

GLOBAL EMERGENCY UPDATE

This update provides the latest snapshot of the most pressing humanitarian emergency responses. Catholic Relief Services teams and partners are carrying out vital emergency relief and recovery efforts 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.



EAST AFRICA



Displaced by drought, this woman and her children are among 18,000 families in Somalia and Kenya that CRS is helping with food and water. *Photo by Nancy McNally/CRS*

Drought in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia has led to a hunger crisis that has devastated millions of families. Grazing land is scarce, rivers are drying up, livestock are

starving and people are on the move. In South Sudan, famine, caused by conflict, has been declared in three counties. CRS is responding across the region.

Check out these two new videos from East Africa:

[Hunger Crisis in Africa](#) video from Somalia
and a [first-person report from Kenya](#) by CRS' Nancy McNally

EUROPE, THE MIDDLE EAST AND CENTRAL ASIA

IRAQ

Iraqi forces are actively retaking territories and cities previously under ISIS control. As these forces continue to reclaim areas of Mosul—Iraq's second-largest city—lifesaving shelter, water and sanitation, living supplies and other emergency assistance are critical. CRS is ramping up shelter activities, as well as support for people's safe and dignified living conditions and care for children.

SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

CRS has helped more than 1.4 million Syrians across the Middle East and Europe, and continually adjusts services as the situation evolves. As the living conditions for people within Syria deteriorate further and force even more people to flee, CRS is adapting its responses in neighboring countries to meet changing needs, and advocates in the United States for greater humanitarian assistance.

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

In Chad, Cameroon, Niger and Nigeria, Boko Haram extremists have killed thousands of people, planting bombs in public places, abducting women and girls, conscripting young men and boys, and destroying villages and towns. Boko Haram is destroying farmland, seizing livestock and forcing markets and farms to close. At least 8.2 million people urgently need food, water and basic supplies. CRS and our local partners are supporting 100,000 people with emergency relief, including food, water, sanitation and hygiene, and livelihoods and agricultural support.

LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN

HAITI

Six months after the devastation of Hurricane Matthew, recovery is well underway in Haiti's South and Grand'Anse departments. CRS efforts have transitioned from emergency relief to heavy investment in agriculture, livelihoods and shelter recovery for up to 200,000 people in the hardest-hit areas.

EAST AFRICA

HUNGER CRISIS

OVERVIEW

A hunger crisis is besieging East Africa. In Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia, lack of rain has devastated millions of families. Grazing land is becoming scarce, rivers are drying up, livestock are starving and people are on the move. In Somalia, conditions are potentially worse than the drought of 2011, which killed 250,000 people. Half of the country's population is in need of food, and 1 million children are malnourished. The governments of Kenya and Somalia have declared a national emergency.

In South Sudan, famine has been declared in three counties in the state of Unity. Hunger there is rooted in conflict: Fighting between government and opposition forces has uprooted 3.6 million people, killing tens of thousands. The conflict is largely recognized as a struggle between the country's two largest ethnic groups. Many families were forced to abandon their farms and livestock—critical sources of food, nutrition and income. At least 100,000 people face starvation in the counties of Leer and Mayendit. An estimated 1 million children under age 5 are acutely malnourished. Stunting, caused by inadequate nutrition, is largely irreversible and has long term effects.

South Sudan has become the world's third largest refugee crisis, after Syria and Afghanistan. At least 850,000 South Sudanese refugees are living in Uganda. In the first quarter of 2017, an average of 1,800 South Sudanese refugees arrived in Uganda daily. Across the region, cholera is on the rise. There have been 3 outbreaks in South Sudan and an estimated 22,000 cases in Somalia, with high fatality rates.

CRS RESPONSE

In Kenya's northern counties and south-central Somalia,



CRS partnered with the World Food Program to airdrop emergency food to 180,000 people facing starvation in South Sudan. Photo by Donal Reilly/CRS

South Sudanese refugees are forced to walk through the bush for several days to reach Uganda due to insecurity on the roads. They have few belongings and limited access to food and water. Women and children account for 86 percent of the refugees.

CRS is providing an integrated package of immediate, lifesaving support to 18,000 drought-affected families, or more than 100,000 people. CRS will also ease people's need to migrate or sell their livestock by providing critical water infrastructure, and livestock and agricultural support. To help prevent the spread of cholera, CRS is distributing hygiene materials and organizing information campaigns.

In South Sudan, CRS is providing food aid to 514,660 people, focusing on the central part of the country where levels of hunger and malnutrition are critical. In addition, CRS provided food to 334,560 people through food-for-work activities that built community infrastructure like ditches and roads. When violence prevented work, CRS provided direct food aid, including food to pregnant or nursing women and 14,500 children under age 5. CRS also partnered with the World Food Program to airdrop more than 33 million pounds of food for 180,000 people in areas

inaccessible by land. Further, CRS is providing critical water infrastructure, supporting cholera prevention efforts, and carrying out peace building activities to address the roots of the conflict.

In Uganda, CRS and partners like Caritas Uganda are providing water, sanitation and hygiene assistance to people in Bidibidi—the world's largest refugee settlement. This includes:

- Improving the water distribution for two boreholes serving 1,600 families, or 8,000 people
- Constructing 2,000 household latrines
- Decommissioning 500 unhygienic communal latrines
- Conducting hygiene promotion activities and distributing supplies

In Ethiopia, CRS is helping families reduce their risk of disaster, and providing vast water infrastructure and high quantities of seed for agricultural recovery. CRS also provides food assistance to more than 1 million people every month.

OVERVIEW

Iraqi and coalition forces are actively retaking territories and cities previously under ISIS control. As these forces have retaken Eastern Mosul and continue to advance on Western Mosul, the United Nations reports that 500,000 civilians have been displaced since October 2016. Families fleeing Mosul have largely been sent to camps located in Ninewa governate.

The United Nations predicts an increase in civilians fleeing Western Mosul. Lifesaving shelter, water and sanitation, living supplies and other emergency assistance are critical.

Many families have been separated, and children and adults have witnessed horrific brutality. The crisis in Iraq has stretched the response capacity of humanitarian agencies, with 3 million Iraqis displaced by armed conflict. According to the United Nations, at least 10 million people need assistance. The heat of summer is on its way, with temperatures well over 110 degrees Fahrenheit expected in the height of summer.

Many displaced families are religious minorities, including Yazidis and Christians, who fled primarily to Dohuk, Anbar and Kirkuk in 2014. More recent displacements, mostly from the Arab Sunni community, include families that have lived under ISIS control for as long as 2 years. They often faced torture or risked death when attempting to flee.

CRS RESPONSE

CRS is partnering closely with Caritas Iraq to support 250,000 people. We hired 50 Iraqis to staff positions, and a larger team of workers in the field. We have offices in Dohuk, Erbil, Kirkuk and Baghdad. CRS and Caritas Iraq are providing comprehensive support, including shelter, water



Rasmia Mahamoud, far right, and her family fled ISIS and now live in a CRS transitional shelter. Photo courtesy of the Sunni Endowment.

INNOVATION SPOTLIGHT FROM THE FIELD

When 85,000 people fled the Battle of Fallujah in 2016, many were stranded in informal refugee settlements like Amiriyat Al-Fallujah, which has treacherous living conditions and is only reachable by a bridge open 4 hours a day. Explosions in the surrounding area made the settlement extremely insecure. CRS and partners have provided emergency support for tens of thousands of people there.

CRS designed a transitional shelter made of locally available wood to keep families warm in the winter and cool in the summer. The doors and windows have locks, providing safety to families who have been living in fear. The shelter is on a raised concrete slab, which keeps the floor dry. There is also fly mesh on the windows and the option of a partition to separate living areas. The shelter can be disassembled and taken with families once they return to their hometowns, providing transitional shelter if their homes have been destroyed.

“Before, there was no tent that could hold all of us,” says Rasmia, who lives with her daughter and grandchildren in Amiriyat Al-Fallujah refugee settlement. “This shelter allows us to be together. We are dry, we have a door that we can lock and feel safe. Even though we have no house, our home is where our family is together.”

and sanitation, critical living supplies, education, and social and emotional support. Our community-based approach always considers the dynamics between displaced and host communities, and between people of different religious and ethnic backgrounds.

CRS and Caritas Iraq provided 1,500 families recently displaced from Mosul with relief supplies in Nargazilia camp in Ninewa. We are also distributing cash for assistance to 1,600 families in Kirkuk city who recently fled fighting in Hawija or Mosul, and another 1,000 families who recently arrived in Baghdad city.

Across the country, CRS continues to provide:

- Education support for 9,000 children in 26 schools in Dohuk, Ninewa and Kirkuk governates
- Shelter for 35,000 people through the upgrade and repair of nearly 2,500 buildings across northern Iraq, and increasingly on the outskirts of Baghdad
- Toilets and access to water for 13,300 people
- Essential living supplies through cash grants
- Food assistance through vouchers, to be used in local markets

SYRIA

REFUGEE CRISIS

OVERVIEW

Conditions in Syria have deteriorated even further. In early April, a suspected chemical attack killed more than 80 people in the rebel-held town of Khan Sheikhoun, in northwestern Syria. Other attacks since February have led to the displacement of 787,000 people from northern and southern Syria, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Many struggle with family separation and grief. Mothers and young children fled the violence without their husbands and fathers, who may be missing, killed, still in Syria or in Europe applying for asylum. Many elderly people stayed in Syria, unable to flee with their families. People are anxious about their loved ones, where to go, who to trust and what to do. They long to be reunited. Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Egypt continue to support millions of refugees, with strained resources.

CRS RESPONSE

CRS has helped more than 1.4 million Syrians across the Middle East and Europe, and continually adjusts services as the situation evolves. CRS works closely with the Catholic Church, especially Caritas and our religious partners, who have deep roots in the region. In Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey and Egypt, we provide the following assistance:

Shelter and rent assistance:

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

Living supplies: Prepackaged relief kits of bedding, stoves, buckets and other household items are provided to newly arriving refugees.

Children's education, support and trauma counseling: Services include tutoring, recreational



Wardah could not write her name before attending CRS' catch up classes for Syrian refugees in Jordan. Along with 7,750 other children, she is now learning, drawing and recovering. Photo by Oscar Durand for CRS

activities and trauma counseling for children.

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

Medical assistance: Immediate care for life-threatening injuries, care for chronic conditions such as diabetes, and maternal and childcare, are included.

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

In Europe, CRS and our local partners have provided assistance to more than 400,000 refugees and migrants across Greece and the Balkans, primarily in Serbia and Macedonia. About half are Syrians, and Iraqis are the next-largest group. Assistance includes:

Food and emergency living supplies: CRS has prioritized the use of prepaid debit cards to allow people to buy items in local markets. Cash allows families the dignity of prioritizing and choosing what they buy, and offers them some sense of control.

Temporary shelter: In Athens, CRS is partnering with the UNHCR

to provide temporary shelter by repairing vacant buildings across the city. For many, it is their first warm, safe, dignified shelter after months of travel and years of war. We are identifying suitable buildings and neighborhoods; negotiating lease agreements; working with building owners, the private sector and local officials; furnishing units; and covering maintenance costs. The average stay will likely be 5 to 6 months, at a cost of \$20 to \$40 per person per month, or about \$1 per day. We will engage local communities in activities to build relations between hosts, and refugees and migrants.

Urban services: CRS and Caritas are managing two service hubs in central Athens that provide hot meals, child friendly spaces, shower facilities, access to social workers and translators, referrals to medical services, rest areas and internet access. An estimated 600 people use these services daily. Transitional shelters will also offer families access to a variety of social services.

Information, translation and legal resources: CRS and Caritas provide information, translation and legal resources so refugees and their families can understand their rights and make informed decisions.

LAKE CHAD BASIN

CONFLICT AND DISPLACEMENT

OVERVIEW

The Lake Chad Basin—which includes areas of Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon—is one of the world’s poorest regions. Recently, it has been besieged by conflict. Boko Haram extremists have killed thousands of people, primarily in northeastern Nigeria, planting bombs in public places, abducting women and girls, conscripting young men and boys, and destroying villages and towns. Boko Haram is destroying farmland, seizing livestock and forcing markets and farms to close. In some areas, people have not been able to plant or harvest for 3 years, and millions now face severe food shortages. At least 8.2 million people urgently need food, water and basic supplies. Uprooted from their homes, 2.7 million of them also need shelter. However, in the past month, armed militant attacks and suicide bombings limited humanitarian access.

CRS REGIONAL RESPONSE

CRS and our local partners are supporting 100,000 people with emergency relief, including water, sanitation and hygiene, food, and livelihoods and agricultural support.

NIGERIA

CRS will support communities and informal settlements in and around Maiduguri with:

1. Food, through monthly vouchers, and hygiene and living supplies
2. Shelter, counseling, and water, sanitation and hygiene
3. Seed and tool distributions to replenish farms, and ongoing health assistance at clinics

NIGER

CRS has reached about 6,000 families, and plans to reach others through:



Moussa Mai and Hassane Issa, now fishermen on Lake Chad, both fled their hometowns due to Boko Haram. Moussa, right, traveled 4 days by boat to reach safety, with nothing but the clothes on his back. *Photo by Michael Stulman/CRS*

- Vouchers for 83,065 people, or 11,616 families, to purchase food and soap
- Malnutrition screenings for 3,737 children under age 5—183 of whom are suffering from acute malnutrition and have been referred to clinics for treatment
- Follow up visits with 235 caretakers of children with acute malnutrition
- Household kits with cooking, water and hygiene items
- Shelter support, including accommodation for women, the elderly, people with disabilities and children raising siblings
- Cash-for-work opportunities for 2,000 vulnerable families
- Construction of boreholes, latrines and water stations for laundry and hand-washing
- Distributions of water purification tablets, formation of water management committees and health awareness campaigns
- Peacebuilding activities to reduce tension between displaced people and host communities
- Establishment of gardening and savings groups to strengthen resilience
- Training for groups to protect the most vulnerable in the community, as well as a training for field staff on social cohesion, conflict management, and hygiene and sanitation

CAMEROON

CRS provided families with cash grants. At least one third of families invested in their economic recovery by purchasing small animals for breeding, supporting a small business or preparing for next year’s harvest. Support included:

- Involving 800 families in cash-for-work activities
- Supporting 2,600 families with cash grants and financial literacy trainings
- Training 796 people in farming and conservation techniques
- Launching seed and tool fairs for 800 families

CHAD

- Food, seeds, tools and agricultural training to 3,500 families
- Provide 1,000 families with 2 goats each, veterinary care and 2 months of fodder
- Training for 50 animal health workers on livestock health and management
- Nutrition education and cooking demonstrations for 231 families
- Training for 353 families on improved fishing techniques
- Livelihoods support through 25 savings groups to help 1,750 people build financial resilience
- Emergency “lean season” support for 700 of the most vulnerable uprooted families, providing 2 months of food, seed and fishing kits

HAITI

HURRICANE MATTHEW

Hurricane Matthew, the Category 4 storm that hit Haiti on October 4, 2016, passed directly over the southwestern peninsula, destroying homes, infrastructure, farmland and businesses. The hurricane affected 2.1 million people across the country. The government of Haiti estimates that 120,000 homes were either severely damaged or destroyed. Nearly all crops were destroyed in some locations, creating an acute food shortage with potential long-term effects. The South and Grand'Anse departments, close to the storm's center, were the most affected.

CRS provided emergency relief supplies to 200,000 people in the first months of response. We are dedicated to working closely with families and communities as they rebuild and recover. We are engaging local vendors to supply small farmers with seeds and tools, and launching training to help families, tradespeople and engineers to build back safer.

Recovery activities began in mid-November, when farmers were provided seed vouchers for the winter planting season. We also launched activities to improve hygiene, build back safer and provide cash-for-work projects across 7 communities, benefiting 65,000 people. This programming took place in a challenging environment of insecurity and political instability. Our focus moving forward will be on shelter and agricultural livelihoods.

IMPACT TO DATE

Emergency relief supplies

- Distributed 6,985 hygiene kits, 1,783 kitchen kits, 5,756 blankets and 1,000 mattresses
- Delivered 521 tons of rice, 145 tons of beans, 119 tons of cornmeal, 32 tons of bulgur, 8 tons of flour and 55 tons of oil
- Provided 4,500 families with water filters, water purification



Marlene St. Charles, left, uses CRS vouchers to buy seeds from local vendor Lecia Cemezier, right. Photo by Oscar Leiva/Silverlight for CRS

tablets and supplies for potable water

- Provided 621 families living in emergency shelters with \$160-cash grants to support their return home

Shelter support

- Distributed tarps and shelter repair kits to 15,485 families
- Analyzed the local supply and quality of corrugated galvanized iron for roofing, and designed a structural assessment tool to evaluate 100 percent of CRS-repaired homes
- Developed a training program to ensure local technicians and families have the knowledge to build back safer
- Hired community labor to speed up repair activities, share labor costs and support community independence

Livelihood recovery

- Conducted seed assessments and enrolled merchants to provide seeds to 22,500 farmers in exchange for vouchers
- Collaborated with Haiti's Ministry of Agriculture to begin repairing a major irrigation

canal, and involved a local farmers' association in related cash-for-work activities

- With Caritas, assisted 1,200 families with livestock, veterinary support and training
- Provided \$60 in cash grants to 20,000 families for their recovery, and engaged 5,100 people in cash-for-work activities, including 500 women

Water, sanitation and hygiene

- Installed 8 water treatment units at community water sources, each with the capacity to serve 4,000 people daily
- Trained and mobilized 32 community health workers to share key hygiene messages
- Delivered hygiene kits—including 2 covered buckets, soap and laundry detergent—to 5,280 families
- Provided training and staffing to the cholera treatment center in Anse d'Hainault
- Repaired and expanded sanitation stations at the cholera treatment center for both patients and staff, and repaired the center's solar power system and constructed an incinerator



For more information, please contact emergencies@crs.org

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