



A local mason, trained by the CRS Sandji Ko project, models resilient construction practices for a flood-prone community. Photo by CRS staff

CRS in Resilience

REINFORCING COMMUNITY CAPACITY TO OVERCOME SHOCKS IN MALI

In recent years, Mali has experienced an escalation of chronic natural and man-made crises. Vulnerable families face both drought and flooding due to increased climatic variability. While CRS' Emergency Department responds to sudden-onset crises and supports recovery efforts, three unique projects accompany communities in strengthening their resilience to withstand future shocks. Bridging humanitarian and development efforts, CRS supports families and communities to reduce their vulnerability to short-term shocks while empowering local structures to address the key root causes of vulnerability and fragility with concrete skills to recover from disasters and reduce their impact in the longer term. In partnership with the Government of Mali, CRS promotes and expands the reach of existing government policies to remote communities.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE REACHED BY CRS RESILIENCE PROGRAMMING IN 2016

518,362

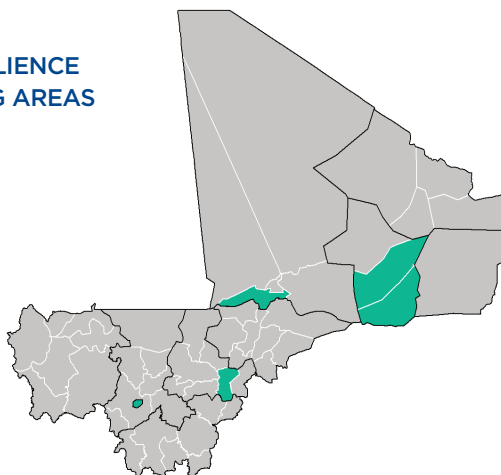
VALUE OF CRS RESILIENCE PROGRAMMING IN 2016

\$1.3 million

NUMBER OF FLOOD-WARNING MARKERS ESTABLISHED IN URBAN ZONES TO PROMOTE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

50

CRS MALI RESILIENCE PROGRAMMING AREAS



Implementing DRR practices and policies

Mali's poorest communities are disproportionately affected by the rainy season each year, as poorly constructed homes in the Niger River Basin are highly vulnerable to flood damage. To strengthen local capacity to mitigate flood impact, CRS launched the 20-month Sandji Ko project, meaning "challenges related to the rain" in Bambara. With the support of CRS, community members in 30 neighborhoods in the urban centers of Bamako and San conducted in-depth problem analyses to prioritize their unique vulnerabilities to flooding. After developing specific plans on how to address prioritized vulnerabilities with locally sourced solutions, communities received micro-grants from CRS to put their plans into action. In addition to promoting proper waste management, flood readiness, and other disaster risk reduction (DRR) skills through radio broadcasts, more than 440 members of local early warning committees were trained in DRR principles, and 350 youth received first aid training. As existing DRR legislation is unenforced, CRS and its partners, including the National Directorate for Civil Protection, continue to advocate to the national parliament to promote higher-level support of local community efforts.

Strengthening social safety nets and food security

Food and nutritional insecurity have been exacerbated in recent years by climatic shocks affecting agriculture and livestock, price fluctuations in national and regional markets, and continued insecurity and displacement. In response to alarming rates of malnutrition in Mali's northern regions, the European Union and the Government of Mali, together with CRS and its partners, launched the EU-PRORESA-funded Lafia program in December 2016 in 167 particularly vulnerable villages of the Timbuktu and Gao regions. Lafia will facilitate the transition from recurring humanitarian responses to development actions addressing the structural causes of vulnerability. The 3-year program aims to raise awareness of national social protection policies with an emphasis on infant and young child health and nutrition. In addition to rehabilitating water points and reinforcing positive hygiene and sanitation actions, the program will strengthen linkages to support referral management for cases of severe malnutrition. Supporting households to diversify their income sources and sustainably manage natural resources will increase food availability, while trained early warning groups will be readied to mitigate and respond to food and nutritional crises. Lafia is one of five programs collaborating under the wider EU-funded Project Key, which seeks to build resilience across northern Mali.



Weather observers in Gabero Commune, Gao, learn how to measure and record rainfall to support disaster risk reduction efforts.

Photo by CRS staff

Supporting adaptation to climate extremes

In response to chronic drought, CRS works with smallholder farmers and communities to stabilize their situation in the face of increasingly unpredictable weather. The Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters, or BRACED, project addresses the additional strains climate change is placing on farming in both Mali and Niger. With funding from UK Aid, CRS and its partners work alongside local government services in agriculture, livestock, and early warning systems, to support nearly 211,000 people in the Niger River Valley of Mali's Gao region to adopt new agricultural techniques, diversify their income sources, and better manage their resources in the face of more frequent droughts and floods. Collaboration with the national meteorological society, Mali Meteo, has expanded the reach of this important research and information-sharing body, and has allowed a larger section of the population to benefit from important weather forecasting information. The 3-year project places equal focus on men's and women's leadership while developing community ownership of the importance of DRR and climate change adaptation. This cross-border initiative contributed to the successful integration of disaster risk reduction into the development plans of each of the seven targeted communes in the Gao region.

OUR WORK IN MALI

Placing partnership at the core of our programming, CRS works closely with counterparts in relevant Government of Mali ministries at the national, regional and district levels, as well as with local civil society partners in nearly every program. Working in Mali since 1999, CRS has proven experience coordinating complex, multi-stakeholder emergency and development projects, and has established offices in Bamako, Mopti, Timbuktu and Gao, and programming in all regions of the country, except Kidal.

