



Youth Builders develop the skills to make a difference in their communities. *Silverlight for CRS*

Commission, has adopted the FACTS approach to roll out its nationwide education-for-integrity program.

Transferring knowledge and skills

CRS and its partners address the whole person, using CRS' Integral Human Development (IHD) framework. Beneficiaries acquire a foundation of knowledge and skills and adopt more constructive attitudes so that they can transform themselves and restore their relations with others. This holistic approach enables beneficiaries not only to improve their individual well-being but also to participate in collective efforts that contribute to the common good.

Nowhere is it more urgent to address the twin challenges of youth violence and youth underdevelopment than in Central America, where unemployment and underemployment among youth is more than 60 percent and homicide levels are at record levels. Over the last two years, CRS and YouthBuild International have been implementing a \$2.2 million program for at-risk and gang-involved youth. The program is implemented by a network of community-based programs and focuses on reaching, training and placing young people in sustainable livelihood opportunities. It utilizes local construction projects to help youth acquire critical life skills, job preparation, education and training. Youth reintegrate into their communities by playing an active role in conflict transformation and restorative justice.

In El Salvador alone, of the 561 youth who have completed the program, 189 have gained formal employment, 91 have started their own businesses, 215 returned to the formal education system and 386 participated in internships. Youth have come together across gang affiliation to complete 39 communal infrastructure projects, many of which included the active support and engagement of allies in local government, the

police and vocational training schools, as well as in the local and international business community.

Programming holistically

CRS' commitment to IHD means that its country programs integrate justice and peacebuilding components into other development activities, such as promoting access to scarce natural resources and participating in livelihood security activities. Diocesan justice and peace commissions collaborate with their sister Caritas Internationalis development agencies to empower individuals to increase their livelihood security and, as citizens, to assume their civic responsibility for changing unjust state structures and systems.

In Burkina Faso, elites commonly exploit the rural poor, often with the tacit approval or active participation of state authorities. Perpetrators have used caste, ethnicity and religion to justify their crimes. CRS partners responded by building on previous projects that had enhanced food security and improved maternal child health. They translated legal rights and texts into national languages, inserting them into literacy training for these and other rural development programs. They also promoted behavior change through rural radio programs and sermons in churches and mosques. The project trained paralegals to accompany victims in court proceedings and advocated at higher levels for procedural changes. The Nouna diocese reported 747 cases registered and completed since the project began, 35 percent of which involved women.



Hands-on activities help Palestinian youth learn to work together. *CRS/Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza*

Before [Youth Builders] I carried a gun with me everywhere and [I] was angry. But now I have changed.... Now I have a future and I don't want to lose what I have achieved.

—A Youth Builders participant

OUR CAPACITY

CRS and its partners implemented over 125 justice and peacebuilding projects in 46 countries in fiscal year 2010, expending \$26.6 million. CRS committed 10 percent of its *private funds* to pursue just peace. The agency employs advisors in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, Europe and the Middle East.

Conflict rarely respects borders. Since 2009, an Africa-wide coordinator has led a CRS Africa Justice and Peace Working Group to address challenges, especially in the Lesser Great Lakes region and Sudan. Together with other international bodies, such as the Catholic Peacebuilding Network and the Catholic Church's regional-level episcopal conferences, they have delivered strategic recommendations and facilitated action planning to address cross-border violence and promote reconciliation.

At CRS Headquarters, three senior advisors—in justice and peacebuilding, governance and civil society, and resource governance—form a core team that is complemented by specialists in human trafficking, protection and gender-based violence. Together they serve and support CRS regional and country programs worldwide.

OUR PUBLICATIONS

Publications about CRS' experience can be found at www.crsprogramquality.org/peacebuilding. Recent titles include:

- *Water and Conflict: Incorporating Peacebuilding Into Water Development*
- *Integrating Peacebuilding Into Humanitarian and Development Programming*
- *GAIN Peacebuilding Indicators*
- *Pursuing Just Peace: An Overview and Case Studies for Faith-Based Peacebuilders*
- *Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring and Learning Toolkit*
- *Bottom of the Barrel: Africa's Oil Boom and the Poor*

Front photo: These young women take part in peacebuilding and social development programs in El Salvador. *Silverlight for CRS*



For more information, visit www.crsprogramquality.org.

CRS and Peacebuilding

Working globally to transform conflicts and promote justice





Peacebuilding projects help young people understand community development and governance so that they can work nonviolently for change. *CRS/Jerusalem, the West Bank and Gaza*

THE PEACEBUILDING CHALLENGE

Most poor people worldwide have lived through at least one violent conflict. Poverty, inequality and intolerance create the conditions for armed violence, and violence breeds poverty. To prevent and mitigate conflict, and to rebuild communities and reconcile people after fighting has stopped, Catholic Relief Services focuses on restoring healthy relationships among groups in conflict. CRS recognizes that the most important contribution it can make is to empower the voiceless and vulnerable to reclaim their rights, fulfill their civic responsibilities and join forces to forge a just peace.

OUR COMMITMENT

For more than 15 years, CRS has worked globally to advance peace with justice. Peacebuilding is a top strategic priority for CRS and its many partners around the world. Together we promote a culture of peace rooted in the principles of Catholic social teaching. Our objectives include greater equity for poor and marginalized people, improved social cohesion and greater Church engagement and effectiveness in peacebuilding.

OUR APPROACH

CRS builds the capacity of civil society to demand justice and peace from the bottom up while simultaneously seeking positive government responses from the top down. CRS and its partners broaden constructive state-society interactions, building a growing constituency for just peace. We strive to prevent violence whenever possible. We have successfully developed and operated early warning and response systems to detect and respond to conflict. When violence has already flared up, CRS and partners provide emergency relief and mitigate further violence and fear. Finally, CRS and its partners help to resolve conflict through dialogue and reconciliation.

CRS works across several subsectors, including extractive industries, gender dynamics and sexual and gender-based violence, youth development, interfaith cooperation and civic participation. CRS applies a multifaceted approach to peacebuilding that includes:

- Focusing on relationships and the root causes of conflict
- Building the capacity and leadership of local partners
- Transferring knowledge and skills to participants, partners and staff
- Programming to holistically integrate relief, development and peacebuilding

OUR EXPERIENCE

Focusing on relationships and root causes

CRS promotes healthy relationships among groups that are often divided not so much by their ethnicity, religion or place of origin as by injustices and perceptions of injustice. Powerful elites reinforce such perceptions by manipulating historical grievances. CRS applies an “inside-out” approach. Program participants learn how to practice nonviolent, democratic behavior within their own group. Likewise, they apply these values-based behaviors in their relations with other groups. This engenders a cultural shift from highly personalized patron-client politics to those of inclusion, fairness and self-governance for the common good. Participants realize they should demand nothing less from their public officials. This approach transforms relationships among diverse, sometimes competing groups to build social cohesion and strengthen civic engagement to create a more level playing field between the state and civil society.



Teenagers from Mindanao’s Muslim, Christian and indigenous groups reach out to each other. *Laura Sheahan/CRS*

In East Timor, CRS and the Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission of Dili are helping youth gangs to resist political manipulation. The Lalettek (Bridge) Project (a \$685,000 investment) has begun to reduce gang violence. In the first year, the Commission formed and worked with 11 community peace and development groups to resolve four violent conflicts. Groups strengthened local leaders. Together with community-based organizations, groups mobilized two communities to resolve local security issues and undertake infrastructure projects. The project also fostered nonviolence through *Dahur* (traditional dance) competitions, bringing community groups together to deliver messages of peace to more than 2,000 people.

São Jose Aimetilaran used to be called *Aldeia La Fila* or *Hamlet of No Return*, as outsiders who dared to come were ... likely to get attacked. Lalettek (Bridge) Project supported me and other youths to take active parts in restoring and maintaining peace in our community, bringing the main martial arts and ritual arts groups in the area—Padjajaran, Kera Sakti and 55—to be part of Community Peace and Development Group (CPDG).

—Norberto Gusmão, area CPDG leader, in a meeting with hamlets and group leaders of 22 target areas of the project in May 2011.

In eastern Africa, CRS and its partner, the ecumenical Sudan Council of Churches, took a different approach with advocacy campaigns and High-Level Dialogues in southern Sudan. These two projects formed part of a seven-project campaign that CRS financed with \$4 million in private funding. Together they supported southern Sudanese efforts in-country and at the regional and international levels to prevent violence and promote social cohesion and reconciliation in the run-up to the January 2011 referendum.

CRS looked to the Church’s people-to-people peacebuilding process that helped unite rival factions in southern Sudan before the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2005. In September 2010, the Kejiko II conference brought Church leaders together with President Salva Kiir, Vice President Riek Machar and southern Sudanese ministers, governors and deputy governors. These key actors created a joint action plan for South Sudan’s referendum process and post-referendum transition.

Advocacy projects helped South Sudanese Church leaders reach decision makers at the highest levels. Delegations of Sudanese bishops visited the United Kingdom, the United

Nations, the White House and the U.S. Congress, while U.S. bishops reciprocated with solidarity visits to South Sudan.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina, many people continue to suffer from the trauma they experienced during the war in the 1990s. Through the Choosing Peace Together project (\$651,446), CRS placed 137 people on the path of emotional recovery. Participants learned new communication skills, received intensive trauma healing and reconciled with perpetrators. Thirty-six participants were selected for speaking tours to share how reconciliation had enabled them to improve their relations with others and reintegrate into their households and communities.



Archbishop Paulino casts his referendum ballot in Juba, Sudan, on January 9, 2011. *Sara A. Fajardo/CRS*

Building local capacity and leadership

Capacity strengthening is much more than project-driven training and technical assistance. CRS approaches it as the progressive, systematic transfer of technical leadership and management authority from its staff to its partners. CRS partners in turn replicate the process with project beneficiaries. CRS employs a mix of on-the-job training, site visits, peer-to-peer learning exchanges and coaching to mentor local leaders and strengthen partners’ organizational capacity. Taken together these interventions constitute a process of accompaniment, enabling partners to determine their own paths of organizational change.

CRS/Cameroon strengthened the capacity of the country’s four secretaries of education (Catholic, Protestant, Islamic and lay private) to design Fighting against Corruption through Schools (FACTS). This project targeted change in the behaviors of students, teachers and parents so that they could contribute to making education and educational administration more just, transparent and democratic. To date, 796 schools have implemented the FACTS II project, valued at \$6.7 million. The government of Cameroon, through its Anticorruption