

Who CRS is:

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is the official **overseas** humanitarian agency of the **U.S. Catholic community**. It alleviates suffering and provides assistance to people in need **without regard to race, religion, or nationality**.

CRS' Motivating Force:

CRS derives its mandate and inspiration from the Gospel. Its work is guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching: the dignity and equality of all people, the rights and responsibilities of all persons, the social nature of humanity, the common good, subsidiarity, solidarity, the option for the poor, and stewardship.

Where and With Whom CRS works:

CRS is one of the world's largest international Private Voluntary Organizations (PVO's). It works with the world's poorest and most marginalized people in nearly 100 countries.

How it works:

CRS is **not a direct service provider**, and in fact, has a relatively small U.S staff working overseas. This because the agency works through local partners to strengthen their capacity to be agents of their own development. While CRS' principal partner is the Catholic Church overseas, its partners and staff are drawn from many religions and cultures.

What CRS does:

CRS promotes human dignity, justice, and peace through programming in: agriculture, education, emergency response, food security, community health, HIV and AIDS, Microfinance, Peacebuilding, Social Safety Net, and Water and Sanitation. Its commitment to solidarity has led CRS to adopt peacebuilding as an agency-wide priority.

CRS recognizes that it has not just an opportunity but an obligation to help U.S. Catholics connect with the people it serves overseas. It does this through promoting awareness of and education on international issues of social justice and peace. And it generates opportunities to act in solidarity with the poor and marginalized to promote more just and socially responsible practices and policies.

What Makes CRS Distinctive:

In a word: "Justice." Justice, or the creation of right relationships, is the Agency's operating ethos. It is the "lens" through which CRS selects, develops, and evaluates its partnerships and programming.

The agency recognizes that it is not enough to do high-quality programming in agriculture, health, water, etc. Years of experience have taught that the programming will be undermined and unsustainable if the unjust relationships, structures and systems that are at the root of poverty,

marginalization, and conflict are ignored and not addressed in and through its partnerships and programming.