and our local partners are prioritizing efforts to ensure that the most vulnerable families are able to successfully transition from emergency to recovery.

These efforts will focus on providing longer-term resilience-oriented assistance, including building safer homes by incorporating disaster-resilient construction techniques, and training local masons and carpenters. We will help people recover their incomes and bolster their livelihood options by providing cash-for-work activities, and seed and livelihood fairs.

Our partners include the Society for Welfare, Animation and Development, the Srikakulam Social Service Society, and the Association for Rural Upliftment and National Allegiance.



CRS is working with partners to provide families with basic living supplies.  
 Photo Rajashree Purohit/CRS

## UGANDA

### DISPLACEMENT



Through CRS cash-for-work activities, refugees and host community members have built shelters, and water and sanitation systems. *Photo by CRS staff*

### CONTEXT

Since South Sudan gained independence in 2011, fighting between government and opposition forces has uprooted more than 1.8 million people from their homes. As of August 2018, about 1.07 million South Sudanese refugees had fled to Uganda. To reach safety, most people traveled through the bush for several days without access to food or water. Most are women and children.

The Bidi Bidi refugee settlement in the Yumbe region of northwest Uganda, where CRS is working, is one of the largest in the world. It was declared saturated when the population exceeded 288,000 people. Since January 2018, only family reunification cases have been accepted there, while new arrivals are relocated to other settlements in the West Nile sub-region of Uganda. Significant gaps remain within Bidi Bidi, and agencies are trying to respond to families' critical needs.

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

### CRS AND PARTNER RESPONSE

CRS is working closely with other humanitarian agencies to ensure a coordinated response. The CRS program is focused on a comprehensive approach to shelter for the most vulnerable, as well as water and sanitation, livelihoods, school construction and the repair or rehabilitation of infrastructure.

#### Shelter and settlement

CRS provides permanent, secure shelters for vulnerable refugees and has:

- Constructed 725 shelters for people with special needs.
- Allocated sites for the construction of another 488 shelters for the especially vulnerable.
- Constructed and renovated temporary structures for refugee registration by the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees—including shaded waiting areas, fences and large, organized spaces for registration.
- Launched the construction of two schools for 1,944 children.

#### Water, sanitation and hygiene

To prevent cholera and other life-threatening diseases, CRS is supplying vital access to clean water, sanitary household latrines, and information on good sanitation and hygiene, including the following:

- Constructed 1,736 household latrines, and hand-washing stations for 8,680 people.

- Constructed and improved motorized, solar-powered water supply systems for potable water.
- Trained 1,461 people—including 1,097 women—in sanitation practices and safe water handling.
- Provided ongoing training to water-user committees for the maintenance of new water systems and continued supervision of new construction.
- Distributed hygiene supplies to 2,800 households.
- Decommissioned 700 latrines and constructed 160 waste pits.
- Promoted hygiene and provided water and sanitation supplies, such as soap, water storage and collection containers, and sanitary pads, to 4,800 households.

### Livelihoods

When their basic needs are met, refugee families can focus on rebuilding their lives. CRS is supporting 6,000 vulnerable refugee and Ugandan families to start or strengthen their livelihood options. This includes agricultural seed and tools; various trainings in agriculture, vocational skills, entrepreneurship and financial management; the formation of farmer groups, savings groups and microenterprise groups; and access to start-up capital and a social fund through savings and lending groups.

To date:

- 1,396 refugees and host community members have completed a 3-month intensive vocational and business training course focused on carpentry, tailoring, masonry, catering and motel management, hair dressing or car mechanics.
- 1,050 members of microsavings and lending groups—80 percent of whom are women—have engaged in small enterprises like agricultural production and food sales.
- 12 people, including 3 women, received training to support microsavings programs.
- 6 demonstration gardens of cassava were established.
- 48 lead farmers, including 15 women, were selected from 6 villages to represent host and refugee communities.

## AFGHANISTAN

## DROUGHT



CRS works to ensure the health of livestock—often a family's most valuable asset. *Photo by Nikki Gamer/CRS*

## CONTEXT

In late 2017, Afghanistan began to experience a reduction in rainfall by as much as 75 percent, which continued into 2018 and has resulted in a severe drought. Across the country, crops are drying up, livestock are dying, and disease is on the rise with the scarcity of clean drinking water.

These rural areas, with an estimated population of 2.2 million people, were already experiencing chronic food shortages, and 1.4 million people are expected to suffer severe food shortages and require emergency assistance in the coming months. More than 266,000 people have been displaced across the western region due to this crisis.

## CRS AND PARTNER RESPONSE

In March this year, CRS launched its drought emergency response, which it plans to continue until at least September 2019.

After multiple assessments across Herat and Ghor provinces, CRS plans to reach more than 30,000 people with water, sanitation and hygiene programming, as well as protection of livestock—often a family's most valuable asset. In October, CRS started a water and sanitation program targeting 5,400 families in Herat, Ghor and Daykundi.

# 2.2 million

**PEOPLE ARE EXPERIENCING  
CHRONIC FOOD SHORTAGES**

The \$3 million program is supported by the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, and will provide sustained access to safe water through well construction, piping, hygiene promotion and filter distribution.

The water system construction and rehabilitation activities will take place through a cash-for-work program, enabling participants to earn a temporary income during this difficult time. CRS is hiring water engineers and construction supervisors to ensure technical oversight.

To bolster household assets, CRS is also focusing on livestock protection. This includes key messaging on preserving feed and protecting herds. Feed distributions are planned in Herat, Ghor, Daykundi and Bamiyan provinces targeting 5,000 families in 88 villages. At least 554 families have received livestock feed to date.

**CRS** faith. action. results.

## SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

## DISPLACEMENT

## CONTEXT

Now in its seventh year, Syria's internal armed conflict has taken an alarming toll on millions of people. While some areas of the country have stabilized and are trying to recover from 7 years of war, others continue to be subject to heavy rocket and mortar attacks. In the first half of 2018, nearly 700,000 people were displaced by the conflict.

The widespread insecurity and unbearable economic conditions have resulted in the displacement of 13.1 million people, with 5.6 million seeking refuge in neighboring countries. Most are women, children and the elderly.

Syria's neighbors bear a heavy burden: Lebanon and Jordan are now home to more than 1 million refugees each, with nearly 80 percent of the refugee population in each country living below the poverty line. Syrian refugees now represent a quarter of Lebanon's total population, a higher proportion of refugees than in any other nation. The influx of refugees into Lebanon and Jordan has strained public services, especially the education system.

In these countries, Syrian refugees have limited livelihood and education opportunities. They have had to sell their valuables to pay rent, and buy food and other essentials, and are increasingly vulnerable to risks like child labor, begging and child marriage.

Education is a primary need. Many refugee children have been out of school for months—even years—making it challenging to integrate back into schools. Stress, anxiety and trauma from the conflict also interfere with children's learning.



Aziza, a Syrian refugee from Aleppo, lives with her 4-year-old son in a refugee camp in Lebanon. Photo by Ismail Ferdous for CRS

## CRS RESPONSE

Since the Syrian war began, CRS and our Church partners have been working to provide comprehensive support for communities and families across the Middle East.

## Education

- Remedial tutoring classes each school year for 1,815 students who are already enrolled in public schools, to help them succeed and prevent attrition.
- Kindergarten for 540 children each year to prepare them to enter formal schools.
- Outreach to Syrian refugee families to promote educational opportunities for children.
- Transportation, healthy snacks and supplies to facilitate attendance and learning.
- Trainings for teachers and bus monitors to better educate and protect students.

## Psychosocial support

- Group counseling for 6,000 students, supplemented by individual counseling when needed.
- Psychosocial classroom activities for 2,355 children per year.
- Recreational activities outside the classroom.
- Training for counselors, staff and teachers to identify and support children with psychological needs
- Infrastructure improvements to the learning environment.

## Parent involvement

- Parent-teacher association meetings and other engagement opportunities for parents to connect with their children's teachers and school support staff.
- Helping parents learn new techniques to support their children's education and ensure they can learn and grow in a safe and healthy home environment.

## Shelter and rent assistance

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

## Living supplies

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

## Food

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

## Medical assistance

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

## Hygiene and sanitation

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

## IRAQ

## DISPLACEMENT

**CONTEXT**

Since ISIS first captured Mosul 4 years ago, up to 5.9 million Iraqis have been displaced. Following an intensive operation, Iraqi forces retook most ISIS-held areas. With an estimated 8.7 million people still in need, the needs of returnees now surpass those of internally displaced people. As of October 2018, 4 million Iraqis had returned home, while almost 1.9 million remain displaced. CRS has identified significant gaps in restoring education, repairing housing and recovering livelihoods in areas of return.

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## 4 million

**IRAQIS HAD RETURNED HOME  
AS OF OCTOBER**

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CRS and Caritas Iraq are focusing initial returnee support on the Nineveh Plains, where an estimated half of uprooted families have returned in the past year. Livelihood opportunities are limited and, for returnees, the relief of returning after years of displacement is tempered by the challenge of rebuilding their lives.

The years of conflict have created instability and destroyed infrastructure. Iraq's education system has been deeply affected—an estimated one in four schools was destroyed, and many more damaged. Returning safely and with dignity to areas retaken from ISIS will also require land mine removal, significant investment in infrastructure and the rebuilding of local economies.



This child's family has returned to the home it fled in Bashiqa, Iraq. CRS provides cash assistance that enables such families to repair their conflict-damaged homes. *Photo by Megan Gilbert/CRS*

**CRS AND PARTNER RESPONSE**

CRS and Caritas Iraq have helped more than 300,000 people with a range of support in Dohuk, Nineveh, Kirkuk, Baghdad and Anbar. We take a community-based approach to meeting the diverse needs of those who have returned, those who are still displaced, and other vulnerable host community members. CRS and Caritas Iraq also give careful consideration to the dynamic among people of various religious and ethnic backgrounds. As a key step in rebuilding trust broken by the conflict, CRS is rolling out social cohesion activities in areas that have been retaken from ISIS.

**Education**

CRS and Caritas Iraq are supporting over 10,000 children with access to quality formal primary and secondary education while they are displaced. Once they return home, support includes physical upgrades to schools, teaching materials and teacher training. CRS is scaling up our education support in areas of return, ensuring schools are safely repaired, and that teachers and parents are equipped to support the emotional needs of students.

**Livelihoods**

CRS and Caritas Iraq are providing cash grants and coaching as families restart small businesses. This programming will be expanded with job readiness and entrepreneurship training to support youth who have returned home.

**Shelter**

Many families continue to live in displacement across Dohuk, Kirkuk, Nineveh, Anbar and on the outskirts of Baghdad. Families returning to cities recently retaken by Iraqi military forces are finding their homes damaged. With their finances depleted and few options for earning an income, they face huge challenges. Shelter activities include the following:

- **Building upgrades** Over 80,000 people have received shelter support, with a further 15,000 to benefit this year. This includes improving the safety, weatherproofing and privacy of buildings where families have taken refuge.
- **House repairs for returnees** Cash and technical help is being provided so that families can repair their homes.
- **Core housing units** When a home has been severely damaged or destroyed, CRS constructs transitional core housing units on the returnee family's property. These are designed to enable families to add further rooms when they have the funds to do so.

**Essential living supplies**

Returning families often need basic living supplies like kitchen sets, bedding and stoves. CRS provides cash grants that enable them to buy what they need most, which supports local vendors and injects cash into the economy. More than 200,000 displaced families have received such support.

## EUROPE

## REFUGEE AND MIGRANT CRISIS

## CONTEXT

Refugees continue to undertake dangerous journeys to Europe. CRS and our partners have assisted 400,000 refugees and migrants across Greece, Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia, Bulgaria, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, where we also help other vulnerable groups. We prioritize support for displaced families as they build new lives in communities where they have been granted asylum, with the goal of helping them become self-sufficient.

## CRS AND PARTNER RESPONSE GREECE

An estimated 60,000 refugees and asylum seekers are in Greece.

**Cash assistance** We provide refugee and migrant families in camps with ATM cards that they can use to buy supplies in local shops. In support of the Greece Cash Alliance—a coordinating body of humanitarian agencies, the U.N. Refugee Agency and the government—CRS has helped ensure access to cash for 2,200 people monthly and helped 17,000 people with this vital assistance since 2017.

**Urban transitional shelter support**

CRS and Caritas have provided safe, dignified housing for 4,800 asylum seekers through the renovation of apartments in Athens and Thessaloniki; families also receive cash assistance to cover basic needs. Trained case managers have given 15,250 referrals for specialized assistance, and accompanied families during medical appointments for physical and mental health needs, as well as legal and social services.

To help refugee and migrant families better integrate both socially and economically into Greek society, CRS works with our partners to provide vital job skills, education, long-term affordable housing and social opportunities including:

- **Buddy program** Greek families are paired with refugee families to help orient them to the city and develop friendships.



In Žepče, Bosnia and Herzegovina, a CRS agricultural project supported Mehmed and Amira Hasanbasic to expand their vegetable production to boost their income. *Photo by Paul Eagle/CRS*

- **Livelihoods** CRS and Caritas have helped 190 refugees with training and links to job opportunities. This includes job readiness support such as resume writing, interview skills, Greek language classes and registering for necessary legal documentation. For children, activities include support to enroll in Greek schools, tutoring and homework support, sports clubs and arts activities.
- **Shelter** We work with the Athens municipality and local partners to explore affordable housing options to help refugees move out of provided shelter and live independently.
- Helped 95 refugees and asylum seekers find employment in the past year, offering livelihoods and integration support to 580 people.
- Assisted 1,900 people to meet their needs through cash assistance, and targeted a further 300 people with short-term cash support.
- Provided temporary housing for 160 people, with support for an additional 20 families. Assisted another 100 families with emergency shelter.

## UKRAINE

## DISPLACEMENT

As the conflict in eastern Ukraine enters its fifth year, more than 3.4 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance. Loss of livelihoods, rising prices and poor access to markets make food security a year-round challenge for internally displaced people and residents.

**Livelihoods** CRS and Caritas Ukraine have provided agricultural cash grants to 552 families, with technical assistance to vulnerable families for small-scale farming activities. We have also supported urban livelihoods. Vulnerable women improve their social and economic well-being through skills training and grants to start small businesses.

**Shelter** CRS continues to explore long-term, durable housing solutions for internally displaced people.

## SERBIA

More than 3,600 asylum seekers are estimated to be in Serbia. Almost 90 percent are staying in government-run centers. CRS and our partners have renovated 3 of 18 reception centers and built 2 ambulance offices and child friendly spaces within the centers. We provide medical protection in 9 centers, and have helped 6,740 people with cash assistance for basic living needs.

## BULGARIA

CRS supports people in 4 refugee camps and 2 detention centers, and provides services for refugees outside the camps. Assistance includes:

- Shelter, cash, educational and recreational activities, case management and livelihoods.

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

Fear of famine looms in Yemen as fighting and air strikes have escalated drastically, including in the main port of Hudaydah. Yemen is being devastated by war between forces loyal to the government—backed by a Saudi Arabia-led coalition—and Houthi rebels. More than 10,000 people have been killed since March 2015.

The conflict and a supply blockade have triggered a humanitarian disaster, leaving 70 percent of the population urgently in need of aid. Eight million people are dependent on food aid for survival, and the United Nations has warned that an estimated 14 million are on the brink of starvation. People's inability to access vital food stems from the sustained punitive economic measures imposed by the Saudi-led coalition, including blockades, import restrictions and withholding the salaries of millions of civil servants. Meanwhile, food and fuel prices have doubled and millions are left without the means to feed themselves or their families.

The latest UNICEF figures estimate 1.8 million acutely malnourished children, with more than 400,000 children under age 5 suffering from severe, life-threatening malnutrition.

Compounding the crisis is a deadly cholera outbreak, reported to be the worst in the world, which is escalating at roughly 10,000 suspected cases per week. As of November 2018, more than 1.2 million cases of cholera, resulting in 2,515 deaths, had been recorded. The epidemic struck when the capacity of the health system was crippled by two years of continuous conflict and import restrictions. Health infrastructure also collapsed, hampering water, sanitation and hygiene services.



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

The inaccessibility of some high-risk areas has obstructed the humanitarian response, as has a shortage of resources, including laboratory supplies and rapid diagnostic test kits. Communities need access to established, fully equipped and supplied diarrheal treatment centers, case management guidelines, training, and staff payment and support.

**CRS AND PARTNER RESPONSE**

Through our partner, Islamic Relief Yemen, CRS continues to coordinate with government ministries and humanitarian agencies to provide aid. Activities have included the following:

**Emergency nutrition**

- Treated 18,600 children under age 5 suffering from moderate acute malnutrition, and 13,500 pregnant and breastfeeding women. Some 13,350 children and 10,000 women were discharged as cured.
- Treated 5,700 people with severe acute malnutrition, with 3,190 discharged as cured.
- Recruited and trained health workers and community health volunteers.
- Counseled mothers and caretakers of children under age 2 on nutrition and improved hygiene.
- Provided food supplements for children 6 to 24 months old, and pregnant and breastfeeding women.
- Distributed medicines, supplies and furniture to 33 health facilities.

**Cholera prevention and relief**

- Provided medicine to 2,110 diarrhea patients.
- Provided hygiene kits, jerry cans and water treatment tablets to 4,000 households.
- Provided treatment centers with solid waste bins, cleaning kits and mosquito nets.
- Provided educational materials for cholera and hygiene sessions, and reached 4,000 households through trained hygiene promoters.

**Water, sanitation and hygiene**

- Provided access to safe, clean water through the rehabilitation of water reservoirs—including cleaning and plastering the inner side of ponds, providing fencing for safety from accidents, repair of sedimentation tanks, and constructing water collection channels.
- Installed solar pumps, water tanks and water distribution points, water taps for human use, and water basins for livestock.
- Trained water management committees on safe water use, sustainability practices, operation and maintenance of boreholes, financial management and record keeping.
- Trained 40 community volunteers on hygiene promotion activities. Training topics included key hygiene messages, steps to carry out promotion at the household and community levels, and techniques to inspire hygiene.