



Tisah and her family in their newly constructed district home after it was nearly destroyed by heavy storms in Indonesia's Tangarang district. Photo by Benny Manser/CRS



The foundation to rebuilding lives

BUILDING SAFE AND DIGNIFIED HOMES THAT ENABLE FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES TO RECOVER AND FLOURISH

The Challenge

Homes and communities are the foundation of family life. When a crisis strikes, lives are upturned. An earthquake can level a community in the blink of an eye. Violence can erupt and wash over a village so quickly that no one can do anything but grab their loved ones, most precious items and run. The loss of a home can fracture a family's identity—it can have a grave impact on their safety, health, prosperity, emotional well-being and dignity. Often, people are separated from their communities, loved ones and support networks. They have limited access to food, shelter, water, health and social services, education and means for earning an income.

Today, more than 100 million people are displaced worldwide, having lost their homes due to climate change, disasters, population growth, economic inequality and conflict. For families and communities to fully recover, comprehensive solutions are critical. In fact, at Catholic Relief Services, it is essential to uphold our framework of integral human development, which places the dignity of the person at the center of all that we do.

CRS and partners support people and communities to recover from crisis by helping to meet their immediate needs for survival, as well as providing long-term support for rebuilding their homes and lives. In FY22 alone, we supported 918,143 people (350,994 in direct programming, and 558,149 through scaling efforts) to have safe shelter. In the first two years of this strategic initiative, CRS has reached 1.2 million people—611,501 people in direct programming, and 649,867 through scaling efforts.

We work with especially vulnerable communities to strengthen their preparedness, mitigate impact and loss, and build their resilience. But, millions of people remain without safe shelter. CRS and its network of partners are uniquely positioned to expand efforts and extend impact to meet the raised stakes at this critical time.

At Catholic Relief Services, we build safe, dignified homes and communities to help all people survive and thrive in the face of disaster.

Our Solution

As part of our Vision 2030 agency strategy, CRS supports people and communities survive and recover from crisis—from the aftermath through rebuilding and beyond. We support vulnerable communities prepare for crises before they strike, alleviate impact and loss and strengthen resilience for the long-term.

At CRS, we have committed to a two-pronged approach to help millions affected by crisis to live in safe and dignified homes and communities:

- Expand the reach of our programming to support more people in need, assisting 1.5 million people directly.
- Bring about systems-level change by influencing key stakeholders—governments, international and local non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies and others—to adopt safe and dignified approaches. This will extend our impact beyond our direct programming, and assist 8.5 million people to achieve safe and dignified homes and communities.

Collectively, our efforts will ensure safe, dignified homes and communities for 10 million people by 2030.

The CRS Approach

Integrated approach and direct implementation

CRS recognizes the interconnection of the spiritual, human, social, political, financial, natural and physical aspects of people's lives. In times of crisis, these holistic elements of life can be disrupted or destroyed. Safe homes are the first step for uprooted families to rebuild their lives.

Lasting recovery is built on durable solutions that are relevant to the local context, and incorporate the complex issues including community rebuilding, families repairing or re-establishing their homes and livelihoods. People need the ability to make decisions about what is safest for their families: returning to their place of origin, migrating elsewhere, or settling in the location of displacement and integrating into the host community.

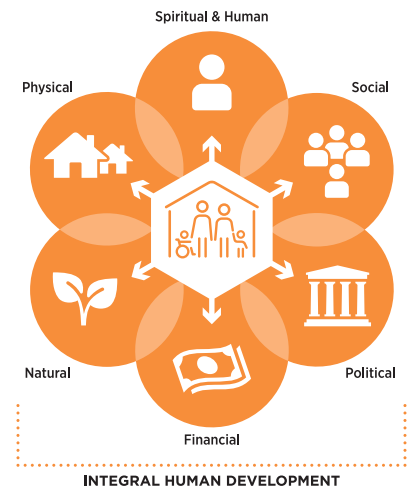


FIGURE 1. Homes and Communities as Strategic Platform

With 75 years of experience across more than 100 countries, CRS has built rich partnerships at the grassroots, national and international levels, and developed innovative practices that are replicated worldwide for greater efficiency and lasting impact. CRS will ensure delivery of timely, appropriate and high-quality sustainable solutions that support the most vulnerable through the following:

Global and local capacity: Investing in people, partners—including local and national organizations and governments—and systems to build a capable humanitarian response community enabled by agile, fit-for-purpose policies, systems and support services.

Integration and collaboration: Creating systems change through collaborative models that strengthen coordination; promote integrated, holistic approaches; and bridge the humanitarian-development divide.



STRATEGIC CHANGE PLATFORM

Building Safe and Dignified Homes and Communities

To be bolder and more focused in our ambition to be catalysts for transformational change at scale, we are investing in six strategic change platforms as part of our Vision 2030 agency strategy.

Each of the six platforms share a common objective: to achieve results at scale.

Recognizing that the concept of home extends beyond physical structures, this platform expands our approach and global influence from shelter and settlement to creating homes and communities as foundations for long-term health and prosperity.

Innovation: Innovating within a changing humanitarian landscape to enhance efficiencies and sustainable solutions—while maintaining a commitment to dignity and localized approaches—for supporting crisis-affected people, communities and partners.

Engaging market systems: Engaging with housing market systems to support people’s ability to purchase the necessary products and services to rent, build, repair, renovate or incrementally improve their homes. Our engagement of market actors—public and private—can bolster and sustain the housing market for families to maintain their homes.

In these efforts, we will assist 1.5 million people directly in our programming, including:

- Safe and dignified shelter, water and hygiene in the aftermath of crisis.
- Timely, dignified support through recovery, with emphasis on bolstering economies.
- Protection of children’s developmental and mental health.
- Increased resilience capacities to cope with future crises.
- Improved humanitarian response capacity of local institutions.

Bringing about transformational change for scaling-up and reaching more people in need

CRS recognizes that our direct implementation is still a drop in the ocean. Leveraging our past experiences and strategic partnerships, we aim to steadily influence existing governance, markets, humanitarian and development systems so that good practices and innovations can be scaled-up by other stakeholders to reach more people in need. We will pursue different models for scaling-up by:

- **Extended impact:** Promoting good practices and innovations at the household and community level will increase their access and entice families to choose for better recovery and/or reconstruction options, beyond CRS programming.
- **Horizontal scaling:** Collaborating and lobbying among local and international agencies will promote the replication of good practices and innovations, thereby serving more people in need effectively. These agencies will be supported and empowered to become agents of change in humanitarian and development approaches for ensuring safer homes and flourishing communities.
- **Vertical scaling:** Embedding innovations and good practices in the existing governance, markets and development systems will help to bring about sustainable systems-level change for more equitable approaches in emergency, recovery, reconstruction, housing and service provision in general.

These are the key pathways through which CRS aims to bring about transformational change at scale so that 8.5 million people are served with increased access to safe and dignified homes and communities beyond our own projects.

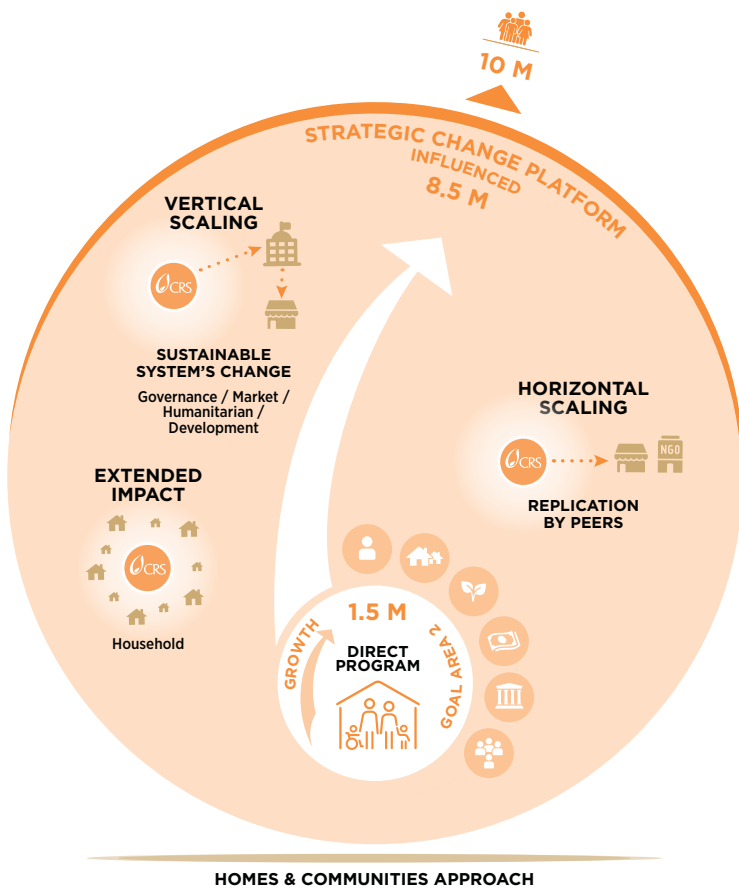


FIGURE 2. Scaling Models



Left to right: In the Philippines, homes and entire neighborhoods are reconstructed after a combination of storms and conflict (photo by CRS/staff); In Bangladesh, CRS supports Rohingya communities on safe, sustainable improvements to the refugee settlement (photo by Amit Rudro for CRS); and, in Bidibidi refugee settlement in Uganda, construction workers support the building of homes, schools and community centers (photo by Karin Bridger for CRS).

"We view the dignity of the people with great importance. We prioritize their opinions as we help to create options in areas with limited space. When Rohingya families first came in, they were living under the sky. Then, they received emergency shelters. As the months went by, they were able to build their own houses, and decorate their houses. This helps to create unity and fellowship. When shelters are turning into people's homes, it becomes a very good thing."

- Nazmul Hossein, Caritas Bangladesh/CRS partner

An Achievable Vision

By leading by example through implementing good practices and innovations in emergency response and recovery, we can work intentionally to promote wide adoption among influential stakeholders, so that more crisis-affected people will have access to safe and dignified homes and communities. This will be achieved by identifying demand, gaps and opportunities within the local context, and by engaging with the governance, markets, humanitarian and development systems. Leveraging our past experiences, current direct programming and reputation, we have the tools, methods and influence to support those who are uprooted at scale.

There is no time to wait. It is urgent that we provide solutions that enable families and communities to recover and flourish and contribute to safe and dignified homes and communities more broadly. **Through this commitment, we will invite new solutions and innovations, and promote coordination and collaboration among sectors and actors for greater efficiency and lasting impact.**



**We believe in transformation on a global scale.
Faith knows no bounds.**

Learn more at crs.org/safehomes.

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