

Winter 2019-2020



GLOBAL EMERGENCY UPDATE

HIGHLIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPACT

Catholic Relief Services is pleased to share the following end-of-year highlights of our major emergency response and recovery activities that took place in 2019, as well as a forecast of the most urgent humanitarian needs—and opportunities for global impact—in 2020. This work is possible thanks to the generous support of private and public donors, the dedication of our local partners, and the unwavering presence of Caritas and the Catholic Church.



LEARN AND PLAY

Children play outside a CRS child friendly space in Kutupalong-Balukhali Expansion Site—the world's most densely populated refugee camp. These spaces are safe places in which children affected by crises can learn and play. In Bangladesh, CRS works with Caritas Bangladesh to assist Rohingya refugees. Read more about our urgent priorities on page 3.

Photo by Ismail Ferdous for CRS

2019 END-OF-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

VENEZUELA: Since 2015, the country has suffered a progressive decline in local production capacity, resulting in food shortages, hyperinflation, the collapse of the health system and social unrest.



Children are receiving health and nutrition checkups and support at Caritas Venezuela centers. *Photo courtesy of Caritas Venezuela*

In partnership with Caritas Venezuela, CRS has supported Venezuelans with food, housing, medicine and mobile medical clinics, clean water, hygiene kits, and cash for families to buy necessities. Malnutrition screenings benefited 20,000 children, food and medicine were provided to 12,000 malnourished children and pregnant women, 14 dioceses received stocks of medicines, and vulnerable Venezuelans benefited from more than 131,000 hot meals. Across the region, CRS and our partners are helping Venezuelan refugees meet basic needs, find safe shelter and access social services.

THE BAHAMAS: Hurricane Dorian struck the Bahamas on September 1, 2019, and swept through the northwestern islands of Abaco and Grand Bahama over the next two days, leaving 65 people dead and 282 missing, and destroying more than 13,000 homes. CRS is supporting Caritas Antilles and the Archdiocese of Nassau to assist people on Grand Bahama with shelter and social and emotional recovery.



2019 END-OF-YEAR HIGHLIGHTS

INDONESIA: In September 2018, a 7.5-magnitude earthquake struck the island of Sulawesi, triggering a tsunami that left more than 4,000 dead and over 10,000 people injured. As many as 2 million people were affected, with more than 211,000 displaced. Along with local partners, CRS immediately began building emergency shelters and latrines. In subsequent months, CRS distributed essential living supplies, constructed transitional shelters with access to water and sanitation, and promoted disaster risk reduction planning. In total, CRS and our partners reached 15,000 families across 88 villages.



CRS provided cash-based assistance, including conditional shelter grants, to help families cover the costs of construction materials and labor. *Photo by Jennifer Hardy/CRS*

MOZAMBIQUE: In March and April, tropical storms Idai and Kenneth endangered the lives of more than 2 million people. At least 648 people were killed, nearly 1,700 injured and over 430,000 displaced. CRS partnered with Caritas Mozambique and the diocesan Caritas programs to provide relief and recovery to more than 82,000 people in Sofala, Manica, Zambézia and Cabo Delgado provinces. Our efforts prioritized shelter, food, agriculture and livelihoods recovery, and water, sanitation and hygiene.



To reconstruct their homes, families are building simple frames and roofs using tools and tarps provided by CRS, as well as salvaged and naturally available materials. *Photo by Dooshima Tsee/CRS*

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I could never have pictured the dimensions of this parish's suffering. We are thankful for the aid we are getting—both spiritual and material.

Father Silvio Anovo, Paroquia do Sagrado Coracao de Jesus, Beira, Mozambique

IRAQ: When ISIS swept across Iraq in 2014, it devastated whole communities, leading to large-scale displacement. Today, many families can finally return home to restart their lives, and the number of those returning now exceeds the number still displaced. But the relief of return is disrupted by the challenges of rebuilding lives after years of violence and instability. CRS has worked closely with Caritas Iraq since 2014 to support more than 300,000 people across devastated areas—Mosul, Fallujah, Hawija, Erbil and Nineveh Plains. CRS and Caritas Iraq have excellent working relationships across majority and minority communities—including Muslim,

Christian and Yazidi. Together, we have provided families with a comprehensive package of assistance, including education and psychosocial support, shelter, water and sanitation, essential living supplies, cash grants and support to restart livelihoods.



CRS renovated this damaged school on the Nineveh Plains. *Photo by Fadi Salam Iliya for CRS*

YEMEN: An ongoing humanitarian crisis has left 80% of the population in need of aid, including 2 million children suffering from acute malnutrition. Health systems have collapsed, along with access to clean water and sanitation, leading to a deadly cholera outbreak. CRS has been working closely with Islamic Relief in Yemen and our partners in Egypt to provide access to safe drinking water, medicine to treat and prevent cholera, and education for both Yemeni refugee children and young adults in Egypt. These efforts are reaching 11,200 people.

LEBANON AND JORDAN: The Syrian conflict has uprooted more than half the country's population and forced millions to flee to neighboring countries. CRS and our partners in Lebanon and Jordan are providing comprehensive support to communities, including education, counseling, shelter, food, medical assistance, sanitation and hygiene.

1 million +

SYRIANS HAVE BEEN REACHED BY OUR EFFORTS ACROSS THE REGION SINCE THE CONFLICT BEGAN NINE YEARS AGO

2020 URGENT PRIORITIES

EAST AFRICA: DROUGHT CRISIS

Across much of East Africa, weather patterns are changing. Rainfall during 2019 was far below average—just as it has been for the past four years—and rain deficits may continue through 2020. Drought conditions, coupled with civil conflict, have disrupted the lives of about 23 million people. In Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan, millions of people are facing extreme hunger due to water scarcity, crop loss, increased food prices and weakening livestock. A major humanitarian crisis is likely if action is not taken.

CRS is increasing efforts to provide critical support across the four countries, with a focus on improving crop production for greater quality and quantity of food; improving livestock health and production; and increasing access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities. These critical—and, in some cases, lifesaving—efforts will reach more than 100,000 people.



Funding from USAID has helped CRS and our partners provide emergency food assistance in Ethiopia. Photo by Will Baxter/CRS

“ We’re very concerned about deteriorating conditions. We’re seeing families who rely on the land to survive now unable to cope.

Matt Davis, regional director, CRS East Africa

BANGLADESH: ROHINGYA CRISIS

In August 2017, more than 700,000 Rohingya refugees fled Myanmar for neighboring Bangladesh, expanding the country’s refugee population to nearly 1 million. More than 600,000 Rohingya live at the Kutupalong-Balukhali Expansion Site—the world’s most densely populated refugee camp. CRS has been working with Caritas Bangladesh since the onset of the crisis to assist more than 263,000 refugees with comprehensive, wide-ranging support. Areas that CRS and Caritas Bangladesh are addressing include safe shelter for families; improved settlement infrastructure; water, sanitation and hygiene; disaster risk reduction efforts in the cyclone-prone area; and counseling, education support and protection for vulnerable women and children.

 View this video showing how CRS and Caritas increased emergency efforts ahead of the cyclone season: [Caritas in Bangladesh: responding to the Rohingya crisis.](#)



A CRS child friendly space in Kutupalong. Photo by Ismail Ferdous for CRS

“ We are there as a symbol and expression of love to the people because Caritas is guided by Gospel values: Love thy neighbor. Refugees have human dignity and it’s love that pushes us. We are very clear that the Gospel says, ‘When I was naked, you clothed me. When I was hungry, you gave me food. When I was shelterless, you gave me shelter.’ Our motivation in responding to this crisis is exactly that.

Francis Atul Sarker, executive director, Caritas Bangladesh

2020 URGENT PRIORITIES

SYRIAN REFUGEES: EDUCATION, COUNSELING AND FAMILY SUPPORT

According to the United Nations Children’s Fund, 8.4 million children—more than 80% of Syria’s child population—have been affected by the country’s conflict. These children have unique emotional and psychological vulnerabilities, with the potential to suffer lifelong damage from trauma and destroyed opportunities.

Education plays a vital role in providing structure, a sense of normalcy and healing for children in crisis. Lebanon hosts an estimated 1.5 million Syrian refugees while Jordan hosts 1.4 million.

CRS, the Good Shepherd Sisters, the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and Caritas Jordan are working in partnership to provide education and support for Syrian refugee children and their families.

Priorities in Lebanon and Jordan include trauma counseling, improvements to public and private classrooms, kindergarten classes, tutoring to prevent dropping out, safe transportation, healthy snacks, parent-teacher meetings, training for teachers and staff, and support for parents and caretakers.



Syrian refugee children attend a class at a center run by the Good Shepherd Sisters in Lebanon’s Bekaa Valley. Photo by Sam Tarling for CRS

 View an animation on how we approach education and care for children displaced by conflict: [Providing comprehensive care for children displaced, uprooted by conflict or crisis.](#)



Before CRS constructed these new classrooms at Ayivu Primary School in Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement, students competed for shade and space in dilapidated classroom structures. Photo by Karin Bridger for CRS

UGANDA: SUPPORT FOR REFUGEES

Since South Sudan gained independence in 2011, fighting between government and opposition forces has uprooted more than 1.8 million people from their homes. Nearly 2.3 million South Sudanese have fled to neighboring countries, with more than 833,000 seeking refuge in Uganda. At the same time, 353,000 refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo have

crossed into Uganda to escape ongoing violence and unrest. CRS has supported more than 120,000 refugees in the Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement, as well as in the Kyangwali and Kiryandongo settlements. Efforts are expanding to provide safe shelter for families, camp infrastructure, school construction, vocational training, agriculture support, and water, sanitation and hygiene.



Nothing is small to a refugee. It doesn’t matter whether it’s a penny. It is a lot in the life of somebody who has lost everything. It gives a sense of life. It gives a sense of revival. It gives a sense of hope again.

Jimmy Francis,
South Sudanese refugee in Uganda



 View Jimmy Francis’ story from Bidi Bidi: [Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework in Uganda: Dignified, durable support for South Sudanese refugees.](#)

WHAT’S NEW IN 2020

An expanding vision

When disaster strikes, the loss of a home can fracture a family’s identity, gravely impacting their safety, health, prosperity, emotional well-being and dignity. Often, people evacuate quickly, leaving behind every asset and income source. They are separated from loved ones and support networks. More than 70 million people around the world today have limited access to food, water, health and social services, education, and livelihood options because they have lost their homes.

CRS is embarking on a bold path, built on decades of experience and partnership, to transform our approach from a focus on shelter and settlement—building roofs and walls—to homes and communities. As part of our Vision 2030 strategy for emergency response, CRS and our partners will ensure safe, dignified homes and communities for 1.5 million people, provide 1 million people with access to safe water, and give 200,000 children safe learning environments and psychosocial support. We will promote local approaches that can be brought to a global scale. We will do all of this by investing in the capacity of people and partners; creating systems change for greater efficiencies, collaborating with holistic approaches; and innovating within a changing humanitarian landscape.