

CASE STUDY

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR 2: Total Value (US\$) Directly Secured from Donors/Government by Local Partners as a Result of Significant Contributions by CRS¹

CRS in Indonesia Supports Local Partner to Secure Direct Funding

Partnership and Local Leadership around April 2021 Tropical Cyclone Response

Partnership and Capacity Strengthening Background

The partnership between the CRS country program in Indonesia and Human Initiative (HI) dates back ten years. During this time, CRS and Human Initiative have viewed one another as long-term, trusted partners in disaster response. Through the flagship project PEER² (Preparing to Excel in Emergency Response),³ CRS supported HI with strengthened organizational capacity in systems, policies, tools and processes. Human Initiative observed, “CRS opened its arms wide for this partnership,” while describing the relationship as “not only work colleagues, but close friends.” The partner emphasized a “real connection” with CRS.

Human Initiative has expressed appreciation to CRS for its continued support of the Human Initiative Institute, which provides “training, sharing knowledge and local leverage the Institute’s platform to build the human non-governmental organizations. Additionally, CRS has provided capacity strengthening support to bolster systems and practices to prevent, mitigate and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse under the

Partner: Human Initiative (HI)

Total value secured: \$165,461

Project: Tropical Cyclone Seroja Disaster Response, Emergency Shelter Kits and T-Shelter Construction for Families Affected by Tropical Cyclone Seroja in Lembata District, East Nusa Tenggara Province*

Partner role in award received: Prime Recipient

Donor: Habitat for Humanity Indonesia (HFHI)

Duration of CRS support: 1 month

Role of CRS**: Accompanier during prepositioning and capture planning, proposal preparation and leveraging results and donor engagement.

*Construction of T-Shelters for 74 families; Increasing the technical capacities of 152 families

••CRS CS approaches are explained here <https://ics.crs.org/resource/overview-crs-comprehensive-approach-partnership-and-capacity-strengthening>

¹ Resources for Cross-cutting Indicators (sharepoint.com)

² <https://ics.crs.org/project/preparing-excel-emergency-response-peer>

³ 2015-2018

Strengthening Partners in Protection Against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse through Protection Mainstreaming⁴ project.⁵

As a result of the supportive partnership, Human Initiative stated that it had improved internal functions in protection against sexual exploitation and abuse, Sphere standards,⁶ Core Humanitarian Standards,⁷ and child protection. One partner staff said, “CRS opened our eyes on how to better respond to emergencies, e.g., how to do assessments, design proposals, do the finance and MEAL, ICT, etc.” CRS capacity strengthening focused on training, including training of trainers, and accompaniment during emergency response and after-action review. While mid-level HI staff still require some additional capacity building in proposal building, CRS believes the local partner “without our support ... in the future, they can do (it) by themselves.”

Partner Collaboration around Emergency Response

The collaboration between CRS and Human Initiative has focused primarily on emergency response, including recent responses to the 2018 Central Sulawesi disaster, the 2021 West Sulawesi earthquake and COVID-19. Human Initiative is also a strategic partner in expanding and scaling comprehensive shelter solutions through influence under the Homes and Communities platform.⁸ Under this platform, CRS supports Human Initiative to conduct policy research, advocacy and capacity strengthening of Indonesian actors through training and peer to peer learning on shelter and settlement.

Human Initiative has credited CRS for its organizational and technical capacity in designing and implementing projects: “Some international NGOs also are only doing the local capacity by briefly training and then sharing knowledge, but they never assisted us very close like CRS did.” CRS and HI staff agree that accompaniment throughout the capacity strengthening process makes the capacity changes more sustainable.

During several weeks in fiscal year 2021, CRS and Human Initiative closely collaborated to prepare a proposal to Habitat for Humanity Indonesia (HFHI). The proposal called for providing transitional shelters and technical assistance following Tropical Cyclone Seroja in the Lembata district in East Nusa Tenggara province.

Throughout the grant process, CRS served as an “intensive coach” by bolstering the local organization’s capacity, visibility and confidence, according to HI. In turn, CRS viewed HI as an “equal partner.”

How CRS in Indonesia Supported Human Initiative to Pre-position for Direct Funding

In Indonesia, CRS actively implements programs and influences stakeholders on shelter and settlement issues. In turn, HFHI reached out to CRS to explore potential collaboration in response to the April 2021 Tropical Cyclone Seroja, which devastated many parts of East Nusa Tenggara. Despite CRS’s strong regional presence and shelter expertise, CRS viewed the conversation as an opportunity to clarify its localization priorities to HFHI. “We communicate clearly to the partner that one of the reasons that CRS exists is to support localization and support organizations to build their own strength.” As a result, CRS endorsed the engagement of Human Initiative as an effective local implementing partner. According to CRS, HFHI viewed the endorsement as “very, very valuable.” Human Initiative reported this was yet another example of the CRS country program in Indonesia demonstrating trust in its capacity.

There was a high degree of enthusiasm among the three parties to join forces. However, fundraising efforts by Habitat for Humanity Indonesia fell short.


⁴ <https://crsorg.sharepoint.com/sites/Ethics-Unit/SitePages/Safeguarding.aspx>

⁵ 2018-2021

⁶ <https://spherestandards.org/>

⁷ <https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/>

⁸ Safe, Dignified Homes and Communities Strategic Change Platform (sharepoint.com)



Furthermore, HFHI's organizational constraints limited the scope of partnership opportunities: HFHI is primarily a project implementer and does not typically fund local organizations. Despite these challenges, Habitat for Humanity Indonesia did succeed in gaining approval from its headquarters to fund another local organization. This was the first time that HFHI would engage with another local partner.

While negotiating with HFHI, Human Initiative acknowledged the capacity strengthening work of CRS as a critical element in building HI's credibility, confidence, and capability to apply for funding. Human Initiative consulted with CRS on its challenges and successes in shelter programming. It gained more confidence to consider implementing the shelter project, particularly in the new geographical areas.

According to Human Initiative, the CRS endorsement was invaluable: "We were even more confident knowing that CRS had our back." True to the agency's principles, CRS wanted to support its longstanding partner with expanded opportunities for collaboration and funding,

How CRS Supported Human International with Proposal Preparation for Direct Funding

From the onset, CRS and HI were open about their roles and responsibilities on proposal development. CRS and Human Initiative operated in lockstep for about one month to develop a proposal, detailed activity plan, and budget. CRS provided close accompaniment, particularly in budgeting, as Human Initiative had no previous experience with the donor, insufficient data and no staff in the targeted geographic area.

There was regular three-way communication between the organizations. HI staff explained that "CRS acted as a "middleman" during the proposal development process." CRS stated, "We want to support the partner from the back end and be as supportive as possible so that they can advance."


CRS and Human Initiative held numerous meetings to discuss the project focus, location, and target population, among other things, emphasizing HI's strengths. CRS provided close support through all stages, from planning, writing, and finalizing the proposal. While HI was confident in designing the project, the constant backing from CRS enhanced its credibility. CRS guided Human Initiative to develop a proposal aligned with donor requirements and standards. As such, Human Initiative appreciated numerous sessions from CRS on feedback, revisions, and consultations, contributing to the partner's continuing learning process.

According to CRS in Indonesia, HI's budgeting was a significant challenge, notably missing data on needs, procurement opportunities, and other issues. Human Initiative also mentioned struggling with the lack of primary data from the communities and implementing shelter programming in an unknown geographical area. While HI did not have staff in the new geographical location, it did have an existing network to leverage.

CRS readily offered support with project design, proposal development, and budgeting challenges from day one. Human Initiative was grateful for CRS accompaniment throughout the process, culminating in proposal acceptance. Securing the grant was particularly challenging as Human Initiative staff were also heavily involved in other commitments, including Homes and Communities programming.

Lessons and Advice for Supporting Local Partners to Secure Direct Funding

- Build and maintain long-term, trusted partnerships. This enables partners to identify areas for needed assistance and close accompaniment. Years of successful collaboration support conversations on strengths and weaknesses while



appreciating differences among partners. Treating each other as equals, working as a team, and being explicit of strengths and limitations smooths the process of joint work, such as in securing funding. CRS readiness to offer support, flexibility, and constructive feedback contributed to a successful proposal submitted by HI.

- Engage with the partner in technical and organizational capacity strengthening before providing support, such as during stages of pre-position, donor engagement, and proposal work.
- Build the funding opportunity based on local partner priorities, strengths, and areas of confidence.
- Constantly explore, discuss, and regularly communicate around the partner's strategy, priorities, approaches, and projects to harness new ideas and opportunities for funding.
- Promote the value of localization, despite donor reluctance and inexperience with local organizations. Demonstrate partner capacity by drawing from previous (joint) work in technical and internal organizational areas while leveraging organizational strength. HI appreciated CRS' willingness to link the partner to the donor directly. Otherwise, Human Initiative would have missed the opportunity to pursue the Tropical Cyclone Seroja response.
- Support the partner to learn about new donors and how they work (e.g., mission, requirements, timelines, forms, and tools).
- Educate donors on the CRS local leadership agenda and the importance of local organizations and local context.
- Introduce and manage change effectively. Once organizations prioritize and strategize their development, capacity strengthening yields success more quickly.
- Nurture partner confidence regarding its capacity.
- Exercise patience when engaging in proposal development and overall capacity strengthening. Keep in mind that partners have different standards and priorities.
- Be mindful of each other's abilities during joint proposal writing. Some partners may overestimate their capacity, requiring additional levels of communication while exercising patience to gain more significant insights.
- Take advantage of unexpected or unplanned opportunities and exercise flexibility to support partners in securing direct funding from other donors.

Vision for the Future of This Partnership

Human Initiative aims to increase technical capacity in Homes and Communities, such as shelter, cash, and voucher assistance, and become a leader in this arena. Human Initiative benefits from a diversified funding base (e.g., UN, private sector). As a member of the Humanitarian Forum Indonesia, it is poised to strengthen capacity in humanitarian response around Homes and Communities.

Among its short-term goals, Human Initiative is working to capacitate and influence other actors, primarily around shelter. Human Initiative is confident that it can strengthen the capacity of other organizations to improve shelter programming.

The Human Initiative Institute will be useful for local partners to learn about sector standards, such as Sphere and PSEA. Human Initiative believes it is a strong local organization around shelter interventions and can expand to more geographic areas by further applying learning and best practices.

Looking Ahead

CRS will be nimble to support partners to directly secure funding from other donors, particularly in unexpected or unplanned situations.

To encourage local organizations to engage with CRS, the agency will continue building a global reputation in shelter expertise and a local reputation to support localization through organizational capacity strengthening.

CRS will seek diverse opportunities within the local leadership agenda, such as CRS operating as a sub for HI or other local strategic partners. If CRS cannot be part of the funding opportunity, it will step back and humbly broker a partnership. The role of CRS will evolve and change to respond to partner needs based on various needs by adding value to the relationship.

CRS will support HI to strengthen its capacity in business development in general, with activities such as pre positioning, donor intelligence gathering, and proposal writing. Proactively pursuing opportunities beyond public funding and private sector donors will contribute to improved financial sustainability.

Evidence

- Partner confirmation of the notes based on the reflection on the work carried out together, which elaborates on the role of CRS in securing funds
- Agreement between HFHI and HI
- Concept note

Note

CRS spent an estimated 23 hours on this case: Mediation (3 CRS Staff @ 5 hours), proposal preparation (2 CRS Staff @ 3 hours) and proposal review (1 CRS staff @ 2 hours)