



The Philippines

## HOMES & COMMUNITIES

# Building Safe Homes and Communities: Philippines

Vision: By 2030, the government, private sector, nongovernmental organizations and civil society organizations will work together to provide some of the most at-risk families in the Philippines with safe and dignified homes and communities.



Nanayaon Alla and her family were displaced by conflict between government forces and militants in Marawi City, Mindanao, but now have a new home built by CRS.

Photo by Jomari Guillermo for CRS

“CRS helped us a lot. We have a home because they cared. It's very different here. It's peaceful and quiet. We all get along well in the community.”

**Nanayaon Alla**  
CRS project participant,  
Mindanao

## Context

On the southwestern side of the Philippine island of Mindanao, in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, there is a chronic housing shortage. In 2022, the region needed 268,996 homes, according to the government's Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development. This included 153,698 homes for displaced and homeless people, as well as for families needing secure tenure of their land. Many low-income households lack security of tenure, which makes them vulnerable to eviction and displacement, and impacts their mental and physical health and well-being. These groups make up 57% of the total housing needs in the autonomous region.

In post-emergency situations in many cities and provinces, families may remain displaced for many months or even years. Some are from areas declared no-dwell zones because they are unsafe to return to, for example, if they are vulnerable to repeated flooding. Unable to return to their homes, these families seek accommodation with relatives or friends or in evacuation centers, while others build makeshift shelters. After some time, some may return to high-risk areas because they have nowhere else to go to.

## Opportunity

CRS is acknowledged by the government and the international community as having expertise and experience in shelter and settlements, market-based programming, social cohesion and justice. Our country program in the Philippines leads the Cash Working Group and the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Task Force of the UN Humanitarian Country Team. The agency has also been part of the Advisory Group of the Shelter Cluster for many years. However, alone, CRS has limited reach to families in need of durable shelter, housing and settlement.

Two government agencies tasked to spearhead the shelter response and the development of housing and settlement initiatives—the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development at the national level, and the Ministry of Human Settlements and Development at the level of the autonomous region—are relatively newly created agencies. Through processes and activities that encourage listening, in-depth discussions, self-awareness, critical analysis, timely information and coordinated action, CRS is showing that localized pathways and systems for safe and dignified shelter and settlements are possible and can be made more efficient.



Jalandoni Pimping and his family lived in an evacuation center for several months after conflict broke out in Marawi City, Mindanao. The family of five now lives in this home that Jalandoni built with the help of CRS. He attended courses on carpentry and received a technical certification from the Philippine government. Photo by Jomari Guillermo for CRS



“ We opted for cash for shelter because we wanted to design and build our own home. Our new home is strong and well-built.

**Jalandoni Pimping**  
CRS project participant,  
Mindanao

**62,000**

**FAMILIES WILL BE SUPPORTED BY CRS WITH ACCESS TO SAFER, MORE DIGNIFIED, AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SHELTER**

## CRS and partner response

### Objectives

We aim to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Human Settlements and Development to support 62,000 families with access to safer, more dignified and culturally appropriate shelters in Bangsamoro. By strengthening the ministry’s capacity to lead housing regulation and construction, and its position as the central authority for human settlements and development, the partnership will extend its reach to more at-risk families in Bangsamoro at a swifter, more sustained pace.

We also seek to enhance the capacity of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development to provide safer homes for 505,116 families and build communities that are resilient to disasters across the country. CRS’ focus is on strengthening the department’s capacity to implement its mandate on shelter emergency response and making its relevant internal policies flexible enough to apply in different parts of the country.

### Activities

- A visit by the Ministry of Human Settlements and Development to two CRS resettlement sites led to the integrated effort to promote social cohesion in the conflict-affected communities.
- Drafting, approval, continuing review and testing of the ministry’s *Housing and Human Settlements Manual*. This helped it secure more government funding to implement housing and resettlement activities.
- Initiating a systematized monitoring and evaluation program for the ministry.
- Participation of the ministry in two Asia Shelter Forum events.
- Drafting, approval and continuing review of the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development’s Integrated Disaster Shelter Assistance Program. This helped the department secure funding.

## Looking ahead

By 2025, the Ministry of Human Settlements and Development will have the key manuals and standard procedures to ensure the continuity of the system changes on emergency, recovery and development for shelter. It will have a regular budget through an enacted law. By 2027, the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development will have completed, tested, reviewed and fully approved the Integrated Disaster Shelter Assistance Program procedures.

It will also have implemented its housing microfinance manual and fully organized subnational shelter coordination in all regions of the country. CRS will be monitoring and accompanying the partners as they continue to implement their programs.

By 2030, CRS and our partners will have provided 367,116 of the most at-risk families with safe and dignified homes whether in emergency, recovery or development phases.

“ This partnership is an agreement that speaks of the oneness of humanity, that fully supports the betterment of humanity, and that shows unity despite the difference in faith.

Hamid Aminoddin Barra  
Minister for Human Settlements and Development, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao

### Working in partnership

After decades of episodic violence that has left more than 2 million people displaced, the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao became an autonomous region of the Philippines after a plebiscite in January 2019.

The newly created Ministry of Human Settlements and Development has committed to addressing the housing and development needs of its citizens. The Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development is also relatively new, having been created by the national government in 2019.

CRS provides technical assistance and initial funding for activities of both partners in the shelter and settlement areas they deem necessary. Technical assistance is provided through workshops, technical meetings, field visits, joint proposal making and training. After the initial activities, the partners made use of the outputs to get budget allocations for their respective programs and to standardize their own procedures. CRS also works with the Shelter Cluster—a collection of nongovernmental organizations with shelter and settlement programs working in the country—to provide information and innovation to these two partners.



**Homes & Communities Strategic Change Platform**

As a part of its Vision 2030 agency strategy, Catholic Relief Services has undertaken a transformational shift from a focus on shelter and settlement—the building of roofs and walls—to homes and communities, the foundation on which life rests. CRS is committed to achieving transformational systems-level change to reach 10 million people affected by crisis and enable them to live in safe and dignified homes and communities through its two-pronged approach:

- Expanding CRS programmatic reach
- Bringing about systems-level change



Noria Bumbola grew up in Marawi City but she and her husband and two children had to flee when conflict broke out. After three years of displacement, they returned to Marawi and built a home with the support of CRS.

Photo by Jomari Guillermo for CRS

“ With CRS’ support, I was able to rebuild my home. My family and I are now ready to restart our lives. CRS gave us the chance to choose.

Noria Bumbola, CRS project participant, Mindanao

### CRS in the Philippines

The CRS country program in the Philippines has been working in the country since 1945. Its programs on emergency response, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, peacebuilding and social cohesion have resulted in a proven track record

acknowledged by the government and the international community. Coupled with its partner development mindset, the country program is well-placed to achieve its vision of safe and dignified homes and communities for highly at-risk families by 2030.



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