



ENSURING SAFE HOMES AND COMMUNITIES FOR THOSE DISPLACED BY CRISIS

In June, we recognize World Refugee Day to honor our sisters and brothers who have been displaced by crisis, and to pledge our support for their safe refuge, relief and recovery.



Madina Minta and her young daughter fled from their home near Bankass, Mali, after armed men attacked their village and burned it to the ground. They've been living at a camp for displaced people ever since. *Photo by Annika Hammerschlag for CRS*

Losing a home due to any number of factors, including natural disaster or conflict, can fracture a family and impact economic and emotional well-being, as well as dignity. The loss of a home can also lead to other life-altering challenges: separating people from their loved ones and support network, and limiting access to food, water, health and social services, education and livelihood options.

Some might be displaced due to severe weather events like typhoons or earthquakes that have left their homes in pieces. Others might be fleeing due to conflict, taking only what they can carry to another town, city or even country. They must depend on the hospitality and protection given by local communities and the generosity of others to meet basic needs for shelter, food, medical treatment and clean water. They are also in need of social services, education, and clear information about their rights and options in order to make safe choices for their families.

Across the world, more than 100 million people are displaced. This is greater than at any time in recent memory—and all due to circumstances beyond their control.

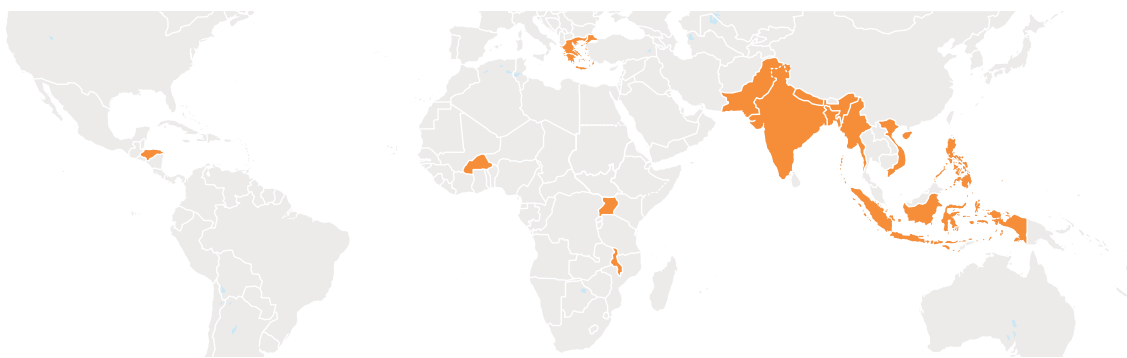
“When we left our home and came here to a different country, I felt as if you took a tree out with its roots and put it somewhere else. It will either live or die.”

—Fatima Al-Mahabani,
a Syrian refugee living
in Bulgaria

Given the unprecedented scale of this crisis, Catholic Relief Services has re-designed our emergency shelter programming to ensure a broader, more holistic approach. Our Safe Homes and Communities approach provides an entry point for comprehensive support to help people rebuild their lives. In this evolution of our programming, we aim to support 1.5 million people with direct programming by 2030. But we recognize that 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 an additional 8.5 million people. And we are already making a significant impact.

CRS supports 350,000 people annually with emergency shelter assistance across 25 countries. As part of our comprehensive Safe Homes and Communities approach, our holistic efforts have benefitted 1.9 million people since 2021.

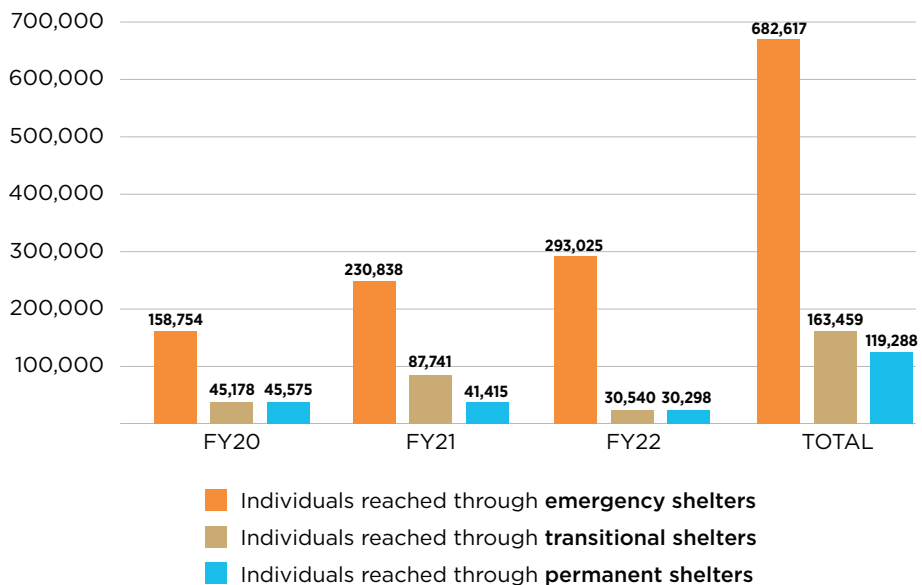
Geographic Expansion of CRS Homes and Communities Projects From 2020 to Today



Global Impact to Date

From October 1, 2020 through September 30, 2022, CRS provided direct and scaled shelter support to 1,902,134 people.

Impact by Shelter Type



Following are some of the most pressing contexts where CRS is supporting safe, holistic and dignified shelter solutions for those displaced by crisis.

EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Ukraine and the Surrounding Region

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, more than 7 million people have fled to neighboring countries, while 6.3 million remain displaced within Ukraine. For Ukrainians, the last 16 months have brought unimaginable heartbreak. Communities in Ukraine and across the region have opened their hearts and homes to receive people seeking safety.

Working with Caritas and other partners across the region, we are supporting efforts to provide:

- Urgent assistance in the form of safe shelter, food and nutrition, cash assistance, hygiene and living supplies, counseling, protection and health services.
- Longer-term support:
 - Shelter support tailored for context, including support to host families, cash assistance to Ukrainian families for rent, support to Caritas shelters to provide ongoing care, and repair work on war-damaged homes.
 - Economic integration and livelihoods projects for refugees and asylum seekers.
 - Education support to help children continue their education virtually or in their new surroundings.
 - Protection, counseling and care for families.
 - Cash assistance to meet a range of evolving needs.

Turkey and Syria

The impact of February's 7.8 magnitude earthquake and its series of aftershocks continues to be felt. The death toll surpassed 50,000. In Syria, an estimated 500,000 people were displaced, with many living in collective shelters, with relatives or friends, or in informal settlements with minimal services. Hundreds of schools served as shelters and remain in need of rehabilitation. Families have reported lingering trauma among children and their caregivers. In Turkey, more than 2.7 million people were displaced.

In Syria, CRS' contributions to Caritas Syria and other Church partners have supported 6,000 families in collective shelters in Aleppo, Latakia and Hama with blankets, food, hygiene items, electricity and other supplies. CRS also provided cash assistance and other support for at least 300 families in Tartous and for those displaced from areas closer to the earthquake's epicenter. Psychological support and livelihood recovery are priorities among both displaced and host communities.

In Turkey, CRS supports Caritas Turkey, which continues to coordinate efforts with Church partners to provide cash assistance, hot meals, hygiene and living supplies, and education and counseling. CRS has expanded our support to other organizations to facilitate people's return and repair of their homes, provide vouchers for purchase of key supplies, and prepare for children's emotional care and activities.

Lebanon

For over a decade, the Syrian civil war has continued to profoundly impact people across the region, with 5.6 million Syrians having sought refuge in neighboring countries.

Since the start of the crisis, CRS and our partners in Lebanon have provided comprehensive support to refugees as well as vulnerable Lebanese families. Notably, efforts have supported children's care and education by:

- Improving public and private classrooms.
- Offering tutoring programs to prevent school dropouts.
- Ensuring safe transportation for students and providing healthy snacks.
- Facilitating parent-teacher communication and supporting parents and caregivers with various resources.
- Offering training for teachers and staff members.

In Iraq, Mustafa Ali Fathi rebuilds his home after it was completely destroyed by violent conflict. CRS provided transitional housing to his family, allowing them to return to their property and restart their lives.

Photo by Hawre Khalid for CRS



Iraq

In 2014, the occupation by ISIS of large territories of Iraq led to the displacement of approximately 6 million Iraqis and the destruction of infrastructure and housing. By December 2021, 4.9 million Iraqis had returned to their homes while 1.1 million remain displaced. Since 2015, CRS and Caritas Iraq have been providing shelter and water, sanitation and hygiene assistance to internally displaced people, as well as to those returning home, through

repairs to war-damaged shelters and transitional housing. This effort targeted homes with non-structural damage and was implemented through owner-led repairs. CRS and Caritas also distributed household supplies, and provided education support, livelihood assistance, transitional solutions and peacebuilding. In fiscal years 2020 and 2021, CRS and Caritas Iraq supported 2,373 and 4,420 Iraqis respectively with cash and technical assistance to repair their damaged homes.

After being displaced by war in Iraq, many families returned to find their homes nearly destroyed. With a cash grant provided by CRS, one family was able to replaster charred walls, buy new doors and windows, install new sinks and faucets, reinstall the electricity and purchase a water tank. Above, before repairs. Below, after repairs.

Photo by Megan Gilbert/CRS



Gaza

Gaza is one of the most densely populated areas in the world, with 2.11 million Palestinians living in a 140 square mile area. The housing crisis in Gaza is impacted by a combination of factors including conflict, a 15-year blockade and the high cost of construction. In the last two years, more than 63,000 homes have been damaged or destroyed. People are living with broken roofs, unsecured windows, unfinished walls and poor plumbing. CRS is helping families make permanent upgrades that lead to better hygiene, a safer environment and enhanced dignity—especially for women and girls, who spend most of their time in the home. CRS has also incorporated eco-friendly shelter solutions into our response to reduce gas emissions. These include the installation of solar power systems, safe asbestos removal and maximizing reusable water. In fiscal year 2022, 700 families—4,314 individuals—received household supplies and cash assistance to rehabilitate their homes through a self-help approach.

LATIN AMERICA

A young mother and her son shelter in Tijuana, Mexico. After her husband abandoned her, she was threatened with kidnapping and trafficking by gangs in her hometown. Now, she waits for an asylum application hearing in the United States.

*Photo by Óscar Leiva/
Silverlight for CRS*



Central America

Across Central America, gang violence, chronic poverty, lack of job opportunities and failed harvests are driving families from their homes—particularly from El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. Thousands of people have crossed from the south into Mexico, seeking shelter and asylum, humanitarian visas or transit permits to reach the U.S. border. Most travel with limited access to food, water and safe shelter—and lack accurate, trusted information.

Across the region, more than 120 shelters and local organizations managed by Catholic institutions and civic organizations provide people with a variety of services, from food and a safe place to sleep for a few nights, to basic medical assistance, legal advice, counseling and referrals. But these shelters are struggling to meet increased demands. CRS is working closely with our Catholic partners to improve their capacity. These services include:

- Hot meals, safe shelter, hygiene and living supplies, legal assistance, health care and counseling.
- Emergency relief.

CRS supports our partners by:

- Strengthening capacity for operations, human resources, finance, administration, logistics, governance and technical programming.
- Providing training and technical guidance, and best practices for developing policies and procedures.
- Collaborating on efforts across the region that create opportunities for people to live safely and with livelihood options in their home countries, preventing the need to migrate.

Venezuela and the Surrounding Region

Venezuela has experienced social and economic crises for years. Currently, more than 90% of its population lives below the poverty line and thousands of children are malnourished. The health system is collapsing and the country has the third-highest food inflation in the world. More than 5.6 million Venezuelans have fled to neighboring countries. CRS support takes place across Venezuela and the region—including in Brazil, Colombia, Peru,

Panama, Ecuador, Chile, and Trinidad and Tobago. Efforts include the following:

- Nutritional assessments for 52,357 children under age 5 and 10,596 pregnant and new mothers.
- Medical treatment of 112,088 people at Caritas Venezuela centers.
- Supplies, equipment, and cash assistance for hospitals and families in need.
- Food assistance, including 201,494 hot meals, reaching 8,995 people in Brazil.
- Safe shelter and collective shelter assistance for refugees and transit individuals.
- Counseling support, legal assistance, and livelihood projects for refugees and transit individuals.
- Awareness-raising campaigns to combat discrimination and support savings groups.
- Ongoing technical support to our Caritas partners in the region.

EAST AFRICA

A displaced child stands next to a makeshift tent in a camp for internally displaced people in Baidoa, Somalia.

Photo by Omar Faruk for CRS



Sudan, Egypt and Chad

In mid-April in Sudan, major clashes between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces have had devastating consequences for civilians. CRS is making every effort to maintain programming as conflict continues. This includes the operation of 21 health facilities in Darfur. Already, more than 100,000 Sudanese have fled to neighboring countries, including Egypt, where CRS is one of few agencies with permission to

respond. In Egypt, plans are underway to support people arriving in Aswan, as well as those being hosted by existing Sudanese communities in Cairo.

In Sudan, CRS is making every effort to maintain programming as the conflict continues. This includes the operation of 21 health facilities in Darfur. In eastern Chad, CRS plans to distribute aid to more than 2,000 people in Andressa, along the Sudan border, working through the Diocese of Mongo and Caritas Chad. The aid includes essential items like food, mattresses, blankets, cooking pots, jerrycans, buckets, mosquito nets and hygiene supplies. CRS is also supporting Caritas Chad to meet the needs of refugees in the eastern region, including with food assistance, water, sanitation and hygiene and protection.

Somalia

In Somalia, a drought and food crisis have resulted in massive displacement and heightened conflict. CRS has been focused on supporting displaced communities and addressing the needs of malnourished children. Our programming has provided vital assistance to more than 70,000 people.

“They arrived with nothing and now face many problems. Most of them fled the fighting without taking anything, leaving all their belongings behind in Darfur, so there are many needs. They have no food, no bedding, no clothes and no shelter.”

—Father Jesus Calero, Vicar General of Mongo in Chad

A doctor talks to a patient at a clinic in Baidoa in southwestern Somalia where there is a camp for internally displaced people. Somalia is in a state of severe drought after four straight rainy seasons failed to bring water. Infants, in particular, are at risk of starvation. Families are taking desperate measures to stay alive, like selling off everything they own or leaving their homes to search for food and water.

Photo by Omar Faruk for CRS



Activities in Somalia include:

- Supporting more than 70,000 people with health care, nutrition services, cash assistance, and clean water and hygiene supplies.
- Expanding our capacity, conducting assessments, positioning for scaled-up action, and adding offices and staff members.
- Preparing long-term plans to improve livelihoods, health services and resilience.

Ethiopia

From 2020 through 2022, armed conflict in the Tigray region of Ethiopia led to extreme humanitarian needs, with an estimated 60,000 refugees fleeing to Sudan and more than 2.5 million people displaced

internally throughout northern Ethiopia. Many displaced families live in overcrowded settlements and collective centers, with virtually no living or hygiene supplies. Risks for women and girls are significant given the lack of privacy and space and heightened gender-based violence. At the same time, local communities who hosted displaced populations were affected not only by the insecurity and crisis in the region, but by stretched resources. CRS and our Catholic partners provided shelter repair kits, emergency shelter kits and double-unit emergency shelters, as well as essential household and hygiene supplies. In fiscal year 2022, CRS supported 57,579 people with emergency shelter, repairs and materials, and 3,052 people with transitional shelters.

WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

The Sahel

Sharply worsening conflict has caused mass displacement in the central Sahel. This, coupled with a new global hunger crisis, has created a humanitarian catastrophe in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger. Almost 3 million people have fled violence, some multiple times and with little preparation. Although neighboring

communities are welcoming and sharing their limited resources, overcrowding increases pressure on livelihoods and overall well-being.

CRS is carrying out an emergency response to save lives, reduce suffering, build resilience and support social cohesion and

peacebuilding. Priority areas for assistance include:

- Safe shelter using our Safe Homes and Communities approach—recognizing the home as the entry point for providing comprehensive assistance.
- Cash and supplies to meet basic needs for food and living supplies.
- Livelihoods support, including income generation and climate-smart agriculture.
- Water, sanitation and hygiene.
- Psychological first aid and counseling support.
- Capacity and leadership support for local organizations acting as first responders.

ASIA

In the Cox's Bazar district of Bangladesh, a project recruits and trains community volunteers to reach out to households with disaster preparedness and other messages in their own language. Recruits receive basic training in disaster risk reduction, natural resource management and community-led disaster risk management.

Photo by Amit Rudro for CRS



Bangladesh

Five years ago, the Cox's Bazar District in Bangladesh became home to the world's largest refugee camp. More than half of the 950,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh are children—their families having fled from discrimination and violence in Myanmar. Since arriving in Bangladesh, many refugees have struggled to create a sense of safety and home in an area prone to cyclones, flooding and landslides.

Since 2017, CRS and Caritas Bangladesh have supported 300,000 Rohingya and host community members. We incorporate disaster risk reduction, protection and counseling support into program activities. Comprehensive assistance, in coordination with Caritas Bangladesh, includes:

- Quality shelter interventions for safe, improved living conditions for families,

as well as climate-resilient infrastructure and landscapes.

- Provision of key shelter materials either through direct distribution or cash assistance.
- Increased disaster risk reduction, demonstrations on “building back safer” shelters, and sharing of strategies to protect the environment.
- Training, resources and guidance for families to improve their living conditions.
- Access to hygiene and living supplies.
- Cash-for-work activities to support access roads and maintenance of community disaster shelters.
- Efforts to strengthen social cohesion among conflicting communities.
- Support for safe spaces and activities for children and women.