






Private Sector Engagement at CRS

Engagement with the private sector, alongside other institutions, can promote the common good and contribute to putting ‘the economy at the service of the people.’¹

Photo by Jake Lyell for CRS

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is no stranger to private sector engagement (PSE); it has been a critical part of our global programming across sectors. Acknowledging that private sector enterprises are a key part of the communities and societies in which CRS works, the CRS Vision 2030 Strategy renews the commitment of CRS to engage with the private sector, alongside other local institutions, for the following reasons:

-  To develop sustainable solutions to development challenges.
-  To improve program effectiveness.
-  To promote local leadership.
-  To reach people at scale.
-  To increase award competitiveness and access to funding.

CRS defines PSE as the diverse and robust set of relationships with for-profit enterprises of all sizes – from informal microenterprises to multinational corporations – that are rooted in shared value and driven by the humanitarian and development challenges CRS seeks to address in its Vision 2030.

CRS engages with private sector enterprises in a variety of ways depending on an enterprise’s constraints, the shared outcomes that enterprise is pursuing, and how the collaboration can contribute to transformational change in market systems and societies. Ways in which CRS engages include, but are not limited to:

- Influencing and/or assisting private sector enterprises to improve products, services, opportunities and practices to better serve and work with populations who are marginalized or vulnerable.
- Facilitating linkages among private sector enterprises, public agencies, civil society organizations, research institutes and communities.
- Learning about and developing alternative development approaches from and with the private sector.
- Sharing risks with private sector enterprises to encourage innovation in products, services, business relationships and delivery models that address humanitarian and development challenges.
- Strengthening capacity of private sector enterprises.
- Helping individuals, groups or civil society organizations to start private sector enterprises.
- Generating demand and improving purchasing power among families and communities who are marginalized or vulnerable, particularly for life-improving products and services.

¹ Taken from remarks by Pope Francis at a conference with global leaders and economists from the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and governments, February 2020. Quoted in O’Connell G. *Pope Francis: A vibrant economy must put an end to poverty*. America The Jesuit Review, March 2, 2020 Issue.

Figure 1 The logic for engaging with the private sector.

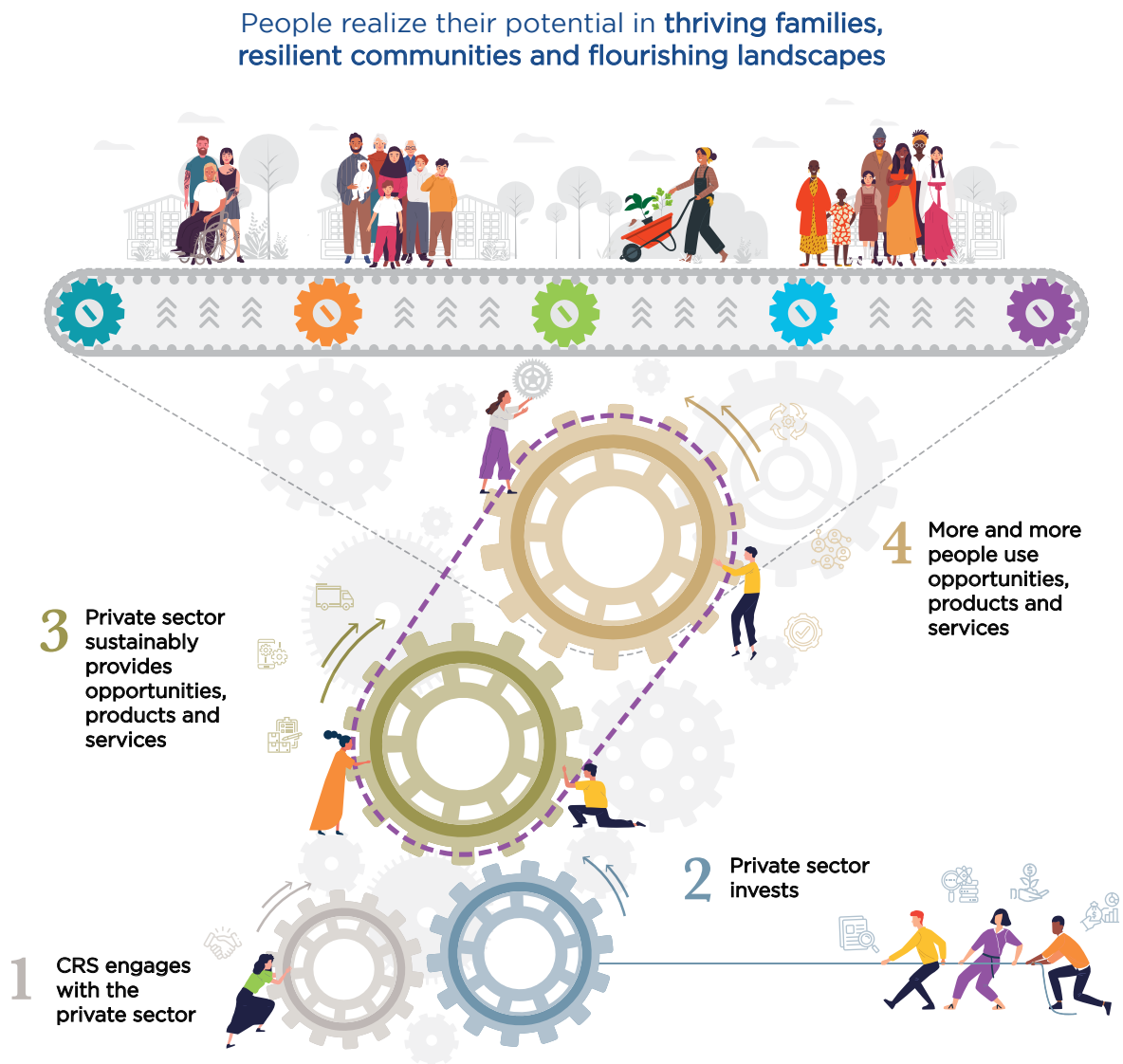


Figure 1 illustrates the following logic for engaging with the private sector:

- 1** CRS engages with private sector enterprises, developing collaborative relationships based on shared values and win/win outcomes.
- 2** In cooperation with CRS, private sector enterprises use their expertise and innovative ideas to develop new ways to provide opportunities, products and services that address humanitarian and development objectives. They invest their own human and financial resources to operationalize the new models in a commercially viable manner.
- 3** After the collaboration with CRS is completed, private sector enterprises continue the provision of opportunities, products and services, including to people who are marginalized or vulnerable, and may expand provision or inspire other private sector enterprises to copy their innovations.
- 4** Over time, more and more people utilize the opportunities, products and services, which contributes to them realizing their potential in thriving families, resilient communities and flourishing landscapes.

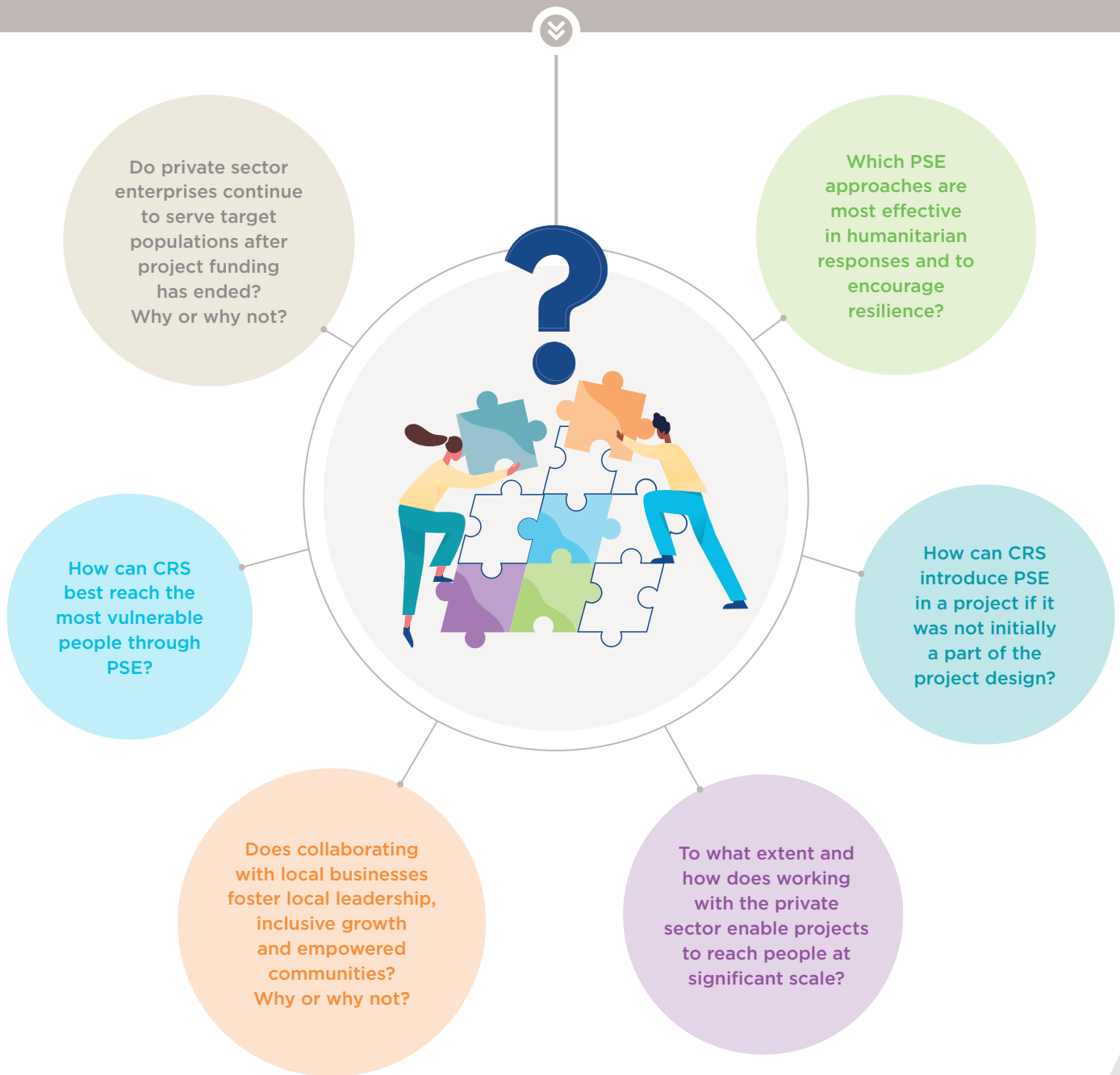
Engagement with the private sector contributes to each of the five Goal Areas in the CRS Vision 2030 and is often cross-cutting. Figure 2 outlines a theory of change² that describes how PSE contributes to CRS' overarching goals.

Figure 2 Private sector engagement theory of change



² The theory of change is organized as follows: **Goals** show how the CRS Vision 2030 Goals align with the impacts described; **Impacts** describe how communities, families and people can benefit from interaction with private sector enterprises who have improved how they work; **Outcomes** describes ways that private sector enterprises can become more inclusive and better serve and work with communities, families and people as a result of collaborating with CRS; and **Outputs** summarizes the results of CRS activities with the private sector.

The PSE learning agenda questions below help guide our approach to implement PSE effectively. They also highlight the issues important to CRS, particularly its Vision 2030.



For more information on PSE key metrics, the PSE rationale, theory of change and learning agenda, please refer to [The Private Sector Engagement at CRS: Theory of Change, Key Metrics and Learning Agenda](#) document on CRS Publications.