

Local Leadership/Partnership and Capacity Strengthening Learning Briefs

AN ANNOTATED LIST

Contributing to Strong Local Organizations

Partnership

[Collaborative Infrastructure: The Foundation of Systems Change for Youth Employment](#) (2021)

The brief focuses on one of the key aspects of the Global Opportunity Youth Network (GOYN), the Collaborative Infrastructure, the process that develops and sustains relationships among ecosystem actors – including youth - in a “community” (which can be as a district, department, or other levels) to increase collaboration, accountability, trust, and ownership for youth livelihoods. This approach is based on Collective Impact, which brings stakeholders together in a structured manner to achieve social change. The brief provides an overview of the approach, its components and what it looks like in action in the GOYN communities, which include Mombasa, Kenya and Thiès, Senegal, where the CRS country programs are contributing to and supporting these efforts.

[What to Consider When Establishing a Strong Private and Public Partnership in Water Access and Management](#) (2019)

This brief is also available in [French](#), and [Spanish](#)

CRS led the implementation of Madagascar’s Rural Access to New Opportunities for Health and Prosperity (RANO Ham Pivoatra or RANO HP) and Rural Access to New Opportunities for Health and Water Management (RANOn’ala) projects between October 2009 and September 2013. Funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, both projects improved access to reliable and safe water and sanitation services in targeted areas, in part through the establishment of public-private partnerships. Using private funds, CRS has continued to monitor these partnerships. While not without challenges, approximately 90 percent of the systems were still functioning at the time of writing — two years after the end of project funding.

[A Partnership Against Malaria in the Gambia](#) (2018)

This brief is also available in [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

The learning brief discusses how partnership and capacity strengthening may have influenced the success of the malaria control interventions in The Gambia. The Gambia’s National Malaria Control Program under the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare saw the country’s malaria parasite prevalence decrease dramatically from 4.0% in 2011 to 0.2% in 2014. Malaria case incidence also fell by 50% across all regions. Globally, the incidence of malaria declined by 21% among populations at risk, and by 35% among children under 5 between 2010 and 2015. The learning brief also identifies opportunities for replication or adaptation by malaria control efforts in other countries.

[A Journey of Partnership and Capacity Strengthening with the Government of Vietnam](#) (2016)

This brief is also available in [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

To foster full inclusion of people with disabilities, the Government of Vietnam established a strong national policy foundation in 2010 to guarantee equal and equitable rights, access, and inclusion of all citizens. These policies are essential to full inclusion; however, the legal structure was neither widely understood nor optimally leveraged by the intended beneficiaries.

Through its own internal assessment process, the Government of Vietnam identified a gap in its policy for inclusion and existing disability issues at the national level. CRS, which had already started to work on disability-related programming in Vietnam, approached the government in 1997 to discuss a potential pilot project. To bridge the gaps between theory and practice and the national policy and the local reality, CRS facilitated adaptation of a bottom-up “working group approach” that the Agency first successfully employed in peacebuilding programming in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

[AIDSRelief Final Report: Providing Treatment, Restoring Hope](#) (2014)

When the first PEPFAR programs launched in 2004, many people did not believe it was possible to deliver high-quality, sustainable HIV treatment in low-resource settings. Over the next nine years, AIDSRelief and other PEPFAR partners exceeded all expectations, delivering HIV care and treatment to more than 700,000 people in 10 countries, including nearly 400,000 who enrolled on antiretroviral therapy. This final report on AIDSRelief outlines key outcomes and lessons learned. It describes approaches and methods that contributed to the initiative's success.

[How a Partnership Set Itself Up for Success in India](#) (2013)

Partnerships often look good on paper but may be challenging in practice. This learning paper describes a promising partnership in India and the partners' innovative approach to strengthening the capacity of local organizations.

[Working Together, Learning Together: Learning Alliances in Agroenterprise Development](#) (2009)

When CRS decided to shift the emphasis of its agriculture programs from subsistence-focused production to market-oriented enterprise development, it needed to both develop new approaches and build staff capacity to implement them.

To do so it turned to the concept of the "learning alliance," a model of mutual, participatory learning involving research and development institutions and rural communities that aims to accelerate institutional change, improve knowledge management, and deepen the level of impact. This brief documents CRS' experience over several years in establishing a learning alliance for agroenterprise across several of its operational regions worldwide.

Capacity Strengthening

[Partnership and Capacity Strengthening Case Study: Caritas India](#) (2022)

This brief is also available in [Arabic](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

This case study showcases CRS' wide-ranging capacity strengthening activities to support Caritas India to develop and implement systems and processes, including strategic planning. In fiscal year 2021, CRS provided support at varying degrees to multiple levels of the Caritas India network: national Caritas, 14 regional forums, and 175 diocesan social service societies. The strategic priorities of Caritas Internationalis guide the partnership. Due to COVID-19, partners postponed elements of the capacity strengthening work and other activities. Caritas expressed appreciation for CRS' flexibility in extending deadlines and conducting remote training: "The partnership is very much flexible and open, and partner driven."

[CRS in Indonesia Supports Local Partner to Secure Direct Funding](#) (2022)

This brief is also available in [Arabic](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

During the ten-year partnership, the CRS country program in Indonesia and Human Initiative (HI) have viewed one another as long-term, trusted partners in disaster response. Through the flagship project PEER (Preparing to Excel in Emergency Response), CRS supported HI with strengthened organizational capacity in systems, policies, tools, and processes. This brief focuses on emergency response, including recent responses to the Central Sulawesi disaster, the West Sulawesi earthquake and COVID-19. HI is also a strategic partner in expanding and scaling comprehensive shelter solutions through influence under the Homes and Communities platform. Under this platform, CRS supports HI to conduct policy research, advocacy and capacity strengthening of Indonesian actors through training and peer to peer learning on shelter and settlement.

[Capacity Building for Partner Protection Policy and Practices: Lessons Learned from the Europe Zone](#) (2018)

As CRS and its partners respond to the refugee and migrant crisis, CRS aims to build the capacity of its partners to protect project beneficiaries. This brief was created as part of the Europe Zone's learning agenda, to understand what lessons CRS can draw from supporting its partners to roll out their own protection policies in concert with the CRS Code of Conduct and Protection Policy.

[Karuna Mission Social Solidarity: A Caritas Member Organization's Institutional Strengthening](#) (2018)

This brief is also available in [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

This learning brief highlights how collaboration amongst Caritas Internationalis member organizations led to the enhanced effectiveness and efficiency of institutional strengthening of the Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS) in Myanmar. It reflects on the experience of KMSS leadership, Caritas Australia, CAFOD, CRS and Trócaire with KMSS' institutional strengthening. Each Caritas member organization provided, in a coordinated manner, the institutional strengthening and capacity building support per KMSS' identified and prioritized capacity needs. Member organizations' support also included instances of joint funding of KMSS' institutional strengthening.

[MENTOR: Civil society strengthening in North Africa and Middle East](#) (2017)

This brief is available also in [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

This learning brief details the approaches, achievements, and lessons learned from efforts by CRS' Middle East-North Africa Civil Society Organization Training and Organizational Development Response (MENTOR) project (2012–2016) to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations, and to reinforce the capacity of locally lead training partner organizations to serve as sustainable resources for civil society after the end of project funding.

[THRIVE: Using CRS Partnership and Capacity Strengthening Approaches to Improve Early Child Development Service Quality](#) (2016)

This brief is also available in [Arabic](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

This learning brief summarizes the capacity strengthening processes, approaches and tools applied by the THRIVE (2012–2015) project, as well as results and lessons learned. The brief's findings draw from assessments associated with specific tools and interviews with staff, local implementing partners and the community-based organizations targeted by interventions.

[How Capacity Strengthening Helped A Local Partner Grow By 4.1 Million in Ethiopia](#) (2015)

This learning brief describes how CRS helped its local partner, the Hararghe Catholic Secretariat (HCS) to reach 1.5 million more beneficiaries and increase its value by \$4.1 million. The HCS made dramatic improvements in program implementation, logistics, human resources, and finance. It developed a solid foundation in the community, a data-driven culture, better cash flows, and more effective governance and strategic decision making

[How Capacity Strengthening Readied a Local Partner for Sustainability and Growth in Uganda](#) (2014)

Comprehensive capacity strengthening helped the Diocese of Northern Uganda, a local partner, to transform itself. The Diocese of Northern Uganda tripled the size of its donor base and doubled its program value. It now provides large-scale services on its own. This learning brief describes how CRS helped the Diocese of Northern Uganda to strengthen its programs, influence, funding, and human resources. The brief offers insights about the partnership skills that made growth possible.

[Short-Term Capacity Strengthening Program \(SPGM I\)](#) (2014)

This brief is also available in [Arabic](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#)

Capacity strengthening requires time and resources, yet the teams that could most benefit are frequently under-resourced and need short-term results. This learning brief captures approaches and achievements of a short-term capacity strengthening program (SPGM I, 2011–2013) in which partner civil society organizations in Sudan quickly improved key organizational functions and had sustained many improvements by the follow-up assessment more than one year later.

[Learning from Comprehensive Capacity Strengthening in Kenya](#) (2014)

In Kenya, CRS identified 15 local partners for capacity strengthening in comprehensive HIV and AIDS service delivery. The project produced changes at every level of the partners' operations. This learning brief draws on quantitative and qualitative data to distill insights about the capacity strengthening experience.

Localization

[The EMPOWER Project: Summary](#) (2021)

Empowering Partner Organizations Working on Emergency Responses (EMPOWER) project promotes the leadership of humanitarian response by local organizations that have nationwide coverage. It is an initiative that is guided by the institutional and programmatic priorities identified within the organizations.

[EMPOWER Project: Empowering Partner Organizations Working on Emergency Responses: Caribbean and South America's Zones 2018-2020 Achievements Year One](#) (2020)

CRS' EMPOWER project aims to strengthen the capacity of local first responders to both meet the acute needs of the most vulnerable, as well as lead comprehensive emergency efforts that support people's dignified recovery. The EMPOWER project builds off lessons learned and demonstrated successes from approaches and modules that have taken place in similar emergency contexts of India, Indonesia, Philippines, and Jordan.

[A Renewed Grand Bargain: Accelerate localization and ensure quality funding for transformative change](#) (2020)

The Grand Bargain compact, signed in 2016 by humanitarian leaders including, governments, NGOs, and the UN, commits to making aid more effective and efficient, and to increase the power and participation of communities receiving assistance. As a signatory to the Grand Bargain, CRS seeks to build on the progress and lessons-learned and to call for a renewed agreement that accelerates localization, expands, and deepens participation and ensures adequate quality funding.

[EMPOWER Empowering Local Organizations Working on Emergency Responses in The Caribbean and South America](#) (2015)

With the increasing frequency of emergencies affecting the Caribbean and South America in recent years, CRS is committed to working with local organizations in these zones to strengthen their capacity to respond. After an emergency, faith-based and local non-governmental organizations are often the first organizations people turn to for help. This project aims to strengthen the capacity of these local first responders to meet acute needs.

[The Missing Link: The Role of Local Institutions in Refugee Response](#) (2018)

This brief, focused on organizations in Lebanon, addresses the question: Can efforts to strengthen local partners take us farther in our quest to respond to unprecedented global displacement? Core to CRS' guiding principles is that of subsidiarity, that local organizations and communities closest to the challenges of poverty are also the architects of their own development. Through the Preparing to Excel in Emergency Response (PEER) project, funded and implemented by CRS over three years in four countries, the project combines critical best practices with technical expertise to professionalize knowledge, skills, and attitudes of local emergency first responders through three pillars: financial and institutional systems, human resources management and adherence to Sphere standards.

COVID-19

[Leading the Way: how intentional capacity strengthening helped locally led COVID-19 response in three countries](#) (2021)

In 2020, Preparing to Excel in Emergency Response (PEER) project partners began responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, and CRS was eager to learn about their efforts, and if capacity strengthening investments made during the PEER project (2016-2018) were sustained and utilized during the COVID-19 response. This brief shows how the PEER partners' COVID-19 response illustrates their ability to serve their communities, as they have provided emergency response to millions of people in this unprecedented emergency. In part, their ability to effectively respond was made possible by CRS' investment in strengthening their capacity during PEER and via CRS' continued relationship.

[COVID-19 and the Critical Need to Support Local Leadership](#) (2020)

This brief presents CRS' recommendations in response to COVID-19, which raises new challenges to global humanitarian systems. With the travel limitations, as well as potential disruptions to aid supply systems, the humanitarian response relies heavily on local actors to lead in new ways and meet community needs. Effective COVID-19 responses require effective local government, and strong local civil society organizations to design and implement humanitarian and development programming responses. It is critical that international actors: donors, multi-laterals, and INGOs support local leadership through quality partnerships, effective capacity strengthening, flexible and adaptive funding, fair multi-stakeholder risk sharing, and reasonable and realistic compliance requirements.

Influencing External Systems, Processes and Environments

[Local Leadership in Humanitarian Response and Development Assistance](#) (2021)

This brief proposes six policy principles, based on CRS' experience with partners around the world, as well as the efforts of our peer agencies, partners, donors, and others, to support and expand locally led humanitarian and development efforts. These policy principles are rooted in Catholic Social Teaching and CRS' principle of subsidiarity: the understanding that communities, who are closest to challenges, are artisans of their own development. CRS affirms local leadership is critical for effective, and sustainable humanitarian response and development and must be a priority for the future of foreign assistance.

[Recipe for Success: Accelerating Nutrition Governance](#) (2021)

This brief examines how existing U.S. Government policies, systems, and structures enable or hinder the localization of the USG's nutrition programming, as well as nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive approaches implemented by U.S. Government funded nutrition actors. Through better understanding of enabling and limiting factors, USG and nutrition actors can further commit to localization and better design nutrition programming for scale up.