



Burundian returnees and IDPs participate in cash-for-work activities in Burundi's Muyinga Province, both restoring critical roads in the community and gaining income to address their family's urgent food needs.

Photo: CRS, 2018.

CRS in Emergency Response & Recovery:

RESPONDING WITH CRITICAL RELIEF TO EMERGENCIES IN BURUNDI SINCE 1962

HISTORY & EXPERIENCE

CRS' emergency programming in Burundi has ranged from life-saving responses to longer-term recovery efforts addressing both conflict and natural disasters. Burundi continues to face chronic crisis, including displacement, flooding, and food insecurity while also being highly vulnerable to disease outbreak. Placing partnership at the core of its programming, CRS works with local organizations and relevant government ministries to serve the unique needs of vulnerable people, including refugees, returnees, internally displaced people, as well as malnourished children and pregnant women.

After first responding to flooding in 1962, CRS' presence as an emergency actor proved critical in 1988 when the agency began serving displaced people amid widespread violence. In 1993, CRS opened offices in each diocese of Burundi at the start of the civil war and, together with Caritas partners, delivered food and non-food item (NFI) assistance across the country.

Throughout CRS' commitment to serving the most vulnerable across Burundi's chronic crises, the agency has executed emergency programming in the following domains:

- Cash (including multi-purpose cash grants and Cash-for-Work)
- Food assistance
- NFI
- Shelter
- Water, Hygiene and Sanitation
- Livelihood support

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMS (CTPs)

CRS leverages its global expertise in information and communication technologies for development (ICT4D) to better and more quickly serve people in crisis. In 2018, CRS Burundi piloted the Cash and Asset Transfer (CAT) platform¹, a web-based tool that ensures transparency and empowers participants through increased choice, during an emergency response in Muyinga Province. CAT facilitated the registration of 750 vulnerable households and the distribution of nearly US \$50,000 in food assistance and 20,000 kg of seeds through electronic vouchers. This technology strengthens CRS' capacity to conduct real-time data analysis and remotely ensure program quality during emergencies.

¹Operating on the RedRose ONESystem and customized for CRS



RECENT EXPERIENCE

Following displacement into the northeastern province of Muyinga in 2018, CRS and Caritas led seed fairs, helping returnees, IDPs, and host community members restore their agricultural livelihoods before the lean season.
Photo: CRS, 2018.



RESPONDING TO REGIONAL DISPLACEMENT

Following conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo's South Kivu Province in January 2018, CRS provided urgent support to 700 Congolese refugee households and 300 Burundian returnee households who fled into the Nyanza Lac Commune in Burundi, where a cholera outbreak was underway. CRS distributed NFI kits consisting of tarpaulin, rope, water containers, chlorine tablets, mosquito nets, feminine sanitation napkins, and other essential household items, supporting displaced families to access clean drinking water and safe shelter solutions.

BRIDGING THE HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS

Since 2014, CRS has implemented the USAID/FFP-funded *Amashiga* Development Food Assistance Program in the Muyinga Province, combatting chronic malnutrition through integrated health, agriculture, governance and gender programming. In 2018, relative peace in Burundi yielded an inflow of food insecure Burundian returnees and IDPs into the province. To mitigate the impact of this shock on already vulnerable host communities competing for limited land and water resources, CRS leveraged private resources and support from Latter-Day Saints Charities to launch an emergency response in parallel with DFAP interventions. 750 returnee, IDP, and vulnerable host community households were targeted – ensuring programming which contributes to social cohesion – to participate in food and livelihood fairs as well as cash-for-work activities. Following this emergency intervention designed to assist vulnerable people address their

immediate food needs, beneficiaries were integrated into on-going DFAP programming, supporting their longer-term resilience.

SOCIAL COHESION MAINSTREAMING

Since the launch of the USAID-funded *Dukire Tubane* Project in 2017, CRS has adapted its signature 3B's approach (*binding, bonding & bridging*) to strengthen social cohesion amongst youth and local authorities following the 2015 electoral violence. CRS' peacebuilding experience informs emergency programming as well, easing tensions during reintegration and ensuring the "do no harm" principle is upheld.

NEXT STEPS: SAFE AND DURABLE SHELTER & EBOLA PREPARATION

Building on the agency's global leadership in shelter and settlements, CRS seeks to fill a gap in shelter actors in Burundi by leveraging private resources in 2019 to construct safe and durable emergency shelter for displaced people and flooding victims. In compliance with Sphere standards, CRS promotes technically sound and locally appropriate shelter designs.

As the Ebola outbreak in neighboring DRC continues, CRS Burundi will support local communities in the high-risk provinces of Bujumbura Mairie and Bubanza to understand the threat of and approaches to prevent Ebola. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and WHO, CRS will leverage the existing *Dukire Tubane* field team to incorporate key Ebola messaging into their weekly sensitization activities. As the Ebola crisis evolves, CRS remains focused on supporting local communities' readiness to reduce their vulnerability.

