PEER Project
Final Evaluation

CRS
CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CP	Country Program
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CS	Capacity Strengthening
ER	Emergency Response
HOCAI	Holistic Organizational Capacity Assessment Instrument
ICS	Institute for Capacity Strengthening
LFI	Local Faith-based Institution
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MOCA	Modified Organizational Capacity Assessment
MDMC	Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center (branch of Muhammadiyah created out of this project)
P/CS	Partnership/Capacity Strengthening
PEER	Preparing to Excel in Emergency Response with Local Faith-based Institutions
PKPU	Penundaan Kewajiban Pembayaran Utang (Indonesian partner)
RFP	Request for Proposal
SRFM	Sub-recipient Financial Management assessment

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This three-year PEER project was undertaken by CRS in four countries (Lebanon, Jordan, India, and Indonesia) to build the capacity of local faith-based institutions (LFIs) to respond to emergencies. It was designed to improve their financial, procurement, HR and other institutional systems during emergencies, as well as their use of SPHERE standards and relevant technical sectors related to emergency response.

The CRS project succeeded in strengthening partners' emergency and overall institutional capacity. It further provided three models of how to build capacity, tailored to four different contexts. In two countries – Lebanon and India – the capacity strengthening was provided directly by CRS PEER staff, whereas in Jordan it was done through a local partner (Caritas Jordan). In Indonesia, CRS implemented a step-down capacity strengthening approach where it trained local partner HQ staff to become "master trainers," and then supported those master trainers as they trained local branches of their organizations. While this project shows many ways to successfully build institutional and technical capacity of local organizations, evaluators note that it was not possible to identify which model with which type of partner achieves the most impact given the varying contexts in each country, as well as the fact that organizational capacity assessment tools were used differently across the four countries.

It should be noted that the project was hampered by funding issues. PEER was supposed to be externally funded after Year One, but that funding never materialized. Each subsequent year, country programs had to search for internal funds, making project staffing and some activities uncertain. Project success is therefore even more commendable against this background.

MAIN OVERALL FINDINGS

Project outcomes – expected systems improvement

- All partners had ***measurable improvement in their organizations' systems and procedures***, for both emergency and non-emergency work. Creation of new policies, procedures, and manuals has enabled partners to be more effective, creative, transparent, and responsive in their work – and on a sustainable basis.
- Those partners that experienced an emergency during the life of the project ***demonstrated improvement in emergency response*** and are:
  - Writing ***rapid, quality situation reports*** that led to good programming and even new funding opportunities.
  - Contributing to ***cluster meetings*** to support more coordinated overall responses.
  - Obtaining and ***using beneficiary feedback*** on programming (emergency and non-emergency) so as to better meet immediate needs and develop future responses.
- Many partners are now more ***oriented to capturing and using data*** (for improved emergency and regular programming), because of training on monitoring and evaluation and HR management. Work on ICT4D enabled some partners to use ICT devices to capture data on beneficiaries and volunteers. Improved M&E is helping many partners write strong proposals.

Project outcomes – unexpected outcomes in sharing and using PEER learning

- Partners are *gaining new respect from and opportunities to collaborate with government and colleague organizations* (government acknowledged the Indonesian partners' more frequent, skillful responses by asking for an MOU with them for future emergency responses; partners in Lebanon and Jordan are working together in new interfaith initiatives)
- Many partners are transferring knowledge from the PEER project to other organizations, increasing project impact in fostering more timely and responsive emergency responses.
- Most partners are using their monitoring and evaluation, proposal writing, and other PEER learning to benefit their other non-PEER projects.
- Some partners (India and Indonesia) are now sending staff to other nearby countries to assist with emergency responses.

Elements of success – partnership

- All partners and CRS staff emphasized the importance of a *trusting, open, mutual partnership* as key for effective capacity strengthening to occur.

Elements of success – CRS staffing

- Partners appreciated not only *CRS staff's broad and practical (not theoretical) emergency experience, but also their respectful, trust-building demeanor.*
- Partners benefited from the *wide range of trainers* brought into the project – program and finance, CRS regional and HQ technical experts, as well as non-CRS experts.

Elements of success – capacity strengthening topics and methodologies

- *SPHERE standards and protection issues were key* to helping organizations experience a "mind change" about the seriousness of emergency response. For example, one partner, for the first time, intentionally included two women in its most recent emergency assessment team to best understand women beneficiaries' needs.
- The project used a *robust set of capacity strengthening methodologies*. Most important was the sequence of conducting institutional capacity assessments, followed by formal trainings, followed by accompaniment (i.e. coaching and mentoring).
  - When done in a systemic, participatory and transparent way, individual organizational capacity assessments gave partners not only an understanding of what a professional organization is, but also a "road map" to get there.
  - Formal group trainings, with a practical/hands-on bent, imparted knowledge and enabled valued peer-to-peer learning.
  - Follow up coaching/mentoring with individual organizations enabled them to reveal their areas of weakness, deepen learning about the training topics, and customize policies for their own use.

- **Other key capacity strengthening methodologies** included:
  - o **Study visits** to other regions within a country, or other countries.
  - o **Emergency simulations and an emergency scorecard tool**.
  - o **Writeshops** (see Lebanon and Jordan write up below)

BIGGEST COMMON CHALLENGES OVERALL

- *Disseminating learning to all staff* and volunteers of each LFI, not just those who attended PEER trainings or participated in PEER project related coaching sessions.
- *Cementing the learning for those organizations that did not experience an emergency* during the life of the project, inhibiting their ability to practice what they had learned.
- For CRS, *fully staffing this privately-funded project*, given competing externally-funded projects.
- *Fully capturing incremental progress, as well as standardizing use of M&E tools across countries.*
- *Ensuring enough time to accompany partners while testing their new policies*.

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC FINDINGS

CRS Lebanon focused intensively on coaching/ mentoring and the innovation of "writeshops." It also added a peacebuilding element to the project by bringing together representatives of 11 different faiths (out of a total of 14 partners throughout the country):

- Focusing on trust-building with each organization during the first few months of the project paid off. Because of conflicts in the region, many LFIs were uncertain about working with CRS and with other organizations outside of their faith community. By project end, some LFIs were even implementing projects with each other – a result good not only for more coordinated and holistic responses, but for interfaith relations overall.
- "Writeshops" were an important methodology for partners. CRS would bring several partners together to draft policies and procedures, based on CRS-provided models. CRS would then coach partners in customizing the models for their organizations.
- Intensive coaching and mentoring ensured the policies and procedures were in place, a sign of project success.
- The majority of LFIs also tested some of the policies and procedures, and were excited about the changes introduced.

Caritas Jordan was supported by CRS Lebanon in its oversight of the project in Jordan. Caritas Jordan selected 11 LFIs (mostly volunteer-based) among its existing partners, managed coordination with them, and co-led capacity assessments and capacity strengthening.

- Partners spoke of how their program quality and creativity improved, in addition to their financial, administrative, and human resources/ volunteer management. Many have increased their level and range of charity activities such as working with orphans.

- Partners note how they can apply SPHERE standards even to their non-emergency support to communities.
- Partners appreciated the trainings and writeshops as methods for joint learning, as well as connections made amongst themselves and with Lebanese LFIs from exchange visits.

CRS India worked with 14 Catholic diocesan partners, including two umbrella organizations, in 7 disaster-prone regions of India. They particularly fostered peer-to-peer learning between partners.
- Partners are developing ways to share PEER learning with the local government and other organizations.
- Partners are developing many ways to help communities prepare for emergencies, such as talking about disaster management with existing self-help and youth groups, or linking three or four villages in workshops on disaster preparation and management.

CRS Indonesia focused on partnering with two large Muslim organizations for maximum reach within the country. CRS trained partner "master trainers," who, with CRS support, cascaded the trainings to their branch offices. CRS also helped partners develop, test, and formally adopt "Standard Operating Procedures for Emergency Response".
- Partners are taking strong initiative, from applying tools learned in PEER to assess the capacity of their branch offices not included in the PEER project, to developing a special beneficiary needs assessment app with the help of CRS IT staff.
- The relationship between CRS and the two main Muslim organizations in Indonesia has become strong. Given the sensitivity of optics of a Christian organization "teaching" Muslim organizations, this is an important peacebuilding outcome.
- The partners now coordinate closely, even doing joint responses whereas before they did not know of each others' existence at branch level. One partner notes that other organizations outside the PEER project also contact them now to do joint responses.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMMING (FROM PEER BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED)

What level and type of accompaniment is required?
- Accompaniment is key, particularly later in the project to assist partners to institutionalize change. ***Three years is the minimum for a project of this type***. Four or five years are optimal to enable partner staff to fully apply the knowledge and skills gained, maintain systemic changes, and even extend the learning to peer organizations.
- Communicate clearly with partners on roles and responsibilities around disseminating the learning within partner organizations as well as institutionalizing that learning.
- The level and type of accompaniment should be adapted to each partner, depending on their existing capacity and complexity of their organization and external context. Particular consideration

should be given for organizations that are predominantly volunteer based, requiring even less formal HR procedures and more volunteer management, as well as more flexibility in scheduling activities around volunteers' time, more assistance in institutionalizing knowledge given their light staffing structure, and more content around volunteer management strategies.

What CRS HR systems, processes and behaviors are needed?

- **Ensure immediate, and full, staffing** for such projects. This means *at least one full-time staff member to manage the project, with other dedicated full or part-time staff* expert in program quality, management quality, emergency response, and monitoring and evaluation. All of these staff should be trained in partnership/capacity strengthening approaches and tools, especially in accompaniment.
- The CRS *staffing structure should be able to provide frequent contact with different levels of partner organizations for appropriate accompaniment. This will depend on the number of partners, existing partner capacity level, and travel time to partner organizations*. It also will depend on the type of capacity strengthening being done and how much follow up the partner will need to institutionalize learning.

What are considerations in choosing partners?

- The *partner selection process should focus on the level of commitment* by the organization to the envisioned organizational change, from Board on down. This includes having enough staff or committed volunteers to be able to engage in project learning activities as well as implement the learning.
- Consider choosing *partners that can reinforce each other* during and after the project, such as by forming a network.

What are the best practices for capacity strengthening methodology?

- Create *mechanisms to enable partners to respond to an emergency* even if they do not experience one in their region during the project, such as seconding staff to another organization/region that is experiencing an emergency.
- At the beginning of the project, *be explicit with partners about the intentional capacity strengthening process,* which starts with a participatory capacity assessment and continues with the creation and implementation of associated development plans. In this way, the assessment becomes an empowering "road map" that partners can own from project beginning and after the project ends.
- *Discuss with each partner, at the beginning of the capacity strengthening project, how they will disseminate* and sustain project learning.
- Consider *creating a role for government* or other emergency responders—local organizations, INGOs, and/or the UN—in the project to strengthen those necessary relationships, even if the role is only to provide briefings on government procedures and capacity.

What are considerations for monitoring and evaluation?

■ Include ***partnership/capacity strengthening and monitoring and evaluation experts while developing the project's M&E plan*** to ensure that it captures meaningful data. Train project staff in the plan so indicators and targets are clear, relevant, and owned by staff.

> **Note**
>
> It remains an open question whether or not to provide partners with funding for their participation in this type of capacity strengthening activity (i.e. partner staff salaries or small grants). This project had good results with both providing and not providing funding to partner organizations.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Capacity strengthening is a cornerstone of CRS' activity, as is responding to emergencies. Around the world, emergencies seem to be increasing in intensity, frequency, and type. Local faith-based organizations often are the first responders to these emergencies, yet also often lack capacity for the best response.

The PEER project (Preparing to Excel in Emergency Response with Local Faith Institutions) was designed to build the capacity of LFIs in four countries, and to serve as a platform for building CRS' own ability to strengthen local organizations' emergency response capacity.

PEER Project - Theory of Change

IF: CRS provides emergency response specific institutional strengthening, capacity building and accompaniment to LFIs as identified and prioritized by LFIs through a detailed capacity assessment process

THEN: LFIs will implement timely, quality emergency responses that meet international humanitarian standards

BECAUSE: LFIs (through project activities) will have the required skills, knowledge, operational systems and human resources to manage disaster responses.

In Indonesia, CRS partnered with Penundaan Kewajiban Pembayaran Utang (PKPU) and the Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center (MDMC), and focused on developing good trainers within the organizations to cascade learning. Here, members take part in a shelter training. *Photo courtesy of MDMC/PEER partners*

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

In Indonesia, India, Lebanon and Jordan, CRS implemented a privately-funded $2.95 million emergency capacity strengthening project called 'Preparing to Excel in Emergency Response (PEER).' The three-year project started on 1 November 2015 and finished on 31 September 2018.

PEER worked to equip 41 diverse local Christian, Muslim and Druze organizations to provide quality and timely humanitarian response that meets the immediate, life-saving needs of disaster-affected populations in Asia and the Middle East through a range of capacity strengthening activities, skills and resources. These capacity strengthening efforts helped to improve institutional and staff capacity for more efficient and effective emergency responses, and included some of the following activities:

- **Assessment of organizations' capacity** using a variety of tools and, at different times in the project, through mutual agreement on organizational development plans.
- **Accompaniment and on-the-job support** to assist LFIs to put new skills and systems into practice both institutionally and on the ground during an emergency response.
- **Trainings** by technical experts on core institutional functions and emergency response modules.
- **Partner-to-partner learning** through exchange visits and networking events.

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the PEER project's final evaluation is the following:

- **Improvement**: The Final Evaluation should identify project strengths and weaknesses, to increase relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of future emergency capacity strengthening programs.
- **Judgement:** The Final Evaluation should assess the project sustainability and its potential for scale-up and replication. The impact should be also assessed.
- **Knowledge:** The Final Evaluation should provide generalizations about the effectiveness of PEER's project strategy or what works. It should also contribute to agency and global learning by identifying potential promising practices or lessons learned in capacity strengthening, including accompaniment, from the PEER project.

The evaluation also contributes to the PEER learning agenda by exploring the following learning questions:

a   What HR systems, processes and behaviors are needed in CRS at a country program level to support improvement in partners' emergency response capacity?

b   What level and type of accompaniment is required to ensure sustained improvement in partner's emergency response capacity?

KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND EVALUATION SCOPE

In addition to the learning questions noted above, specific key evaluation questions were:

1. Did the project achieve its objective to make LFIs better able to provide quality and timely humanitarian response?

2. What were the elements of the project that led to its success?

3. How sustainable and scale-able is this project?

4. What does this tell us for future such programs?

OVERVIEW OF THE EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES

This evaluation began with a desk review of the relevant project documents, including the proposal, results framework, quarterly and midterm reports, IPTT, MOCA results, and notes from other meetings and learning events. The evaluators conducted preliminary interviews with selected CRS staff to ensure their understanding of key project terms and models. The evaluators streamlined the evaluation questions from the Terms of Reference (TOR), then created and sought feedback on key informant interview and focus group discussion questions. They also created, sought feedback on, and tested an online survey.

Evaluators traveled to all four countries to conduct Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in person with CRS staff, Caritas Jordan staff, LFI staff and volunteers. The KIIs and FGDs were well received. Several said it was a good chance to reflect and remember key points. One went further, saying, *"This gave me a platform to express, document and share some of my ideas, as well as a few frustrations. This was a great space."*

Evaluators also conducted an online survey of LFI staff and volunteers. Both qualitative and quantitative data, combined with information from the desk review, were used to produce an initial draft. This draft was reviewed by key CRS country program, regional, and headquarters staff. While a validation process with partners had been planned, this ultimately did not happen due to time constraints, as all CRS staff and local LFI staff had moved onto other projects, including responding to emergencies in India and Indonesia. Two rounds of review by CRS staff were used instead to create this final report.

Some limitations existed on the evaluation methodology. Perhaps most significant was the fact that the evaluators were not able to speak to government, other external stakeholders, or beneficiaries of emergency responses conducted by PEER local partners. This was due to a lack of time, the distance required to get to locations where disaster response beneficiaries were, and, in some cases, ongoing emergencies. Lack of time and length of travel distance also meant that only seven of the Indian partners could be interviewed. The need to use translation for many KIIs affected scheduling, as did the fact that most CRS PEER staff had left the project or joined other units by the time the evaluation took place. The latter likely played a role in the low survey response rate, making the online survey a source of data but not statistically significant.

DESCRIPTION OF EVALUATION FINDINGS

DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRY PROGRAM MODELS

From the beginning of the project, each country program developed a different model for how to implement the PEER project, based on their country context and country program (CP) experience and objectives. This included determining with which and how many organizations the CPs would partner. It further included deciding how CPs would staff the project, which activities to undertake and what, if any, resources to provide partners.

All partners, in all countries and with all models, did make progress in strengthening their institutional and emergency response capacity. However, even within the same country program, great differences existed between the amount of progress made by different partners. This is because so much is dependent on context: variables include the partners' types, needs, existing organizational capacity, level of commitment, and the external environment.

Because of this, and because organizational capacity assessments were not used in the same way across all four country programs, the evaluators were not able to draw conclusions on which methodology works best with which kind of partner, including their baseline capacity. Instead, evaluators offer a rich description, in both table and narrative form, of the strengths and drawbacks of each model used in PEER. This points to a fundamental lesson from PEER -- that many different ways exist to do successful capacity strengthening work.

MODEL	STRENGTHS	DRAWBACKS	CONDITIONS
CRS trains and accompanies partners directly (India and Lebanon)	• CRS controls quality of all trainings and accompaniment	• Requires a great deal of CRS staff time • Often challenging for partners to cascade knowledge to their staff who did not attend trainings	• This is useful for all types of partners, from those with relatively little capacity to those already relatively strong.
CRS trains partner "master trainers" who cascade training internally (Indonesia)	• Partner develops cadre of strong trainers for specific topics • Trainings can be adapted by partner to local culture and language • Saves CRS time • Partner learns material more when taking on training responsibility • Partner owns the capacity building process and results more, increasing chances for sustainability • Partner develops project management capacity, including financial management	• Potential loss of training quality as it is cascaded • Tends to emphasize training rather than accompaniment • Works mostly in the area of technical/ programmatic capacity • Deals mostly with staff knowledge and skills and less with organizational systems and procedures	• Partner shall be committed to the process and results, including committing the time of its staff to become trainers • Structure and size of the partner shapes the cascading process • Might require paying some partner staff to cascade the training

MODEL	STRENGTHS	DRAWBACKS	CONDITIONS
CRS supports strategic local partner who conducts the capacity strengthening of the other partners	• Strategic partner develops capacity to be a CS institution itself • Builds a network of local partners • CS materials can be adapted by strategic partner to local culture and language • If the strategic partner is supported fully early on, this model can save CRS' time	• Few local organizations have the necessary overall institutional strength, so this requires large up-front investment by CRS • Potential loss of CS quality as it is shared with other organizations • If the strategic partner is not well- supported early on, this could use even more CRS resources to support both strategic partner and other local partners	• The strategic partner shall be committed to the CS of the partners and also to becoming a stronger CS institution • Likely requires paying some strategic partner staff

THE CRS INDIA MODEL

CRS India designed its version of the PEER project to be oriented to dioceses in disaster-prone areas. It put out a call to 24 dioceses and evaluated 21 responses they received. The criteria included whether or not the partner was a first responder, the number of staff and volunteers, and if the organization had an enabling work environment with other stakeholders and local government.

CRS India staff members meet with the head of a local partner agency during a joint food/non-food item distribution in an emergency response. *Photo by David Snyder/CRS*

CRS India chose 14 dioceses, two in each region. Twelve were implementers and two were coordinating forums. An additional forum joined for capacity building sessions that aligned with their interests. These partners were spread all over the country, from northeastern Himalayan-flood prone areas to southern cyclone lanes. The partners were to receive capacity strengthening support but nothing else such as paid staff time or computers.

CRS staffing on this project was sparser than in other country programs. The Director of Disaster Management initially led the project with support from a Delhi-based CRS Fellow, the Director of Partnership, and the Head of Programming. Hiring of the Project Coordinator took about six months as CRS India looked externally but then decided to hire internally to ensure a high level of partnership and management skills.

Once hired, the Project Coordinator was full time and two other staff were part time on PEER: the Director of Disaster Management and the MEAL Officer. Some finance and HR/Admin staff also worked with partners but were not budgeted directly to the project. CRS staff said this was light staffing, particularly given the fact that it usually takes at least one flight, if not two, to travel to the widely-dispersed partner locations. The Project Coordinator therefore lobbied for more staffing and, by the second half of the project, received support from field offices to assist with coaching and conducting the project's midline capacity assessment tool called 'MOCA' (the Modified Organizational Capacity Assessment). This strong localized support helped a great deal; but, even then, the team was stretched to meet partner needs.

In terms of approach, CRS India started by asking partners to conduct individual baseline MOCA assessments to ascertain their organizational capacity level, both institutionally and in emergency responses. CRS India discussed the scores with each partner and identified common training needs. *(It should be noted that initial MOCA scores were very high and not accurate. See annex for MOCA data.)* CRS India then convened all partners for a meeting to present the suggested training topics, receive feedback, and make adjustments to the overall training plan. Training topics were: SPHERE, emergency needs assessment, MEAL in Emergency, procurement and logistics, protection mainstreaming, and resource mobilization. Additionally, CRS India ran two Emergency Simulation workshops and a networking event.

CRS India used a variety of trainers drawn from the country program, CRS regional and HQ staff, and outside resource people. All trainings were practical in nature, using discussions, simulations, and role plays. After each training, CRS India asked organizations to create action plans to implement the training. However, little feedback was given on those action plans due to lack of CRS staff time.

CRS India conducted a midterm MOCA, using a different approach than had been used for the baseline. This time, CRS management quality staff accompanied the PEER team member to directly conduct the MOCA assessment in partner offices and engage in document verification. This resulted in lower, but more accurate, scores for the majority of the partners. CRS India again discussed scores and next steps with each partner.

In addition to the trainings and general accompaniment, CRS India supported partners who experienced emergencies during the life of the project. At a minimum, CRS worked with them by email and phone during the emergency. Sometimes CRS also came to the field to respond and provide on-the-spot mentoring. Five of the 14 Indian partners responded to five floods and one cloudburst; two of those emergencies were directly supported by CRS staff and funding. For one of the partners, it was the first time they received funding from the START Fund[1].

CRS India sought other practical ways to build PEER partner learning. On one occasion, CRS sent a PEER participant from one region to assist a second partner's response. On another, CRS sent a PEER participant to assist CRS' emergency response in Nepal. This was also a plus for CRS, as expressed by a CRS staff member: "Getting manpower in an emergency is difficult, and there was not much cost for the project when there was already a PEER person."

---

1 The START Fund is collectively owned and managed by Start Network's members, and supported by the British, Irish, Dutch and Belgian governments and the European Commission. The START Fund provides rapid financing to underfunded small to medium scale crises, spikes in chronic humanitarian crises, and to act in anticipation of impending crises, filling a critical gap in humanitarian financing.

CRS India conducted a final MOCA with management quality support at the end of the project. This confirmed progress in institutionalizing new policies and procedures for all partners. The average overall capacity improvement increase for all partners was 10% (in comparison to the targeted 5% increase). By the time of the midline assessment, all LFIs had high capacity in all areas, with an average total MOCA score of 81%. Between midline and endline assessments, half of all LFIs (and more in India) had further increased their capacity in procurement and performance management[2].

THE CRS INDONESIA MODEL

CRS Indonesia's PEER model was built on lessons learned from several years of similar capacity strengthening programming, primarily with KARINA (Caritas Indonesia) and Catholic dioceses. From those projects, CRS Indonesia knew that dissemination of learning within the partner organizations, whether small or large, was a challenge, as most did not have strong mechanisms for sharing learning. CRS Indonesia therefore knew they wanted to develop a strong methodology for developing good trainers within the partner organizations in order to cascade learning.

CRS Indonesia formulated the general project idea, then considered potential partners. It felt it would be flooded with applications if it put out a request for proposal (RFP), and also knew from previous capacity strengthening experience that it wanted to work with large, Muslim, faith-based organizations that already were responding to emergencies through their volunteer base. CRS Indonesia therefore approached Muhammadiyah and PKPU to explain the project and its probable benefits. Both organizations felt it was strategic to align with a Catholic organization known for its emergency response, capacity strengthening, and technology in emergencies.

All three developed the CRS Indonesia PEER approach together. Muhammadiyah in particular has a complex structure, so CRS helped it build buy-in at all levels to create a disaster response unit to head all future emergency response training and actual responses (the MDMC, Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center). Given their large size, both partners chose to focus PEER in only four of their branch offices in disaster-prone areas.

Unlike in other PEER implementation countries, CRS paid nine full time and one part time partner staff. This step was taken based on CRS Indonesia's struggles in previous Capacity Strengthening (CS) projects to get partner attention. The staff, as a CRS team member put it, gave PEER, *"100 percent commitment from partners, and they are supported. This was our experience with [previous capacity building programs with] Caritas which didn't work. Now PEER coordinators are becoming ER managers (unexpected outcome) – both organizations are well-funded so this is not a big stretch."*

---

2   For more information please see Annex 4

CRS started by conducting the MOCA assessment with partners, discussing the results, and jointly determining learning needs. Each organization then replicated the assessment process with its branch offices. Also early on, CRS Indonesia convened a budget workshop at which the partners were given their allocation and coached to create a project budget.

CRS then did a series of week-long training of trainers for four HQ staff from each organization. CRS and the partners repeated this training of "master trainers" on several other topics: Rapid Emergency Need Assessment Training, project design, and WASH and shelter in emergency. Master trainers cascaded these trainings to branch offices, who then sometimes replicated them further. (See the Lessons Learned section for more details.)

In addition to MOCA and the subsequent trainings, CRS Indonesia also conducted the standard CRS Sub-Recipient Financial Management (SRFM) assessment for these two partners[3]. Partners "were open to this and often asked what they can do to improve. They were honest about what procedures they did have or did not." (CRS staff)

In the second year of the project, based on the learning to date, CRS Indonesia led a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in Emergency Response (ER) workshop with each partner to help them develop their SOPs. *(See Lessons Learned section for more details.)* CRS Indonesia and partners used the third year of PEER to inculcate the SOPs into partner organizations.

Like India, the Indonesia PEER team also suffered from understaffing. The CRS staffing structure was meant to include two full time staff with part time support provided from finance, MEAL, gender, and other specialists. It ended up including one full time staff for most of the project, and even this one person mostly shifted to another project for the last year of PEER. A second full time staff member was on the project for the first year and a half to help with trainings and logistics. When this person left mid-project, he was not replaced because of the uncertain funding of PEER after the end of the project and inability to identify a possible candidate with the right qualifications/experience. (PEER was supposed to be externally funded after Year One, but that funding never materialized. There then ensued a yearly scramble for internal funds, making the project uncertain.) Other staffing included help from the finance/admin pool, about 10-20% of a MEAL Officer's time, and a similar amount of time from a Gender Officer. In sum, CRS paid one full time PEER staff and five part time staff, with one unpaid finance staff supporting.

Indonesia had several emergencies during the PEER project, something which all acknowledged was key in cementing PEER learning. In total, MDMC responded to 80 emergencies such as floods, earthquakes, volcano eruptions, and refugee responses. PKPU responded to 66 similar emergencies. The vast

---

3   CRS conducts this on all grant sub-recipients as part of its SRFM policy.

majority of these responses were done without CRS on-site support. Both MOCA and anecdotal evidence about these responses show improvement in partners' capacity. Half of the branch offices and MDMC had an increase in two capacity areas: MEAL and Resource Mobilization. Interestingly, PKPU had a low percentage increase in many areas and no percentage change in four capacity areas. Both MDMC and PKPU had high baseline capacity percentage for all capacity areas, 85% in average. The branch offices of both partners had relatively overall low baseline capacity, 65% on average. The average percentage increase in total percentage for PKPU branch offices is 13% and 11% for MDMC branch offices (in comparison to 10% increase target)[4].

THE CRS LEBANON MODEL

CRS Lebanon has a history of providing capacity strengthening to partners. Based on this previous experience, CRS Lebanon decided to open an RFP as well as to seek diverse new faith-based partners through recommendations. CRS Lebanon received about 18 applications and chose 14, out of which 11 were from different religious sects. These 14 organizations had a range of starting capacities: from well-established organizations with high profiles to small organizations representing a minority population. "Between the 14 NGOs in PEER there were only 2-3 organizations that had policies and procedures in place. Others didn't have any policies and procedures." (Partner, Lebanon)

CRS Lebanon ended up having a robust staffing structure, though initially they had just a PEER project manager for quite a while. Building on learning from other projects and realizing its own staff capacity gaps, CRS Lebanon expanded the team to four staff members. This included the Project Manager (PM) and an HR/volunteer management focal point person (internal hires) and a finance/finance in emergencies person, and emergency specialist (external hires).

Each partner appointed an internal PEER focal point, usually the director, operations manager, or program director. These people disseminated PEER project information and coordinated internally around training and writeshop attendance. Not only did the CRS Lebanon partners not receive any funding from CRS for staffing or activities, but several offered to pay for items such as staff travel costs out of their own budgets. CRS Lebanon did provide simple equipment to partners related to partner capacity such as desktops, printers, safe boxes, and accounting software.

After an extended trust-building period, CRS conducted the baseline organizational assessment using MOCA, and created draft development plans. While the CRS team shared the overall areas of strength and weakness with the LFIs, they did not share actual MOCA scores. This decision was based on previous experience that partners shared scores among each other and asked themselves, each other, or CRS about low scores. CRS Lebanon wanted to avoid

---

4   For more information see Annex 4.

this situation. They therefore discussed overall non-numerical MOCA results with the partners to agree on areas of focus. "Sitting together and agreeing on priority actions was key." (CRS staff).

Based on MOCA findings, organizational capacity needs were identified, analyzed, and turned into development plans. Plans listed which training topics could be covered in joint sessions (mostly those related to emergency response) and which required individualized attention. Topics included HR/volunteer management, SPHERE, and emergency needs assessment.

In the initial combined trainings, some organizations were not comfortable mixing with the other LFIs given the conflicts in the region between members of many of these different faith groups. However, by project end, all LFIs were working together. This significant outcome is explored more in the final Lessons Learned section.

After the trainings, many coaching sessions were conducted for each LFI, covering the three major pillars of topics (HR/volunteers, finance, and emergency response). During the trainings and coaching sessions, policies were explained, discussed, and sometimes fully developed. Where trainings were not enough to help partners develop policies and procedures, CRS Lebanon held writeshops (see final Lessons Learned section for more details).

CRS Lebanon offered other training topics as well. For example, CRS offered project cycle management per four partners' requests. While not in the original project plan, CRS felt it was important to show its commitment to the partnership. Additionally, the CRS Lebanon team sometimes repeated trainings for the entire staff of an individual organization. For example, CRS conducted the SPHERE standards training for all staff of three partners. In another bid to increase learning, CRS Lebanon added exchange visits among the partners. All of these measures paid off, as results of baseline and endline MOCA assessments show much improvement for most partners. All of the LFIs started the project with medium capacity in all areas, as seen by the baseline assessment overall capacity average of 58%[5]. Over the course of the project, almost all LFIs increased their capacity in the following areas: procurement, logistics/admin, quality response capacity, HR capacities, MEAL and resource mobilization. The average overall capacity increase for all partners is 29% (compared to the targeted 50% increase).

THE CRS/CARITAS JORDAN MODEL

Jordan was chosen for the PEER project because of its large refugee situation. Per Jordanian law, registered NGOs cannot have a religious affiliation. The project therefore was conducted mostly with non-registered LFIs that are volunteer organizations. The Jordanian PEER partners were a mix of scout[6] and

---

5   For more data see Annex 4.

6   These organizations provide young people (scouts) with opportunities to participate in programs, events, activities and projects that contribute to their growth as active citizens.

charitable organizations that undertake activities such as caring for orphans and needy children. Most were intrigued by the idea of learning how to prepare for emergencies, particularly as they are in a volatile region and already have a large refugee population. PEER did not cover any partner costs, but did provide accounting software to one LFI and capacity-related equipment such as laptops to others.

Unlike the other countries, in Jordan CRS did not work directly but rather in partnership with its sister agency, Caritas Jordan (CJ). CJ managed relations with partners, including all coordination (see Lessons Learned section for details). Caritas Jordan had four staff working on the project: one part time project coordinator and one full time project assistant, as well as two part time senior accountants and administrative coordinators. On the CRS Lebanon team, the PEER team project manager was the main liaison between CRS and CJ. "The principle of co-working together was the key in the project implementation." (Caritas Jordan staff)

To start the project, CRS and CJ tailored the MOCA tool for the Jordanian LFIs, knowing that many of the MOCA areas would not apply to the volunteer organizations. Overall, the LFIs in Jordan have weak capacity and the majority do not have permanent staff. CRS and Caritas Jordan therefore did not want to demotivate them with topics beyond their ability to absorb.
CJ (sometimes with CRS on-site support) administered the tailored, baseline MOCA in different ways depending on the partners' availability and distance from the Caritas Jordan office as well as level of capacity. Some did the self-assessment online, others visited Caritas and answered the questions and others were visited by Caritas. CRS and CJ also did not share MOCA scores with Jordanian partners, in order not to demotivate them and because they saw the scoring as purely for setting a baseline.

The training topics were: HR/volunteer management, emergency response, finance management, SPHERE, emergency needs assessment and Microsoft Excel. Because the partners were volunteer organizations, they were not always able to send the most relevant person to the trainings and instead would send someone who was available.

As in Lebanon, after the trainings, the partners worked on their policies using examples and templates from the trainings, then would send the draft policies to CJ for review. Sometimes CRS also reviewed the policies with CJ, depending on the topic (such as finance policy).

In the beginning, CJ conducted follow up/coaching visits to the LFI offices or LFIs would visit the CJ office to work on the policies and procedures. However, the on-site coaching was hard to implement as the partner staff were rarely available during working hours or workdays. Thus, Caritas Jordan also started to facilitate writeshops, with CRS Lebanon support, to help partners draft policies and procedures. They would only visit the organization if it appeared they needed on-the-job coaching after several drafts were exchanged and reviewed.

"Coaching/follow up was not good to do for the LFIs because they were busy all the time. Writeshop was a good solution. It was better from the time perspective." (Caritas Jordan staff)

In addition to trainings and writeshops, the Jordanian LFIs were brought to Lebanon for a study tour of emergency response, which many found very helpful. The PEER project closing ceremony also was important to the LFIs as they received printed copies of their policies and procedures. Baseline and endline MOCA assessments administered by CJ show improvement in many areas of many partners. All of the LFIs began the project with medium capacity in all areas, as seen by the baseline assessment of average overall capacity of 52%[7]. Most increased their capacity in the following areas: compliance, HR management systems, finance, procurement and resource mobilization. The average overall increase for all partners is 25% (compared to the targeted 50%).

COMMON FINDINGS ACROSS COUNTRY PROGRAMS
Biggest common challenges overall
- Disseminating learning with all staff and volunteers of each LFI, beyond those who went to trainings or participated in coaching sessions.
- Cementing the learning for those organizations which did not experience an emergency during the project period.
- For CRS, staffing this project fully, at global as well country program level.
- Creating and implementing a MEAL plan that captured incremental as well as overall progress, consistently within and between country programs.
- Ensuring enough time to accompany partners while testing their new policies.

EVALUATION QUESTION ONE:
Did the project achieve its objective to make LFIs better able to provide quality and timely humanitarian response? (Impact, Efficiency)

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:
IR 1: LFIs demonstrate improved management of financial resources and institutional systems in emergency response
IR 2: LFIs demonstrate improved management of human resources in emergency response
IR 3: LFIs adhere to SPHERE standards in design of emergency response

All partners and CRS staff felt PEER project objectives were achieved. MOCA scores as well as the final online survey show improvement in all partners. This is for both organizational systems and procedures as well as individuals' knowledge, skills, and attitudes. From the online survey, respondents rated

_____

7   For more data see Annex 4

an average of 3.7 out of 5 for the PEER project's improvement of their organizational capacity in finance, procurement and logistics, HR and volunteer management, and emergency response. The improvement over baseline MOCA scores for financial, logistics and procurement systems management in emergency response are the following: Indonesia 76.50%, Lebanon 43%, Jordan 42% and India 86%. The percent improvement over baseline MOCA scores for human resources management are the following: Indonesia 73.50%, Lebanon 46%, Jordan 65% and India 83%[8].

Here again, the evaluators note that they were not able to decide conclusively which model produced the most impact for effort. Impeding the ability to draw conclusions between countries is the fact that the assessments were conducted differently in each CP and even with each partner, and therefore do not represent standardized data. Also, during the evaluation the endline MOCA data was not available to interview LFIs about the changes in scores and reasoning behind them.

Expected outcomes: *systems in place for improved capacity in emergency response/changes to emergency response*

With regard to emergencies, the increase in knowledge about emergencies was key. Most partners describe a new "confidence" in knowing what to do and how to do it. Indian partners, for example, used phrases such as "we are focused" and "we know what steps to take." All partners felt they now have better technical knowledge in a range of subjects. All said they are able to respond to emergencies much more quickly.

Most improvement was seen in those who responded to emergencies or who are in disaster-prone areas. They now are networking more, attending international coordination meetings, and offering their expertise. They note their situation reports enable more accurate and timely procurement of emergency items as well as other improvements. Distributions have improved, such as by use of vouchers and better communication with target populations. "Before we would just come to area and ask the head of a village to invite maybe 100 people and there would be chance for chaos." (Partner, Indonesia)

All spoke of the importance of learning SPHERE standards – both that these are a necessary minimum and that aid is a right charity. Similarly, the protection training affected partner procedures. For example, after the gender training, an Indonesian organization sent two women as part of an emergency response team, improving contact with women beneficiaries. However, CRS staff note that it is difficult to know exactly how well partners are living up to international standards in their emergency response because, if partners responded without CRS funds, CRS did not monitor as extensively. CRS therefore has anecdotal information about SPHERE standard usage but not hard data: "We use SPHERE standards; for example, before PEER we might only give one soap but know we know to give five." (Partner, Indonesia)

---

8   PEER Year 3 IPTT

Systems related to emergencies have changed as well, particularly ones that partners needed and found important. "Assessment tools, Standard Operating Procedures for Emergency Response, how to set up a distribution location, using coupons for distribution – all of these systems are being used because they make it easy for us to respond." (Partner, Indonesia)

Procurement and logistics systems, especially around vendors, are more standardized. Some organizations now prepare a vendor list and pre-position supplies. Most now segregate cash management duties and streamline emergency procedures by giving field people financial management authority.

Most organizations who responded to emergencies note that they are more accountable about their response to donors, government, and the public. One Indian organization mentioned more transparency with communities. The community knows the amount of funding involved, quantities and quality of materials, and even suggests changes to the intervention, such as an extra room in a shelter project for gender privacy reasons.

Expected outcomes: *applying new emergency response capacity even in the absence of an emergency*

Improvements were noted even in those partners who did not experience any emergencies: "[In the 2006 war], we provided relief and rescue services. We will do all these again but apply the SPHERE standards, e.g. in storehouse management." (Partner, Lebanon.)

Some found ways to apply the emergency knowledge to other programming: "The project is about helping us in emergency response. But even if there are no emergencies we can use the tools we learned during the project." (Partner, Jordan)

Two partners in India mentioned understanding the importance of responding indirectly to emergencies in other regions, and now collect donations to send, even if they do not respond directly to an emergency. Others are preparing for potential emergencies such as by changing their staffing structure.

"We didn't have organizational structure before and now our organizational structure incorporates an emergency response position." (Partner, Lebanon)

They feel ready for an emergency: "We have not had practical experience. But is clear what to do. I immediately thought of a sit rep last week when a small flood happened – how many villages, how much land affected. I made a sit rep and sent it to Caritas India." (Partner, India)

Expected outcomes: *institutional strengthening*

Partners have instituted changes that make strong and healthy institutions overall, not only for emergencies. "LFIs are aware of the importance of having systems in place. They have HR policies in place. They realize the importance of staff." (CRS staff)

Some partners note they are better able to recruit their volunteers and manage them, particularly by letting them choose a sector/activity in which to develop expertise (Partner, Indonesia). Most organizations have improved reporting in terms of content and timeliness, for both financial as well as programmatic areas. "Before it was just necessary to have a report, not important what was in it. Now we have improved accountability for what is in the report" (Partner, India)

Several have used their new MEAL knowledge to create M&E for other projects. Almost all described a new appreciation for data gathering: "We learned from CRS the importance of the needs assessment. What our society really needs – this is the question." (Partner, Lebanon)

One Indian partner realized they need to know more about data gathering and knowledge management. On their own, they found a university professor who helped them improve their analytical capacities. Now all of their projects use statistical software, an example of how LFIs have taken the learning from this project and run with it.

Partners' HR systems also have changed. All organizations with paid and even non-paid staff mentioned updates from org charts, to vacation schedules, to protection and inclusion policies, to complaint mechanisms. "We now have policies for disabled, gender, protection" (Partner, India). One partner had an open discussion with their staff about improvements to their HR policies. Many organizations have instituted performance appraisal systems.

Partners' financial management capacity also improved as they started to do better budgeting by using computerized software for their accounting records, using the charts of accounts, and other. "In finance we are placing more people to make control in financial transactions. We used to have one person/position for finance but now we are getting few signatures for some financial tasks." (Partner, Jordan) "In finance we have an accounting software and two persons are using it already. The new software is user friendly." (Partner, Lebanon)

These changes are not going unnoticed. Some partners report good feedback from beneficiaries: "The impact of the PEER project is also the fact that we do better projects. Our internal work in procurement, staff hiring, map of authority is better now. Beneficiaries told us that we are doing more smooth and easy work." (Partner, Lebanon)

UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES

In addition to the expected outcomes described above, there were many unexpected outcomes. Most of them were positive. A main one was new recognition and respect from other organizations and government, in some cases regardless of whether there had been an emergency response. In India and Indonesia, organizations were acknowledged by national and regional levels of government for their more frequent, skillful responses. In Indonesia, both partners signed an MOU with the national governmental disaster management agency for joint work on emergencies.

Another unexpected outcome is that many are starting to work on disaster risk reduction and preparedness in addition to emergency response. They are already talking about issues of preparedness with communities: "with village heads we know that we need to discuss disaster plans in village meetings. Identify places where we can put equipment, evacuate to, etc." (Partner, India)

Networking between PEER partners in each country has been an unexpected, but entirely welcome, outcome: "Overall we see a lot of exchange between partners who help each other on challenges. Relationship building has happened in different areas and states." (Partner, India) "PEER project also promoted mutual experience sharing among LFIs. This was a very important thing for us as we were learning." (Partner, Jordan)

There are also positive changes in communities. For example, based on CRS technical help, one Indian partner asked a vendor to make a more secure main house pillar for a shelter project. Two years later, the community continues to demand that pillar from the vendor.

Several partners in all countries have used proposal writing skills to submit projects to other donors, incorporating their new understanding of gathering data and citing improved systems. Some have won grants to work with each other. "It is easy for us to develop a proposal now, not just disaster proposals but also development proposals." (Partner, India) "While applying with the proposals we can tell the donors that we have policies and procedures. For the first time we will be having donors in our organization assessing us." (Partner, Lebanon) Strong resource mobilization happened in Indonesia despite CRS not having explicitly taught fundraising. One partner successfully approached Unilever for resources, citing their new emergency response team and adherence to international standards.

Another unexpected benefit has accrued to CRS. In both India and Indonesia, they now have a larger cohort of skilled people to send to support emergencies: "They are ready to go at any point which we did not expect." (CRS staff)

? EVALUATION QUESTION TWO:
What were the elements of the project that led to its success?

CRS RESOURCES, SKILLS, AND SUPPORT

CRS resources
CRS staff noted that CRS provides, and management supports, many opportunities to learn about partnership and capacity strengthening skills. This includes online partnership and capacity strengthening trainings as well as the CRS Institute for Capacity Strengthening (ICS) website[9]. While CRS has a

_____

9   https://ics.crs.org/

lot of good P/CS materials, other staff note they require customization which takes time. "CRS's documents and manuals are very much 'CRS style' so we needed something general to fit to the organizations per their type and level of capacity." (CRS staff) Staff noted missing elements in CRS resources, detailed further in the recommendations section.

CRS skills and support

All partners found CRS staff highly skilled, able to transmit information effectively, with deep and relevant experience both in emergency response as well as institutional systems and processes. The survey corroborated this, ranking CRS staff 4 out of 5 for "how well did the support provided by PEER staff meet your expectations?" Breaking down elements of support, the most highly-rated was expertise (4.23) and lowest was ability to evaluate and follow up (3.90). Board members ranked PEER support most highly (4.40), with managers next (4.25) and then volunteers (4.0), which attests to partner buy-in. Least satisfied were finance/admin staff (3.27) who had the least exposure to CRS staff.

The broad and deep practical emergency experience of CRS staff was particularly important to partners, as was CRS staff's responsiveness. "They responded to our questions and requests every time we needed them. They were also advising us even outside of the PEER project and activities" (Partner, Lebanon). CRS was appreciated for being flexible, changing topics and structure of trainings and dates to meet partners' needs. The use in trainings of external resource people, with great expertise, was also appreciated by most of the partners.

CRS staff were focused on finding teaching opportunities wherever they could and were clearly humble and enthusiastic. "CRS also learned from us. For example, they changed things based on our input – cash transaction is one example they learned from us and shared with other organizations." (Partner, India) In another example of flexible capacity strengthening, during a training one Indian partner heard there might be an emergency in their home district. With CRS staff, they planned an assessment of immediate needs. Though the disaster did not occur, the partner learned much from the trial run.

For some CRS staff, accompaniment was a new concept. They wished they had had more exposure to it from the beginning of the project to "see the scope of what we wanted to be able to provide partners" (CRS staff) For another staff member, emergency response was a new topic and this person learned by doing without a proper training.

However, staffing PEER adequately was an issue. This affected the PEER project global coordinator position but also some country programs. Understaffing in almost all of the countries meant that CRS did not do the accompaniment they might have wished: "Some partners we could have done even more with if we as CRS had more time, and also if they as partners had the qualified staff and time to allocate for this project." (CRS staff)

Interestingly, CRS staff seemed to feel this more than partners. The survey revealed the vast majority of partners (67%) felt there were enough CRS staff and only 14% not enough CRS staff. This may be because CRS staff had high ambitions for even more accompaniment, while the partners mostly were happy with whatever amount they received.

PARTNER CONTRIBUTION

All partners brought great dedication to the project. This included committing the time to get the most out of the project and to change as a result. For most partners, this commitment started at the board/president level, which was key to project success in terms of participation and buy in. Some partners spoke proudly about the fact that they did not receive funds for this project. Most CRS staff saw this as a sign of intense partner commitment: "only one partner (in Jordan) dropped out, and all other partners engaged the whole time and had no expectations about money at the end." (CRS staff). "Donors are shocked and intrigued by fact that no money was attached to project [in most countries]." (CRS staff)

Partner motivation was high: "We decided to participate because we thought it will help us to provide better services and be trustworthy for the donors." (Partner, Jordan) In addition to commitment and desire to learn, partners also brought:

- existing training capacity helpful in disseminating the information to communities.
- networks of other local partners to extend the learning.
- relationships with local government.
- ability to engage media.
- close connections to communities and an ability and desire to get community input.

EXTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING THE PROJECT

The biggest external factor in PEER was whether or not an emergency occurred during the life of the project. Partner who experienced one during the project period learned much more than those who did not. Other external factors included:

- **Lack of funding opportunities**. Some partners were demotivated by facing existential funding challenges at the same time as CRS was encouraging them to spend time on instituting high level policies and systems.
- **Lack of government cooperation**. As one reported "They [government] feel insecure – 'this is my responsibility. Why are you doing it?'" (Partner, India)
- **Presence of government cooperation**. In many places the government actively sought out CRS partners for emergency response once they demonstrated their new skills.
- **Donor requests** for better policies and procedures motivated partners.

CRS METHODOLOGIES, TOOLS, TOPICS, AND APPROACHES

All countries followed a cycle of institutional capacity assessments, followed by practical/hands on trainings, then substantial coaching and mentoring. The online survey confirmed what interviews revealed, that assessment and action planning tools were regarded as the most helpful. The online survey also showed that, where some tools were seen as less effective than others (networking events especially), it was not because of lack of CRS staff skills, but more about the time required and lack of immediate connection to the trainee's job.

Assessments

All countries started the training portion of the project by using the MOCA assessment tool, but partners in different countries experienced MOCA differently depending on how the assessment was communicated and administered. With some partners the CRS PEER team spent quite a bit of time going over and referring back to MOCA. In other cases, the CRS PEER team focused on creating forward-looking development plans, not referring partners to the MOCA results, especially the scores.

MOCA was seminal for all partners in India and Indonesia, first helping them to understand what a healthy organization looks like (several describe this as a paradigm shift/mind change) and then giving them a clear picture of what they need to work on. "I liked the three phases of MOCA – initial, midterm and final. I especially liked the midterm to get a chance for improvement" (Partner, India)

However, for the Jordanian and Lebanese partners, MOCA was not a memorable exercise which contributed to their capacity strengthening pathway. Some of them remembered doing some kind of assessment but did not see the relation of MOCA assessments to the capacity strengthening support provided by the PEER team, even though the development plans for each organization were based on weaknesses and gaps extracted from the MOCA assessments.

Another assessment tool was the emergency simulation scorecard, developed by the PEER team. Those who used it found it helpful not only for mid-response assessment. At least one partner also used it as a checklist for their actual emergency response, asking CRS for supplementary assistance from those results (such as crafting an emergency response organigram).

Trainings

After the organizational capacity assessments were the trainings. Trainings generally were seen as "meticulously planned and implemented." They were engaging, practical, interesting, in good locations and largely appropriate timing. However, at least two Indian partners mentioned a lack of follow up by CRS to post-training action plans they submitted, which undermined learning. Another problem in the trainings, as noted by some of the more volunteer-driven organizations, was that CRS materials are designed for a professional organization, not one staffed mostly by volunteers, which creates different challenges and opportunities. Those partners wished the trainings had been made more basic and oriented to smaller organizations.

Accompaniment

All partners saw on-site support and coaching, particularly those who had it during an emergency response, as a very effective methodology. The CRS staff person "helped us have a multi-dimensional view of our response so we changed our strategy." (Partner, India). "After the training was a follow up. What are you doing right now? Do you need help? It was effective for us. If there is no follow up, we would forget." (Partner, Jordan) A nuance of this was seen in Indonesia, where a partner appreciated CRS's accompaniment progression: gradually stepping back from responses to let the partner take the lead. A few Indian partners expressed a desire for precisely this stepping back so they could have had more chance to lead.

All partners appreciated accompaniment (coaching and on-the-job support) but used it differently. Some partners constantly asked for support while others took the information CRS provided "and ran with it, not needing us to come in to help them." (CRS staff). Smaller organizations needed more assistance from CRS. "It's important to have 2-3 follow up sessions after a specific training: one to make sure the information was captured and understood (could be a mini-training for that organization with more of their staff), a second for putting an action plan in place, and then finally to follow up that they have accomplished what they set out to do, all spread out over time. That's what I saw working well." (CRS staff) The combination of trainings and coaching was seen as vital by almost all partners. "Training and then coaching together are necessary. In the training they're not open enough but will be so in the coaching. Some partners we did not coach and that was a problem." (CRS staff) "Focus more on one-on-one trainings. Coaching. This will focus on the points that I need to learn." (Partner, Jordan)

Writeshops

Other partners noted the helpfulness of writeshops followed by coaching: "For example, a petty cash policy is written and approved by the partner's board, but we want to see if it is being used. We give them 2-4 weeks after writing the policy to work with it and call/email us about challenges. Then we go as if we were auditing and see if it's documented and being followed." (CRS staff) Finance staff were the staff who found writeshops the most helpful, according to the online survey. Caritas Jordan and a few partners found the writeshops a good compromise to the onsite coaching for developing policies and procedures. Writeshops are focused, timebound and easily implemented as partners are asked to concentrate just for a few hours on the task, and in a conducive environment.

Emergency simulations

Emergency simulations were appreciated by all partners for keeping the learning interesting and cementing concepts, especially as they were relevant, real-life scenarios. A few wished the simulations had been done in the field rather than the training room. Also, a few asked for more simulations, at least one each year.

Peer learning

Chances to learn from other peer organizations, and other country programs, were appreciated by all. Such study tours enabled partners to see different approaches to different types of disasters, and also different ways of working and even living: "When the Jordanian NGOs came to us, we shared our experience. They said that that was one of the richest visits during all their lives. They asked me how we do this, how we survive. We said that the will of surviving is the most important". (Partner, Lebanon) Program staff found these networking and learning opportunities more helpful than other staff, according to the online survey.

CRS capacity strengthening topics

With the exception of a few partners in Jordan, all partners found all topics relevant. Some suggested additional topics. (See the recommendations section for more details.)

SPHERE standards were the first topic almost all partners mentioned. They described it as a "paradigm shift" and a "mind change"; "SPHERE standards are like a Bible now" (Partner, India). Protection trainings prompted similarly significant shifts in attitude and behavior. "Thanks to PEER we prioritized the protection of our staff as well as the protection of beneficiaries. We know how to deal with beneficiaries and not exploit them." (Partner, Lebanon)

Most partners appreciated the lag between trainings, which allowed them both to incorporate their new knowledge as well as to attend to their other work. However, some partners, particularly those that were smaller volunteer-based, would have preferred less time between trainings: "As a result, we were forgetting the material." (Partner, Jordan)

Dana Shahin of Caritas Jordan meets with Stella Dawood, 15, of Mosul, Iraq, after she and her family sought refuge in a Caritas-supported shelter in Amman, Jordan. *Photo by Kim Pozniak/CRS*

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF PARTNERSHIPS

All partners found the partnerships very good, especially in comparison with other agencies which take a more donor-oriented stance. Project design and implementation largely met their expectations, as the initial project discussions around capacity needs were consultative. All but a few organizations found the process of setting dates for trainings to be flexible and consultative. An exception was Caritas Jordan, who felt caught in the middle for scheduling between CRS and the LFIs with their complicated volunteer schedules. Overall, partners found PEER staff respectful and dedicated, ranking their satisfaction with the partnership as 4.34 out of 5.

In addition to appreciating PEER staff and approach, partners found other benefits: "Partnership with CRS brought credibility to our organization. The CRS project as well as the changes implemented make us a trustworthy organization for others." (Partner, Lebanon)

SUSTAINING AND SPREADING KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY

In terms of sustainability, all partners felt they would sustain much of the learning. The systems and tools most likely to be retained were those that met partner needs and were easy to use. Where partners had less progress, it often was a case of leadership prioritization and staff strength and size. In some places there are technical difficulties with implementing a new system, such as finding vendors who can do payments.

As noted, the main challenge for all countries was that if there was no emergency, the LFIs did not have a chance to practice, and therefore cement, emergency response skills. "Some of the technical topics for emergency response that did not get used during the project lifetime will fade" (CRS staff). It should be noted that most partners are development organizations. They do not have committed emergency response staff who can lead the learning and institutionalization process. However, a few are now considering creating such positions or integrating emergency response in some staff JDs.

PEER participants take part in a training on emergency preparedness and response. *Photo courtesy of PEER partners*

Another challenge in all four countries is disseminating knowledge within the organizations, leaving them vulnerable to serious drop in capacity if one or two key people leave. Some partners, particularly in Indonesia and Lebanon, thought that having written policies and procedures was sufficient to transfer the knowledge to others in the organization. However, others pointed out that, if key trained people left and new management came into place, those policies and procedures could be disregarded.

In general transferring knowledge within the LFI was seen as both challenging and helpful: "This is a good system because I have to master the knowledge in order to pass it on. CRS does need to make sure that those who took the CRS class did fully understand." (Partner, India) Other partners noted specific ways in which they shared project knowledge: "In the middle of the project we did a one-day workshop in our organization when we shared with our staff what we have learned, and we are going to do the simulation with our staff." (Partner, Jordan)

A few seem to feel stuck and not sure what to do now that the project has ended. Many have asked for some form of refresher course in a year's time, or a check-up exam to see how much the organizations have retained. Several asked for CRS help in teaching the rest of their staff; "It is not true organizational training because you are only training two people per organization. I have admin staff, program coordinators and lots of others working under me, down to animators. All these people are not trained by PEER." (Partner, India)

Many LFIs in all four countries talked about potential challenges with application of the newly developed or improved policies and procedures. They envisioned a few obstacles: possible resistance from the staff, disagreement from their governing structures, inability to apply certain policies due to the fact those policies and regulations are not practical or fully applicable to their organization. "One of the [challenging] factors is the time needed to apply. Also some LFIs have the barrier of decision making flow in their organization. Top management engagement in their organization, decision making processes, take time." (CRS staff)

Despite this, many organizations plan to share the PEER learning beyond their organizations, including by:
- Translating the materials into local language and sharing with colleagues.
- Working with their communities through sensitization work.
- Sharing the information with other local organizations: "We have given documents to local NGOs who are using needs assessment and report writing." (Partner, India).
- Sharing information with government both through bilateral meetings as well as in larger coordination meetings: "Last month during the interagency government meetings and other development projects meetings we shared SPHERE minimum standards; they say they will take up." (Partner, India)

Several partners noted that, were it part of the project design, they could have worked more explicitly to share the learning and even create a sustainable network of responders. "This was for 14 partners, but there are many more out there. If resources were available from CRS after each training, that would let us share the knowledge. We would learn it better by teaching and in two years' time we would have built a preparedness net. In three years, we would have government involvement as well. This would have been the outcome." (Partner, India)

CRS also has a role to share the learning from this project globally, and already has begun to do so. For example, the PEER project coordinator, alongside a CRS Partnership and Capacity Strengthening Senior Technical Advisor, conducted a webinar for the Charter for Change signatories[10] and endorsers and for the Grand Bargain Localization Workstream signatories about the PEER project and CRS' partnership and capacity strengthening approach. Other organizations approached the PEER coordinator after these webinars to learn more about CRS' methodology. Workstream meetings for the Grand Bargain localization agenda are opportunities to share learning about what CRS has accomplished and how. Other ways to collaborate on capacity strengthening are already happening especially around CRS' P/CS tools, such as the ICS website, HOCAI, other training modules and manuals.

---

10 Charter for Change is an initiative led by 29 national and international NGOs to practically implement changes to promote locally led responses as identified by the Grand Bargain Workstream 2 on Localization.

PARTNER LEVEL OF CAPACITY

Partner commitment and staffing

Regarding partner selection, what matters most is the level of partner commitment in making the most of this opportunity, particularly from partner leadership. "It was important that CRS's intervention was made while we were ready to change." (Partner, Lebanon)

Another very important consideration is that the partner has enough staff or key volunteers, with limited turn-over, to be able to absorb and institute the capacity strengthening. "Since there are no staff assigned for/supported by PEER, we do need to pull staff from other projects. They have assignments already. But in the latest HR training, we learned a system to track who is free when/ when staff are available." (Partner, India)

Partner organizational structure

The structure of the organization should also be taken into account during the selection process. Large, complicated organizations may have more systems in place to work with, and more organizational heft to sustain PEER efforts. They may have more reach into communities. However, they may also have more bureaucracy which can slow the project, and which requires more CRS staff skills to navigate. Smaller organizations may have fewer systems in place, meaning capacity strengthening improvements are more immediate and substantial. They may offer less reach into communities, though, and require more CRS time and effort for the capacity strengthening process. Volunteer-based organizations have high turnover and volunteers often cannot dedicate time to learning solid internal systems and processes. Some of these organizations wondered about the value of investing energy in change when their organizations were performing adequately already. In PEER this hindered continuity between trainings and created scheduling complications in general: "Volunteers and their time! This is the major challenge. How to make sure that we achieve the activities and at the same time respect volunteers schedule?" (Caritas Jordan staff)

CRS' goal for the project

Because of the different effort and impact from working with different types of organizations, several CRS staff members noted the role of the goal of the project and context in determining what types of partners are most appropriate. "Think about key objectives of project, what types of partners to attract. That was where there was deviation in the PEER CPs. In Indonesia, they wanted large country reach, to do more with less. In Lebanon they really wanted wide representation. Are there other elements outside of capacity strengthening that you are hoping for, such as networks to build or future ideas of projects to lay a foundation for?" (CRS staff) As a nuance, some partners felt that having organizations with different levels of capacity in the same training hindered the

process of learning, as some lagged behind. They suggested having cohorts of similar partners for the trainings and writeshops, but then mixing up the groups for exchange visits and other networking events.

It is also important to ensure that CRS' goals cohere with those of partner organizations. "Not all partner organizations want to be a CRS and have no interest in expanding. They just want to be better in their community. Make sure our goals line up with potential partner goals. In the past sometimes what we want them to do is different from what they want to do." (CRS staff)

PROJECT TIMEFRAME AND PHASING

On paper this project was a three-year project. However, for Jordan, Lebanon, and India the project was actually shorter as it took 6-8 months to find staff and partners. However, almost all partners thought that the project timeframe, with several months between trainings, was sufficient. Some partners specified that if the project had been shorter and faster paced, it would have been too difficult to balance with the rest of their workload. On the other hand, a few – mainly the Jordanian volunteer-driven organizations — wished the project had been a more intensely paced one- or two-year project.

While most partners thought the three years was sufficient, many other partners and almost all CRS staff thought a longer project would be better: "Two years to build capacity, then one-year TOT, then the final two years to further build capacity. That would help to fully extend the knowledge to them, which is missing now." (CRS staff) Partners wanted more time to disseminate the learning within their organization as well as to cover other topics. Some of them also emphasized that more time would allow CRS to help them to apply the policies and procedures, as adapting such to their own organizations takes time. "We finished the project in the marathon. We needed more time in this project to finalize everything. A period of the testing of the policies is key." (CRS staff) The online survey confirmed that partner staff felt that a longer project duration would enable going more deeply into topics as well as building capacity of more staff in each organization.

PROJECT MEAL / MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

CRS staff noted that the MEAL plan was one of the weaker aspects of the project. In terms of its development, the right people with the right understanding were not brought in to give input for measuring progress in a capacity strengthening project. For example, the P/CS unit was not fully involved in creating the MEAL plan, and of the PEER team who were involved, only one staff member had previous P/CS experience. "The PEER staff could have added long-term change level indicators in the MEAL plan if they had staff knowledgeable in this area." (CRS staff)

Elements of change were captured, but not the fullness of change, whether within one partner or across the entire global PEER project: "Maybe the change in emergency response capacity was captured through the emergency

simulation scorecard. But it was not done everywhere. So, how to track the change for the whole project if the same tool is not used everywhere? PEER needed a standard scale for all CPs to capture both quantitative and qualitative changes." (CRS staff)

Where the MEAL plan did try to capture outcomes, the most appropriate tools were not used, or used consistently, to capture data. "MOCA is a big tool assessing many areas. The Intermediate Results of the project were on finance, HR and SPHERE. However, the trainings were on more topics, e.g. WASH, logistics, etc. because the MOCA revealed these needs. How is this captured in the monitoring and evaluation plan?" (CRS staff)

Another problem was that little attention was paid to the MEAL plan during project start up. Initial MEAL processes were often done quickly and without enough attention to their import: "The SMILER workshop should have been done on-site to have more opportunities to debate, discuss, and engage for all CRS staff in this important step." (CRS staff) This meant that different country programs used different interpretations of both the overall goal and specific measurements. "There was a lack of clarity in the project/among the project staff on how the outcome of the capacity strengthening will look like." (CRS staff)

Some of the targets and indicators in the PEER MEAL plan were not clear right from the beginning. "For example, the indicators and targets related to organizational capacity change were not fully aligned with MOCA tool. Also, the targets for the accompaniment were not realistic at all." (CRS staff) As a result, the MEAL end-of-the-year data (per the MEAL plan) show some under-achievements or very high percentages of overachievement (mostly in the case of accompaniment). For example, at least one accompaniment visit per LFI was planned to establish and/or review financial management systems, for a total of 41 accompaniment visits. But in reality, an average of 4-5 visits were conducted per LFI, thus 200 visits in total. Another example is on the HR manual. At least two accompaniment visits were planned to each LFI to develop the HR manual, which includes guidance for volunteer and staff management, for a total of 82 visits. However, on average 6 visits were conducted to each LFI, for a total of 267 visits[11]. Other staff noted that the MEAL plan required them to measure things they were not doing, and therefore should be tailored to individual country programs. Another CRS staff member wondered, "after a CS project is over, how do we measure impact 6 months to a year later?"

A further challenge is that very few of the PEER staff were trained in MEAL, especially MEAL in capacity strengthening, so most staff struggled to implement it. "The staff used the MOCA in different ways, so it is hard to rely on the data from a grant perspective. CRS staff was not sure how to do it, who shall do it, what it measures, etc." (CRS staff) Caritas Jordan staff also faced challenges in understanding the whole MEAL plan, although collecting regular basic data was doable and easy to understand for them.

---

11   PEER Year 3 IPTT

However, from the partners' vantage point, the MEAL plan was not a negative. Some partners in India and Indonesia said that collecting M&E data, while time consuming, gave them information they needed for their own purposes including reports to government. In Indonesia, CRS accompanied partners extensively around reporting, so partners found the process a good chance to bring program and finance staff together to ask questions of CRS and learn more. At the same time, some other partners did not recall collecting any data for the PEER MEAL plan.

? EVALUATION QUESTION FIVE:
Learning questions

WHAT HR SYSTEMS, PROCESSES AND BEHAVIORS ARE NEEDED IN CRS AT A COUNTRY PROGRAM LEVEL TO SUPPORT IMPROVEMENT IN PARTNERS' EMERGENCY RESPONSE CAPACITY?

Staffing types and structure for capacity strengthening
The main lesson for the future is to ensure immediate, and full, staffing for such projects. As noted above, all CRS country programs felt they did not have enough staff to devote to partners over the life of the project, though by the midpoint Lebanon and Jordan were quite well staffed. It also impacted CRS' ability to make structural changes to the project, such as the suggested changes to MOCA or decreasing number of partners (in India due to the long distances) that came out of the midterm evaluation.

All CRS staff urged a minimum of one full time CRS employee dedicated to the project. The number of full time staff depends on the number of partners, partner types and needs, and travel time. Staff noted the importance of having a stable of expert resource people available to meet partner timing and subject matter needs. This includes budgeting for participation from finance and admin personnel in trainings and accompaniment. While many felt it is helpful to have access to a range of staff with different areas of expertise, others did note that part-time staff can bring challenges. "They provide subject expertise, constantly renewed, which is good; but they have competing priorities which makes it hard for them to commit." (CRS staff)

CRS staff and partners appreciated the substantial expertise given to the project by others. It is important to have support from regional and HQ experts as well as non-CRS resources. It was also highlighted that "Having a diversified CRS country program team assists when talking to partners about not discriminating with beneficiaries. [A diversified team also helps] with building trust with partners of faiths different from CRS." (CRS staff)

As noted earlier, bigger partners with more employees or volunteers have particular needs: "People with governance knowledge – skills to work with

big organizations, particularly around how they surge for an emergency, with different departments and budgets, requires a very technically skilled trainer, more so than guiding a small organization." (CRS staff)

Specifically, regarding emergencies, it was noted that CRS emergency staff tend to focus more on deliverables and less on partnership. "A recommendation from the Caritas Ukraine response is that CRS needs to identify one person on the emergency team who just works with partners and is the point person for training etc. Communication gets lost quickly – all sorts of staff barking orders at partners, so you need someone to rein that in and remind the emergency responders about how to work with partners on decision-making from a sustainability standpoint. Capacity strengthening of CRS teams on partnership and capacity strengthening in advance of emergencies is important." (CRS staff)

While this project was understaffed at the country level, it also was understaffed at the global level. Some CRS staff speculated this is because CRS does not take privately-funded projects as seriously as externally-funded ones. The position of project coordinator turned over several times and was not really a full time position until the final year and a half. This has ramifications not only for project progress, but also for sharing project learning within the agency. Relatedly, there was little MEAL involvement in this project. "PEER project also didn't have the MEAL domain expert covered. They needed to have a committed global staff for MEAL, at least 25-30% of level of effort." (CRS staff)

Hiring and orienting CRS staff
The skills and attitudes required of capacity strengthening staff are legion. In addition to the respectful and humble demeanor which people expect from all CRS staff, those for a capacity strengthening project also need coordination ability, the ability to analyze where a partner is and how to help them progress, and an understanding of the importance of an organization's hierarchy and approval protocols.

This set of skills is not common. Many CPs had a hard time finding external hires with strong partnership capacity, so they relied heavily on internal staff. Taking time to hire, as well as to orient, is key. Regarding partnership principles: "Some (externally hired) staff came from organizations that dealt with partners as a donor. Leading by example was important – having them with us during meetings and seeing how we are respectful of partners, urging them to use this approach when they do it on their own." (CRS staff)

Some CRS staff who were new hires to this project did feel they needed more initial support. "We needed to identify in the beginning of the project the capacity gaps of the CRS staff. We needed trainings before the project startup. We needed more guidelines for each type of organization, for each level of capacity. E.g. how the HR and finance are different per each type." (CRS staff)

Coordination of CRS staff on partnership and capacity strengthening issues
CRS staff said that collaboration with the HQ P/CS unit, as well as with others on how to do more capacity strengthening ahead of emergencies, is key. "It was

helpful to invite CRS' Senior Technical Advisor for Training and Performance Support to speak at the PEER learning event about what CRS is doing globally around partnership." Similarly, it was useful to have PEER staff join the CRS Perfecting Partnerships[12] learning event as PEER staff learned much and contributed significantly around partnership work and capacity strengthening.

Retaining CRS staff

Several CPs found it difficult to hire staff externally who have a strong understanding of CRS' partnership principles and capacity strengthening approach. They also struggled, and in Lebanon did not completely succeed, in keeping these experienced staff. "When PEER ended, I lost two well-qualified staff. From Day One we were telling partners about sustainability and strategy and retaining staff…. But CRS didn't live up to this model." (CRS staff)

Relatedly, there is need for mechanisms to maintain relations with partners. "We as an agency are not good in closing out projects. At the beginning we took time and effort building trust, but when the project ends, the relationship is over if we don't have another project." (CRS staff) Happily, some partners do feel they will get advice from CRS staff even after the project ends. In Jordan, both Caritas Jordan and partners were sure that they will continue learning from each other as they are in long-term relations.

WHAT LEVEL AND TYPE OF ACCOMPANIMENT IS REQUIRED TO ENSURE SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT IN PARTNER'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE CAPACITY?

Both partners and CRS felt that the frequency of coaching depends on partner capacity needs as well as type and size of the partner organization and the context in which the organization operates. It also includes proximity to the partner. "Regular and continued interaction is key – not sure how to answer about specific time. Just call and catch up with them at least once or twice a month to see how all is going." (CRS staff) "Accompaniment is key. Full stop. To achieve development of the tailored and customized policies and procedures CRS staff shall plan to spend lots of time with the partners. Minimum four visits to the partner offices is necessary to help them write the policy in one area, e.g. HR management." (CRS staff) Further, the online survey showed that in-person support was perceived as more effective; remote support over email/phone was ranked as the least effective methodology.

There were many requests for assistance from the CRS team, particularly around disseminating the learning within partner organizations as well as accompaniment to institutionalize that learning. "We had so many demands from the organizations to conduct trainings for their staff in their organizations. We did that but didn't have enough time. Thus, from the beginning we shall be clear with the LFIs that they need to replicate and cascade down the trainings themselves." (CRS staff)

---

12   Perfecting Partnership is an intense and energetic learning and praxis experience for select CRS staff from around the world with experience and expertise in partnership and capacity strengthening.

LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD APPROACHES

"You can accomplish more if you focus on capacity strengthening. Localization means more resources are going to this. Local NGOs are able to respond more quickly and know the communities, and do not take as long as INGOs to set up." (CRS staff)

A main lesson from the PEER project is that there are many ways to build the emergency response capacity of local organizations. These depend on the context of the country, the types of partners involved, and the goals of CRS in undertaking the work.

Globally – fostering learning between country programs

The project coordinator led the PEER team to share their relative strengths across country programs. "One thing that was really helpful was the cross-learning experience, interacting with people from other teams, acquiring new skills. If some CP team was taking up an initiative, we could borrow and adapt their modules." (CRS staff)

These cross-CP learning events happened organically around needs and strengths. It was helpful to have a budget to support such learning, which CRS teams found very valuable. For example, CRS Lebanon team joined an emergency simulation which CRS India ran. While there, a Lebanese staff member led a session on volunteer management as CRS India did not have that background. Similarly, CRS India staff traveled to Lebanon to learn more about accompaniment. "It would have been good to go to Lebanon earlier in project to be able to see the scope of what we wanted to be able to provide partners." (CRS staff). While there, the CRS India team led sessions on warehouse management, an area in which CRS India excels.

CRS Indonesia – cascading trainings and creating SOPs

"That would be the ultimate model, CRS training a local organization to do the capacity strengthening." (CRS staff)

Two elements of CRS Indonesia's methodology stood out. One was the cascading training, in which CRS trained five members of each partner's headquarters staff, first in how to be a trainer and then in the five substantive topics. Partner "master trainers" were chosen using criteria suggested by CRS (time available, previous experience, willingness to train). Some had previous training experience. CRS invested heavily in further building their skills, particularly by devoting a full day of the first training to advanced facilitation techniques. For each training topic, CRS gave master trainers a facilitation guide as well as helped them create their own.

To cascade the training for each topic, partners then invited staff of their four PEER project branches (including the head of branch office) for a three- or four-day training covering the topics they had just learned themselves. Sometimes CRS staff would sit in on these trainings or watch and provide feedback on videos of the trainings. Some of the branches then went on to replicate the training for the rest of their branch staff and volunteers.

PEER partner participants in Indonesia take part in an emergency WASH training. *Photo courtesy of MDMC*

Indonesian partners described many strengths of this methodology, from cementing the learning to increasing ownership of the knowledge. "You learn more yourself when you teach something," "it reduces the time needed, as it would take months for CRS to do all the trainings," and "this methodology also helps to decentralize knowledge."

Partners also noted their ability to adopt the training to the local context, which is particularly important in Indonesia with its myriad of local languages and cultures. They also appreciated the chance to organize their learning. "There is a lot of turn over, at least with volunteers, so we need to set up a system to address this." A few staff pointed out that learning particularly was maximized at the branch office level when they had to make an action plan about how they would implement what they learned in a training.

At the same time, partner staff of different levels described the challenges faced by this approach. Training results at the branch level were uneven, seemingly based on the natural talents of those who were to do the training. No TOT was offered to the branch level trainers due to time constraints, and facilitation guides were not handed out, with the reasoning that you "can't just hand out facilitation guide without the TOT aspect, or it won't be used well."(Partner, Indonesia) This has consequences, though, as one staff member noted at the branch level "maybe we cannot remember all the things we need to deliver to others as completely as we received." (Partner, Indonesia) They noted that the subject matter powerpoints and hand outs are good and replicable, but they also need instructions for being trainers in general and the required training activities in particular.

However, there are other indicators that the training is indeed spreading the learning. Follow-up action plans to implement learning were made by each branch office (in one organization) produced very good activities: one branch office decided to build its own WASH technical capacity so will do a training for staff and volunteers in the future; another did an emergency simulation; another is catalyzing periodic planning and coordination meetings with other actors in their region

A second good practice in CRS Indonesia's methodology was the process of creating Standard Operating Procedures for emergency response. This was done in Year Two, after training on the substantive topics had been completed and with a year remaining to practice the new procedures. The CRS Indonesia team shared emergency response SOPs from other organizations, both local and international, with the partners. They also asked partners to identify their existing emergency response procedures. Then CRS Indonesia convened a three-day writeshop which included the highest level possible of stakeholders within the organization, such as the Director of Finance and the head of the logistics team.

Partners first drafted minimum components for an emergency SOP, then built a more extensive SOP from their existing procedures. They tested the SOPs with an emergency simulation and revised accordingly. Partners got SOPs approved by their boards, rendering them official organizational policy. They printed the SOPs and delivered them to all branch offices. Now, when PEER staff visit branch offices they test them on the SOPs, which sometimes works and sometimes does not. Overall, however, CRS staff say "SOPs will be sustained because of the high-level commitment to them. Most of the emergency forms and reporting templates are in the SOP and are easy and being used and have been adjusted for their organization."

FINDINGS UNIQUE TO INDONESIA

- Partners are taking strong initiative. This ranges from mapping out the skills needed at different stages of an emergency to facilitate deployment, to applying assessment tools such as SRFM and MOCA to assess capacity of the branch offices that were not included in PEER, to developing a beneficiary needs assessment app with the help of CRS IT staff.
- The relationship between CRS and the two main Muslim organizations in Indonesia has become strong. These were delicate organizational relationships, particularly with the optics of a Christian organization "teaching" Muslim organizations. However, trust was built so solidly that the three organizations are signing an MOU for future work together: "Coaching/accompaniment helped build the relationship at many levels" (Partner, Indonesia)
- The partners now coordinate closely, even doing joint responses whereas before they did not know of each other's existence at branch level. This is seen in their response to the Sulawesi earthquake which occurred just days before the end of PEER. Both partners have been active with coordination and in the cluster groups. MDMC in particular responded quickly with high-quality volunteers on the ground. Within six weeks, both CRS partners had distributed almost 4,000 NFI kits, 551 emergency shelters, and installed 5 water tanks serving 1,224 IDPs. They are advocating with government and service providers for emergency and transitional settlements that meet residents' holistic needs.
- One partner now is able to send people internationally (Yemen, Sudan, Bangladesh) to support other organizations with emergency response.
- One organization is considering creating an emergency response training institute.
- Online survey response revealed a PEER staff support satisfaction level 4.5 out of 5.

CRS India – fostering partner-to-partner learning and sharing learning with communities
Two elements of CRS India's methodology also stood out. One was the cross-learning from the diversity of partners involved, including umbrella/coordination bodies. The five general trainings brought all 14 partners together, each represented by two staff members. This enabled many things. It fostered rich

discussion of the topics. It also enabled partners to learn from each other, not only ways to handle emergencies, but also different types of emergencies. Given the increasing rate of emergencies in India, partners were glad to have the chance to hear about situations they had not yet faced but might in the future. Importantly, CRS itself learned insights from partners to pass on to others. CRS also facilitated staff from one partner joining another partner's emergency response. Other partners felt this could have been built on even more. CRS could help them "form national level team or regional level team to respond to emergencies – collaborative team ready to move wherever necessary." (Partner, India)

Several partners in India also are transmitting the learning to the communities in which they work in a variety of ways. Some have explicit meetings with the community. "Our staff are training our villages – mainly about disaster preparedness, assessment if something happens, how to report and to whom, about how when something happens to manage the disaster situation. They connect three or four villages together." (Partner, India). Others use existing program mechanisms to disseminate disaster preparedness: "At the community level we have self-help groups and youth groups. During these trainings we will periodically use these topics not just during emergency."

FINDINGS UNIQUE TO CRS INDIA

- Government and other organizations' interest in working with the PEER partners is strong in many cases. "Our work benefits the government. When they see how we are systematically distributing (assessments, give goods per the list to families, recording on tablets, then doing good messaging for some target groups, then calling a few beneficiaries to do a satisfaction survey for monitoring and evaluation purposes) they are positively surprised. So are other organizations like Oxfam who have called us to learn more of that methodology. I trained the local government, including the district manager who told us 'you are organizing this so beautifully and peacefully, with no snatching of goods.' This was in newspapers." (Partner, India)
- One partner spoke of using the media and Church publications specifically to publicize the need for donations, in their role of resource mobilizer during an emergency response (Partner, India)
- One partner plans to reach out to other religious organizations to join in their future response efforts and even do advocacy around harmful government development policies that create man-made disasters and necessitate emergency responses.
- Online survey response revealed that PEER staff support satisfaction level was 3.76 out of 5.

CRS Lebanon – fostering interreligious peacebuilding and conducting writeshops
An unexpected, and profound, outcome was the strong peacebuilding element of this project. CRS Lebanon deliberately set out to find partners of all faiths, and ended up with 14 organizations representing 11 religious sects. As a

Catholic, American agency, CRS Lebanon chose to invest almost six months to build trusting relationships with these partners, even before conducting the organizational capacity assessments. This was particularly important with the various Islamic partners who did not know CRS. It was also important to acquaint them to the idea that they were going to be working with partners from different faiths. Given the interfaith violence happening nearby in Syria, as well as the history of interfaith violence in Lebanon itself, this was understandably sensitive.

CRS Lebanon conducted a launching event to explain the project's goal and process to all partners together. It also prepared MOUs to be discussed and signed with each partner, stating expectations of mutual time commitments, confidentiality, and other such issues. During the trust-building period, CRS explained its own organizational history, proving both its experience and its "need not creed" approach. Finally, CRS Lebanon offered evidence of the growth other Lebanese organizations had experienced in a CRS-led capacity strengthening project 10 years earlier. This further built the CRS case that they would be able to help partners develop new, needed expertise. While several partners started out not even wishing to speak to one another, by project end many are collaborating and even creating projects together. "We learned and realized that we need to collaborate. Collaboration is key for the emergency response, e.g. war. We were exposed to the ideas from different regions and religion, which enriched our understanding of the emergency response." (Partner, Lebanon) "At the closeout event, the government official said that he does not know how we reached the condition that these LFIs from different faiths talk to each other and work together." (CRS staff)

Another strong element of CRS Lebanon's strategy was the writeshops. CRS staff noticed that the majority of partners were not documenting the learning during and after the trainings. Also, some organizations continued to have difficulties in creating policy manuals. For these organizations, CRS decided to institute writeshops for a few partners together at the same time. Then CRS provided individual coaching visits and online support such as feedback on the draft policies via email or phone. These efforts resulted in partners having the necessary policies and procedures in financial management, HR/volunteer management, procurement, emergency response (including HR and finance in emergencies).

FINDINGS UNIQUE TO LEBANON:

- CRS Lebanon and partners have mapped who provides which services and are referring beneficiaries to each other; prior to PEER they did not have this information, but now they are able to specialize, attend cluster meetings, get other service maps, and think ever more strategically about their role.
- Some partners show changes in attitudes and behaviors in becoming more inclusive, e.g. hiring people not from their religion.
- Partners have started to help other communities outside their own religious group. For example, the Maronite Scouts in Lebanon and

Roman Church Scouts in Jordan on their own initiative invited each other to their events and use their own funding to work together.

- CRS Lebanon helped some partners prepare for successful accreditation from ministries. "The Ministry of Health was going to do an accreditation of our center, so CRS helped with the organigram and JDs. We got Ministry accreditation last July, in 2017." (Partner, Lebanon)

- More so than in other countries, partners asked for CRS to play an organizing role for a network of LFIs to continue work beyond the project. "We would meet every three months to share what we do, how we changed and grew, what we are working on specifically, etc." (Partner, Lebanon)

- Many partners did not understand why they were selected for project participation, believing their organization had been chosen automatically because of their faith affiliation. It might be more empowering for organizations to understand they were selected in a competitive process. "We have in our files the application forms completed by the LFI, but because these forms were filled in and submitted by the top leadership of LFIs (e.g. Board member) it is understandable why the LFI staff from the middle level management do not recall the application" (CRS staff)

- Online survey response revealed PEER staff support satisfaction level 3.81 out of 5.

Caritas Jordan -- CRS building local CS capacity

In Jordan, CRS worked to build the capacity of Caritas Jordan, who then worked to strengthen the capacity of local organizations. Caritas Jordan managed the relations with partners, including all coordination. CRS' involvement was mostly limited to co-trainings and a few writeshops and coaching sessions. The CRS Lebanon team would go to Jordan two days before the training to prep the Caritas staff. CRS and Caritas Jordan would go through the facilitation guide together, amending it to the context and developing case studies to use during the trainings. CRS co-facilitated with Caritas Jordan, and Caritas Jordan chose which aspects of each training they wanted to lead. Caritas Jordan staff were certain that they could lead the majority of trainings in finance and HR management and the only training they needed CRS to lead was in emergency response. "The entire project and its scope of implementation in Jordan was remodeled in order to meet the needs of local faith-based activities, partners. The nature of the work they perform is different from that of a registered official organization (such as those in Lebanon)." (Caritas Jordan)

After the trainings, Caritas Jordan did the bulk of the coordination and coaching. CRS staff noted that Caritas Jordan's facilitating role of the project was key. Working with scouts and volunteers is not easy. For example, "service map development took a long time because LFIs were busy and their volunteers were busy. So, Caritas was following up with them constantly. Some of the LFIs were far from Amman (e.g. 3 hours away), so these LFIs were coached less. Also, availability of the LFI staff for coaching in Jordan was harder as they are volunteers." (CRS staff)

The model worked well in many ways. Strengths noted by Caritas Jordan staff included being closer to the LFIs, understanding their context and communities much better than CRS, and "When we finish the project we will continue working with LFIs. We have a longer relationship with LFIs than CRS does." (Caritas Jordan staff)

However, Caritas Jordan staff also note that they would have been better prepared had there been a longer and more structured orientation for them to the PEER project and its MEAL plan. One staff member stated: "Training with the staff on the project is key. We were learning by doing." Another challenge was the complication of adding CRS schedules into the already difficult coordination mix.

FINDINGS UNIQUE TO JORDAN

- PEER spurred general program quality and creativity in addition to improved financial and human resource management: "As a result of the project we got energized and excited and started more charity activities, e.g. visiting elderly people centers, expanding the volunteer circle, etc. PEER helped us to develop new ideas for our activities." (Partner, Jordan)
- Despite not having an emergency, most organizations were able to apply at least some of the training to their regular activities: "SPHERE book is very useful and I was reading it and will be reading this book while [distributing food to communities]" (Partner, Jordan)
- Because these organizations were smaller and more volunteer-driven, there was less uptake of general policies and procedures than elsewhere. However, uptake of volunteer-related policies and procedures happened more quickly as it was practical for the LFIs, and therefore prioritized by the PEER team. "We organized people and usage of equipment much better to do the school cleaning for the opening thanks to the plan developed and lists of engaged volunteers. This is an example of better volunteer policy." (Partner, Jordan)

Syrian women wait to registered for aid distribution at the Mafraq Caritas Center, in Mafraq, Jordan. *Photo by Andrew McConnell for CRS/Caritas Jordan*

- Jordan was the only CP where a majority of partners thought the program should be shorter and more intensive: "Maybe to do the project one year, but conduct training every month. There are retired volunteers and they can attend the trainings often. More intensive trainings would ensure that we don't forget what we learned." (Partner, Jordan) The LFIs staff commented that even though they are not always available to attend trainings as they are busy with their jobs there are always other volunteers who can replace them.
- Online survey response revealed a PEER staff support satisfaction level of 3.73 out of 5.

RECOMMENDATIONS

"Projects like PEER are very important because we work with partners everywhere, emergencies are happening more frequently, and localization means that partners are responding more and more." (CRS staff) The following recommendations are drawn from good practices emerging from this project, as well as areas for improvement.

CRS Staffing, Systems, and Resources

- These capacity strengthening projects rely entirely on staffing, so take time to find the right CRS staff.
- If hiring externally, plan a strong orientation to CRS partnership principles and capacity strengthening approach, including accompaniment. This could be done through "focus group discussions with staff on working with partners, mini trainings on how to handle difficult situations with partners." (CRS staff)
- Create opportunities for CRS country programs to learn from each other, particularly early in the project, as peer learning was universally seen as fruitful.
- Consider a trial period for newly hired capacity strengthening staff, as well as obtaining partner input on how the person is working out, via the CRS Partnership Scorecard [13]or other tools.
- Ensure appropriate levels of CRS staff for frequent contact with different levels of the partner organizations. "Appropriate" depends on many factors including number of partners, partner capacity and size, and distance of partner from CRS. It also will depend on the type of capacity strengthening being done and how much follow up the partner will need to institutionalize learning. Ideally, for a project with more than four partners, there would be a full time PM with strong partnership and coordination skills, as well as someone with finance/admin capacity and someone with emergency capacity.
- Budget for CRS technical staff related to specific capacity strengthening areas of focus, in addition to program and finance (such as HR, procurement, MEAL, protection, etc.)
- Before project ends, identify ways to retain CRS staff in whom much has been invested for P/CS so they can apply their experience to other CS projects.
- Tailor the timeframe and staffing to project objectives and context. For example, are you trying to create a regional response network? Are you incorporating interfaith peacebuilding? Are you working with mostly volunteer-led organizations?

Coordinating with internal and external stakeholders

- Coordinate CP-based capacity strengthening projects with the ongoing work of P/CS in headquarters as well as P/CS units in the region and country programs.

---

13 CRS Partnership Scorecard is an online survey tool (which also allows offline version) used both by CRS and partner staff to provide feedback on partnership.

- Train the Humanitarian Response Department (HRD), especially external hires, on the P/CS model and resources, perhaps via the online partnership and capacity strengthening trainings. "Those emergency experts who are used to direct implementation need to make a mental shift toward more inclusion" (CRS staff)
- Consider collaborating with Caritas Internationalis and specific CI Member Organizations on more emergency capacity strengthening ahead of emergencies, including partner capacity assessments.

Capacity strengthening resources
- Create more materials to help those who are new to emergency response capacity strengthening, such as a two-pager on real-world examples of how emergency CS was done.
- Create more materials on capacity strengthening in emergencies: process maps for P/CS in emergencies, quick assessment tools such as "capacity strengthening in emergencies" to identify partner needs such as faster financial procedures, surge capacity plans, etc.
- Consider certification of CRS staff in different levels of partnership and capacity strengthening skills (basic, intermediate, advanced) tied to qualifications for positions in CRS, building off a stronger version of the ICS online courses. Include more technical topics such as WASH, etc.
- If using the cascading capacity strengthening model, ensure partners fully understand all the tools. "Honestly, for the MOCA, it was hard for me to learn. There are so many questions to ask." (Caritas Jordan staff)

Training methods and topics
- Ensure partners understand how the training topics are related to the partners' needs assessment and project priorities, as well as the entire CS approach.
- Provide follow up between trainings, including commenting on post-training action plans.
- Group project participants by ability level so that trainings (and writeshops) are tailored to their capacity.
- Consider including more on disaster preparedness and empowering communities post response, as well as ICT4 emergencies such as early warning technology.
- Have training materials for different education levels. "More simplified documents were needed for me to understand and apply. It seemed to me that they prepared the documents for university graduates." (Partner, Jordan)

Capacity strengthening approaches
- Emphasize peer learning, such as exchange visits between partners or deploying LFI staff to help in each other's emergency responses.
- Help organizations disseminate learning within their organization, particularly for organizations with high volunteer turnover. Ways to do so include:
  - Having individual reflection conversations with partners at project start to discuss how they will share and sustain the learning

- o Offering tips for cascading learning (possibly as a peer brainstorming session at the first training)
- o Assisting partners as they create their internal training materials and supporting initial partner trainings of their own staff.
- ■ Consider a sustainability methodology that helps partners link with each other. Suggestions include forming a partner emergency response team (ERT) or building partner response networks at the state, regional, or national level.
- ■ Consider exchange visits for partners with organizations that are leaders in safeguarding and protection or other issues related to emergency response.
- ■ Have partners develop their own improvement/action plans after the capacity assessment, then have partners revise plans based on midterm assessment or monitoring findings.
- ■ Determine ways to support organizations that are mostly volunteers, including more flexible scheduling of activities to accommodate volunteers' schedules and more assistance institutionalizing knowledge given their light staffing structure. Also consider more content around recruiting and retaining volunteers.
- ■ Incorporate more reflection and learning events early on in CS to enable CRS and partner staff to understand more dimensions of the project and improve implementation.
- ■ Engage partner leadership not only in commitment to the project but also in the CS activities themselves. This gets leaders' buy-in as well as understanding of new policies and procedures.
- ■ Follow the P/CS cycle through all steps[14], including accompaniment in practical application of systems and learning gained as well as documentation and replication of the best practices and learning. Initial application of new policies and procedures, and refining based on monitoring, requires concerted support from CRS and should be considered in choosing project duration and staffing.

MEAL plan
- ■ Ensure CRS' P/CS and MEAL staff are involved in creating MEAL plans and that MEAL staff are at least linked to the project, if not brought onto project staff.
- ■ Train all relevant CRS and partner staff at project start on administering the partner capacity assessment tool(s)to avoid significantly different scoring.
- ■ Use qualitative data gathering mechanisms, such as the emergency scorecard or interviews or focus groups, to measure how well the capacity strengthening methodology is creating change within the organization. Also consider complexity tools, such as csSCAN[15] (SenseMaker).

---

14 This is an official PCS cycle endorsed by the PCS unit, which explains the sequence and importance of all steps, starting with establishing the partnership and finishing with replication of good practices. For more please visit www.ics.crs.org

15 The capacity strengthening SCAN (csSCAN) tool is designed using Sensemaker software to collect and interpret CRS staff and partner feedback on the CS continuously.

- Divide objectives into smaller steps to capture incremental progress towards new and/or improved policies and procedures.
- Use quantitative data gathering mechanisms, such as an accompaniment/coaching tracklog. This also provides data about the staff time and funding needed for quality CS: "how much money and time go into this? This is a critical question for donors and funding." (CRS staff)

Partner capacities and resources
- Use some form of an extensive vetting process, such as applications, to ensure the partners, from leadership on down, are committed to making the most of the project.
- Ensure partners have staff capacity and time to absorb the learning; this is particularly an issue for volunteer-driven organizations.
- Sign project MOUs or letters of intent, particularly outlining expectations around time, follow up, and absence of project funds.
- Encourage partners to assign point people to do internal coordination as well as provide continuity of who goes to different PEER trainings (and writeshops); "the first 3-4 months, we were sending different and multiple people to the trainings. Later we understood who to send, so there is a benefit from his/her participation." (Partner, Jordan)
- Consider including partners who play an umbrella function as well as partners who directly implement emergency responses, to spread and sustain learning.
- Consider how CRS can help broker relations for partners with government and other INGOs and NGOs for coordination, learning, and funding.
- Consider how to involve the government directly in the project such as having them participate in emergency simulations and make presentations at trainings.

Note:

- A open question is whether or not to pay a partner staff project coordinator to ensure partner follow up. With well-funded partners, this can aid project implementation. In Indonesia, the two PEER-funded coordinators are now transitioning to Emergency Team Leader roles, funded by their organizations. Yet less well-funded partners may lose much project learning if they cannot continue to employ the coordinator when the CS project ends.

- Another open question is whether or not to attach small grant funding to this project to help partners roll out the learning within their organizations and/or to external stakeholders.

LIST OF INTERVIEWS

LIST OF KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

COUNTRY	LFI NAME	POSITION
Indonesia	Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center (MDMC)	Branch office managers (4)
		PEER trainers (2)
Indonesia	The Posko Kemanusiaan Peduli Umat (PKPU)	Branch office managers (4)
		PEER trainers (2)
Indonesia	PKPU/MDMC together	Finance officers (2)
Jordan	The Catholic Parish Council (Saint Georgiou's committee)	3 persons
	AL-WEBDEH LATIN SCOUT	7 persons

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (LFIS)

COUNTRY	LFI NAME	INTERVIEWEE	POSITION
Indonesia	Muhammadiyah Disaster Management Center (MDMC)	Naibul Umam	MEAL Officer
		M. Indrayanto	PEER Project Coordinator
		Rahmawati Hussein, PhD	Vice Director
Indonesia	The Posko Kemanusiaan Peduli Umat (PKPU)	M. Jawad	PEER Coordinator
		M. Kaimuddin	PEER Trainer and ER Manager
		M. Jumarsono	Head Office Staff and PEER Trainer
India	TSSS (Tezpur Social Service Society)		Director
India	PGSSS (Purvanchal Gramin Seva Samiti)	Fr. Varghese	Director
India	KSSS (Karuna Social Service Society)	Rev. Fr. Pious Phillip	Director
		M. Narendra	Finance Officer
India	Bihar Water Development Society (BWDS)	Fr. John	Director

COUNTRY	LFI NAME	INTERVIEWEE	POSITION
India	BSSS (Balasore Social Service Society)	Fr. Lijo Nirappel	Director
India	TASOSS (Tamil Nadu Social Service Society)	Rev. Fr. John Selveraj	Director
India	PMSSS (Pondicherry Multipurpose Social Service Society)	Mrs Bridgit Selvaraj	Admin and Finance Manager
Lebanon	Alawite Islamic Charity Association	Mr. Noureddine Eid	President LFI Office
Lebanon	Armenian Relief Cross	Mrs. Vergine Khorshidian	Associate Director LFI Office
Lebanon	Assyrian Support Committee	Mrs Eliena Beniamen	Associate Director LFI Office
Lebanon	Cénacle de la Lumière	Mrs Nadine Kousaifi and Mr Raffi Kaypekian	Operations Manager and Finance manager LFI Office
Lebanon	Islamic Social Welfare Association	Mr Tarek Bizrri	Emergency Program manager LFI Office
Lebanon	Maronite Scouts	Mr Robert Abi Khalil	General secretary LFI Office
Lebanon	Nabatieh Scouts / Ambulance	Mr Mahdy Sadek	General director LFI Office
Lebanon	Imam Sadr Foundation	Mrs Ghada El Zein	Director of Health Services LFI Office
Lebanon	The Awareness and Consolation Association	Mr.Mohamad Yahya	Program Manager LFI Office
Lebanon	The Social Association	Mr. Ghassan Shehade	Executive Director LFI Office
Jordan	Latin Scout of Northern Zarqa		LFI Office
Jordan	Latin Scout of Al Misdar		LFI Office
Jordan	Youth for United World		LFI Office
Jordan	Friends and Alumni of Schenler School Association		LFI Office

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS – CRS AND CARITAS JORDAN STAFF

COUNTRY	CRS STAFF NAME	JOB POSITION
Indonesia	Yenni Suryani	Country Manager
	Syahri (Adhong) Ramadhan	Program Manager - PEER
	Maria Josephine (Pipin)	MEAL Manager
	M. Helmi	Finance Coordinator
India	Akash Asthana	Program Manager - PEER
	Rekha Shetty	Emergency Director
Lebanon	Ramzi El Hage	Program Manager – PEER
	Marwa Rahhal	Emergency Response Specialist
	Sylwa Abajian	Senior Project Officer
Jordan	Carol Antonios	Project Coordinator – PEER
	Ibrahim	Finance Officer
	Rami	Admin Officer
Global	Amanda Schweitzer	PEER Project Coordinator
	Mohit Holmesheron	MEAL Technical Advisor

CRS and partners in India gather after a PEER training in Bhubaneswar. *Photo courtesy of CRS India/Partner staff*

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS – LFI PEER STAFF

1. Did the project achieve its objective to make your organizations better able to provide quality and timely humanitarian response? What are examples of new tools, systems, and processes that your organizations is using for emergencies? For regular programming?

2. What were the elements of the project that led to its success, i.e. improved capacity to better respond to the emergency (Let them answer broadly then probe for:
   - What CRS brought, especially regarding skill level of CRS staff and topics of CS and documents and materials
   - What your organization brought
   - What CS methodologies worked best (e.g. coaching, training, networking, etc.) Why? Which were least helpful? Why? What combination and sequence of the methods was helpful for your organization?
   - What was the influence of internal and external factors on project implementation and outcome, both positively and negatively?

3. CRS worked with the national offices to strengthen the capacity of the branch offices. What were the strengths and challenges of this approach?

4. Were there any challenges in implementing what you learned? If so, what were they? Are you still trying to implement those tools/procedures, and if not, why not?

5. Can you tell us if and how your organization responded differently to emergencies after receiving capacity strengthening through the PEER project? What did your staff do differently in emergency response that improved the response? Bring examples.

6. Do you think there will be any ongoing sharing of learning and resources from the PEER project after it ends? Can you tell me what and why and how?

7. If CRS were to do this project again in another country context to improve LFIs capacity in emergency response what would you recommend we do?
   - Let them answer generally, then probe for:
     i. How many and what type of CRS staff we have? How should those staff be prepared for their role?
     ii. The topics and CS methodologies?
     iii. Partner selection criteria
     iv. The timeframe and pace of the project?

8. Is there anything else you want to raise?

KII QUESTIONS – LFI PEER STAFF

Interviewee's background

1. When did you join the project? What sort of training or orientation did you have on the PEER project's objectives and methodology? Did you feel it was adequate? Why or why not?

Achieving objectives

2. In your opinion, did the project achieve its objective to make your organization better able to provide quality and timely humanitarian response? (we know that the LFIs in Lebanon and Jordan didn't have a chance to respond to the emergency during the PEER project but we still want to check on their self-perception) In addition to emergency situations, did the project assist you to provide quality and timely assistance to the communities you serve through ongoing programming/ development programming?

3. How was your organization helped to identify needs? How were these needs prioritized and responded to during the project?

4. The baseline and endline MOCA results of your organization show the changes in the following capacity areas: (have the scores for all areas of MOCA)
   - o Financial Management
   - o Procurement and Logistics
   - o Human Resource Management
   - o Emergency Response

How would you explain these changes? What is the PEER project contribution to these changes? Please list those.

What were the major factors contributing to the positive changes in the capacity areas?

What were the challenges explaining the negative or no changes?

Can you bring examples of any institutional and emergency response tools, systems and processes improved as a result of PEER project that are **used** in your organization? What explains the usage? If there is no use, why? What are the challenges?

5. What were the best and/or most surprising outcomes from the project that you saw? (i.e increased coordination ability, new external partnerships, new donor funding, etc) Why were there such outcomes? What are the contributing and hindering factors?

6. (For those LFIs, which responded to the emergency) Can you tell us if and how your organization responded differently to emergencies after receiving capacity strengthening through the PEER project? What did your staff do differently in emergency response that improved the response? Bring examples.

7. How well did the emergency response provided by your organization meet the international standards stipulated through SPHERE and CHS?

8. What was CRS staff role during your organization's emergency response activities? What types of support were provided by CRS during the response? What do you see to be the most effective way of support?

Elements of success

9. What were the elements of the project that led to its success, i.e. improved capacity to better respond to the emergency (Let them answer broadly then probe for:
   o what CRS brought, especially regarding skill level of CRS staff and topics of CS and documents and materials
   o what your organization brought
   o What were the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership with CRS, including communication and decision-making? What can be improved in the future?
   o what CS methodologies worked best (e.g. coaching, training, networking, etc.) Why? Which were least helpful? Why? What combination of the methods was helpful for your organization?
   o what was the influence of internal and external factors on project implementation and outcome, both positively and negatively?

(For Indonesia) CRS worked with the national offices to strengthen the capacity of the branch offices. What were the strengths and challenges of this approach?

(For Jordan) CRS worked with the Caritas Jordan to strengthen the capacity of your organization and other. What were the strengths and challenges of this approach?

10. How will you personally use what you learned from PEER in the future? How do you think your organization will use what it learned from PEER in the future?

11. Do you think there will be any ongoing sharing of learning and resources from the PEER project after it ends? Can you tell me what and why and how?

Learning Questions

12. How would you evaluate the skills and knowledge and attitudes of CRS staff? Where they adequate to support your organization to improve to better respond to the emergency? If yes, bring examples. If no, why?

13. To you, what are the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes that one shall possess to be able to strengthen LFI capacity in the emergency response?

14. Was the overall amount of time spent by the PEER team working with you adequate? Why or why not? What about the amount of time allotted for the specific capacity strengthening activities, such as trainings or phonecalls or coaching visits? Was that sufficient? If not, what would have been better?

Lessons for the future

15. If CRS were to do this project again in another country context to improve LFIs capacity in emergency response what would you recommend we do?
    - o Let them answer generally, then probe for:
        - i. How many and what type of CRS staff we have? How should those staff be prepared for their role?
        - ii. The topics and CS methodologies?
        - iii. Partner selection criteria
        - iv. The timeframe and pace of the project?

16. CRS was collecting the reports from you to report on the progress. What was easy and doable and meaningful in writing these reports? What were the challenges in writing these reports?

17. Is there anything else you want to raise?

KII QUESTIONS – CRS PEER STAFF

Interviewee's background

1. When did you join the project? What sort of training or orientation did you have on the PEER project's objectives and methodology? Did you feel it was adequate? Why or why not?

Warm up/big picture

2. Our understanding of how your CP approached PEER was xxxxxx (verbally outline their CP's model as we understand it). Is this correct? Why was the CS model chosen by your CP? What were the strengths and challenges of this approach?

3. Overall, what worked well in PEER as the overall project? What didn't work so well?

Achieving objectives

4. The baseline and endline MOCA results of the LFIs show the changes in the following capacity areas: (have the scores for all MOCA sections)
    - o Financial Management
    - o Procurement and Logistics
    - o Human Resource Management
    - o Emergency Response

What were the major factors contributing to the positive changes in the capacity areas, including the role of the PEER Project? What explains the negative or no changes?

To what degree are the financial, institutional, and human resources systems and emergency response capacity **in place and operational** among the LFIs? How do you know? How did your CP achieve this? What was LFIs role?

(For those LFIs, which responded to the emergency) Can you tell us if LFIs responded to emergency better this time, during the PEER project? What have their staff done differently/better in emergency response that improved the response? Bring examples.

How well did the emergency response meet international standards? We have these data in the IPPT for IR3. How this data was collected?

5. Were there any unexpected outcomes, positive or negative? (i.e increased coordination ability, new external partnerships, new donor funding, etc) If yes, please explain what they were and the contributing and hindering factors?

Elements of success

6. What were the elements of the project that led to its success, i.e. build capacity of LFIs to better respond to the emergency? (Let them answer broadly then probe for:
    a. Were there adequate staff, resources, and support to prepare LFIs to better respond to the emergencies? If yes, bring examples. If no, why not?
    b. What resources and contributions did LFIs have that enabled them to participate well in the PEER project?
    c. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership, including communication and decision-making? What can be improved in the future?
    d. What was the influence of internal and external factors on project implementation and outcome, both positively and negatively?
    e. The major methods of the CS used within the PEER project were coaching, on-site support, networking, writeshop, etc. Which methods did your CP choose and why? What combination and sequence of CS methodologies worked best? Why?

7. In your opinion, which outcomes (new systems, skills, partnerships, etc) are most likely to be sustained by the current actors, and which least likely? Why?

8. In your opinion, how can outcomes be scaled up or spread further – to other CRS staff and CPs, to other partners, to other external stakeholders – in future programming?

Learning Questions

9. To you, what are the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes that one shall possess to be able to strengthen LFI capacity in the emergency response? Do these differ depending on the partner type?

10. Which methods of accompaniment were effective to improve emergency response capacity of LFI on the individual, team and organizational levels? What factors made them effective?

11. What are the most effective and efficient staffing models and structures that contribute to partners' improved emergency response capacity? (for example, PCS units versus one person responsible for the PCS, OR PCS integrated in each persons' JDs versus having dedicated staff with specific PCS agenda/roles and responsibility, etc.)

12. Please tell me about the time required for working with each LFI. How

often did you interact with them for each method, and for how long? Why? What factors decide the time and frequency of each accompaniment method? And to you, what is the optimal time and frequency for each accompaniment method?

CRS Structure

13. What current HR systems and processes exist in your country program to hire and retain qualified staff to implement partner CS projects in general and in emergency response? How would you recommend improving this?

14. What are the strengths and weaknesses of these systems and processes?

15. What knowledge management resources (training materials, templates, tools, industry standards, humanitarian standards, SOP, etc.) do we need in place to support continual growth of CRS staffs' KAPs around partner capacity building in general and specifically in emergency response?

Lessons for the future

16. What is one thing you know now that you wish you had known at the project start?

17. What does the whole PEER experience tell us for future such programs, if we are trying to have a measurable, sustainable improvement in partners' emergency response capacity?
    i. What were the partner selection criteria in this project? What criteria we shall keep and what criteria we shall abandon?
    ii. How many and what type of CRS staff do we have? How should those staff be prepared for their role? How many LFIs did you work directly with in this project? Would you decrease or increase that number of partners? Why? What is the optimal ratio of CRS staff to number of partners' staff for accompaniment and CB? What factors influence this ratio? What resources are needed?
    iii. What did you think about the timeframe and pace of the project?

18. What recommendations can be made for improvements to the MEAL plan for similar future capacity strengthening projects?

19. What do you think were the motivations for the LFI's to continue with this project without guarantee of future or further funding by CRS or other donors for emergency response programming?

20. Is there anything else you want to raise?

ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY

1. Where is your organization based?

    o   Lebanon
    o   Jordan
    o   Indonesia
    o   India

2. What is your organization's faith affiliation?

    o   Muslim
    o   Christian
    o   Other (Please specify)

3. What best describes your organization? *(please pick one)*

    o   Micro, mostly volunteer-based organization (fewer than 10 people)
    o   Small, mostly volunteer-based organization (10 to 49 people)
    o   Medium-sized, mostly volunteer-based organization
        (50 to 249 people)
    o   Large, mostly volunteer-based organization (250 or more people)
    o   Micro organization with paid staff (fewer than 10 employees)
    o   Small organization with paid staff (10 to 49 employees)
    o   Medium-sized organization with paid staff (50 to 249 employees)
    o   Large organization with paid staff (250 or more employees)
    o   Other

4. What best describes the location of your organization with respect to the CRS PEER project team? *(please pick one)*

    o   In the same city or town as the PEER project team
    o   A few hours trip from the PEER project team
    o   A full day trip from the PEER project team
    o   More than a one-day trip from the PEER project team
    o   Other

5. What is your position/ activity in your organization? (if you are a volunteer, you can pick a second position/activity to fully describe your role)

    o   Board member
    o   Director
    o   Manager
    o   Finance and/or admin staff
    o   Program staff
    o   Volunteer

6. What is your gender?

    o   Male
    o   Female

7. Have you been exposed to similar capacity strengthening activities provided by another organization before or during the PEER project?

    o   Yes
    o   No
    o   Don't know

8. To what degree did the support provided by CRS PEER staff meet your personal <u>expectations</u>?

    o   not at all
    o   somewhat
    o   adequately
    o   better than adequately
    o   completely

9. To what degree did the support provided by CRS staff meet your <u>organization's identified capacity needs?</u>

    o   not at all
    o   somewhat
    o   adequately
    o   better than adequately
    o   completely

10. To what degree did the PEER project activities strengthen your organization's **INDIVIDUAL knowledge and skills** in the following areas:
    (1 = not at all; 2 = somewhat; 3 = adequately; 4 = better than adequately; 5 = completely)

    _____   Institutional strengthening Financial Management
    _____   Institutional strengthening Grants Management
    _____   Institutional strengthening Operations System/Administration
    _____   Institutional strengthening Procurement and Logistics
    _____   Institutional strengthening Inventory Management
    _____   Institutional strengthening Human Resource and Volunteer Management
    _____   Institutional strengthening Project design and management
    _____   Institutional strengthening Protection and anti-harassment policies
    _____   Emergency response needs assessment procedures
    _____   Emergency Response Sphere guidelines/CHS during an emergency
    _____   Emergency Response Humanitarian Framework/Coordination
    _____   Emergency Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning/MEAL
    _____   Emergency Response Technical Areas (shelter, WASH, protection mainstreaming, emergency leadership, etc.)
    _____   Emergency Response Procurement and Logistics
    _____   Emergency Response Inventory Management
    _____   Emergency protection policies
    _____   Emergency Response Human Resources and Volunteer Management

11. Do you think that as a result of PEER project capacity strengthening activities your organization **uses improved or newly developed policies, procedures and manuals** in the following area:
   (1=not at all; 2 = somewhat; 3= adequately; 4= better than adequately; and 5= completely)

   _____ Institutional Strengthening Financial Management
   _____ Institutional strengthening Grants Management
   _____ Institutional strengthening Operations System/Administration
   _____ Institutional strengthening Procurement and Logistics
   _____ Institutional strengthening Inventory Management
   _____ Institutional strengthening Human Resource and Volunteer Management
   _____ Institutional strengthening Project design and management
   _____ Institutional strengthening Protection and anti-harassment policies
   _____ Emergency Response needs assessment
   _____ Emergency Response Sphere guidelines/CHS during an emergency
   _____ Emergency Response Humanitarian Framework/Coordination
   _____ Emergency Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning/MEAL
   _____ Emergency Response Technical Areas (shelter, WASH, protection mainstreaming, emergency leadership, etc.)
   _____ Emergency Response Procurement and Logistics
   _____ Emergency Response Inventory Management
   _____ Emergency protection policies
   _____ Emergency Response Human Resources and Volunteer Management

12. To what extent do you agree that, as a result of the PEER project, your **ORGANIZATION** has improved the following general capacity areas:
   (1=not at all; 2 = somewhat; 3= adequately; 4= better than adequately; and 5= completely)

   _____ Financial management
   _____ Procurement and Logistics systems
   _____ HR and volunteer management
   _____ Emergency Response capacity

13. In case of a future emergency, do you think that the PEER project has helped you to provide a response that will be: (Please choose all that apply)
   (1 =not at all; 2 = somewhat; 3= adequately; 4= better than adequately; and 5= completely)

   _____ Based on emergency needs assessment data
   _____ Coordinated with other humanitarian actors to increase complementarity and reduce duplication of efforts
   _____ Tailored to the needs of different beneficiary groups: women, elderly, children under 5, disabled, most vulnerable groups, etc.
   _____ In line with the strengths and experience of the LFI and their staff
   _____ Designed based on the Sphere Handbook guidelines
   _____ Timely
   _____ Able to source funding to meet beneficiary needs
   _____ Staffed appropriately to meet beneficiary needs
   _____ Based on ongoing Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) activities to ensure changing beneficiary needs are addressed

14. Were there any other outcomes that your organization achieved thanks to the PEER project? Please choose all that apply.

    o   Increased coordination ability
    o   New external partnerships
    o   New donor funding
    o   Services/trainings from organizations not engaged in the project
    o   Other (please specify)_____
    o   No, Not applicable

15. Can you rank the top three most helpful CRS capacity strengthening methods? *(Please provide number 1 – 3 for the selected ones)*

    _____   Coaching/on-the-job support
    _____   Trainings/workshops for all LFIs in a country together
    _____   Trainings/workshops for individual LFIs
    _____   Writeshops
    _____   Remote support through phone calls and email
    _____   Learning events/exchange visits
    _____   Networking events

16. Can you identify the ONE least helpful CRS capacity strengthening method? *(Please only select one)*

    o   Coaching/on-the-job support
    o   Trainings/workshops for all LFIs in a country together
    o   Trainings/workshops for individual LFIs
    o   Writeshops
    o   Remote support through phone calls and email
    o   Learning events/exchange visits
    o   Networking events

17. For the capacity strengthening method selected in question 16 as the least helpful, can you note why?

    o   CRS staff did not have enough skills or knowledge to facilitate this method
    o   CRS staff were not able to use the capacity strengthening method effectively
    o   Too much time was required
    o   Method was not relevant to my job or position/activity in the organization
    o   No follow up was provided
    o   Other (please specify)

18. Can you rank the <u>top three</u> CRS capacity strengthening tools that were <u>most helpful</u>?

   o   MOCA/Organizational Capacity Needs Assessment
   o   Development Plans/Action Plans developed based on MOCA results
   o   Learning and Resources Needs Assessment for trainings/workshops
   o   Emergency Simulation Scorecard
   o   Surge capacity mapping tool
   o   Guiding questions/templates for developing policies and procedures
   o   Examples of finalized policy and procedure manuals and/or SoPs documents
   o   Examples of manuals for project design and management
   o   Subrecipient Financial Management assessment (SFRM)
   o   Joint Needs Assessment/JNA form
   o   Post Distribution Monitoring form.
   o   Other (please specify)

19. In general, how do you rank the team of CRS PEER staff you dealt with in terms of the following: *(1 = poor; 2 = fair; 3=good; 4= very good; and 5=excellent)*

   _____   Their expertise/understanding of the material they were sharing with me
   _____   Their ability to understand my learning needs
   _____   Their ability to communicate the material to me
   _____   Their ability to evaluate and follow up
   _____   Their flexibility
   _____   Other

20. In terms of staffing levels, how would you rate the number of CRS staff working on the PEER project:

   o   Not enough staff
   o   Enough staff
   o   Too many staff
   o   Don't know

21. How satisfied were you with the partnership between CRS and your organization while implementing the PEER project?

   o   not at all
   o   somewhat
   o   adequately
   o   better than adequately
   o   completely

22. Given your experience participating in the PEER project over the last three years, would you recommend that similar projects in the future should be:

   o   Shorter
   o   About the same length
   o   A year longer
   o   Several years longer

23. If you said the project should be longer, what do you think could be achieved with more time? *(please select up to three options)*

- o   Going more deeply into the topics covered
- o   Covering more topics
- o   Going more slowly so that there is more time to change based on new knowledge and skill
- o   Going more slowly so that there is more time to apply new or improved policies, procedures and manuals
- o   Building capacity of more of our staff
- o   More on-site support with emergency response
- o   Other (please specify)
- o   I do not believe the project should be longer

24. To what degree do you think that, after the PEER project:
    (1=not at all; 2 = somewhat; 3= adequately; 4= better than adequately; and 5= completely)

    _____   I will continue applying my new skills and knowledge gained during the project

    _____   I will train and coach current and new colleagues in these topics

    _____   I and my organization will continue using the new tools, manuals and policies

    _____   I and my organization will share our new capacity with other, non PEER project, organizations

MOCA RESULTS

INDIA

In the table below is MOCA midline data versus endline data for all 14 partners. CRS India proposed to to compare midline data with the endline data as the midline data is "more real" than the baseline. For the baseline MOCA assessment, there was little probing or verification of results and original scores were high. CRS India therefore revised its assessment procedures for the midline assessment, resulting in more accurate scores for all partners.

CAPACITY AREA	20% AND MORE INCREASE	NO % CHANGE	1% AND MORE DECREASE	LOWEST TOTAL % CHANGE	HIGHEST TOTAL % CHANGE	1% AND MORE DECREASE IN TOTAL SCORE
Finance						
Procurement	8 LFIs					
Logistics and Admin	4 LFIs					
Compliance			3 LFIs			
HR capacities						
HR Management systems						
Performance Management	6 LFIs		3 LFIs			
Coordination	4 LFIs					
MEAL						
Resource Mobilization						
Quality Response capacity						
Total score				3-4% (3 LFIs)	23% (1 LFI)	

INDONESIA

This MOCA data is for 2 partners, each with one HQ office and 4 branch offices. The HQ MOCA data is baseline versus endline, whereas for branch offices the analyses were done midline MOCA data versus endline data. While doing the midline assessment CRS and the branch offices were scoring the questions as if before the project intervention. The baselines for the branch offices were initiated by the HQ offices and were mostly self-assessments. Thus, the CRS Indonesia team proposed to use the midline MOCA data collected with the support of CRS. Plus, the revised MOCA tool was used both for the midline and endline. (MOCA was revised to make it shorter and more tailored to branch offices.)

CAPACITY AREA	20% AND MORE INCREASE	NO % CHANGE	1% AND MORE DECREASE	LOWEST TOTAL % CHANGE	HIGHEST TOTAL % CHANGE	1% AND MORE DECREASE IN TOTAL SCORE
Finance		PKPU	2 branch offices			
Procurement	MDMC					
Logistics and Admin		PKPU	3 branch offices			
Compliance		PKPU				
HR capacities						
HR Management systems		PKPU				
Performance Management			MDMC			
Coordination	MDMC					
MEAL	MDMC and 4 branch offices	2 branch offices				
Resource Mobilization	MDMC and 4 Branch offices	3 branch offices				
Quality Response capacity	MDMC					
Total score				3% (for PKPU) and 11-12% (3 branch offices)	14% (for MDMC) and 29% (1 branch office)	2 branch offices

JORDAN

The MOCA data below is for 11 LFIs. The MOCA scores are based on the comparison – baseline versus endline. Three MOCA areas were not assessed due to the Jordanian LFIs' different organizational structures and systems. Performance Management, Coordination, and MEAL were not assessed.

CAPACITY AREA	20% AND MORE INCREASE	NO % CHANGE	1% AND MORE DECREASE	LOWEST TOTAL % CHANGE	HIGHEST TOTAL % CHANGE	1% AND MORE DECREASE IN TOTAL SCORE
Finance	7 LFIs					
Procurement	6 LFIs					
Logistics and Admin			4 LFIs			
Compliance	9 LFIs					
HR capacities						
HR Management systems	8 LFIs					
Resource Mobilization	6 LFIs					
Quality Response capacity						
Total score				7% (1 LFI)	32%-37% (4 LFIs)	

A shelter training for PEER partners in Indonesia. *Photo courtesy of MDMC/PEER partners*

LEBANON

The MOCA data below is for 14 LFIs. The MOCA scores are based on the comparison of baseline versus endline. Only for one LFI the data compared is for midline versus endline. At the beginning of the PEER project this LFI had limited activity history as it was a startup organization. This is why the MOCA assessment was only done at project mid- and endpoints.

CAPACITY AREA	20% AND MORE INCREASE	NO % CHANGE	1% AND MORE DECREASE	LOWEST TOTAL % CHANGE	HIGHEST TOTAL % CHANGE	1% AND MORE DECREASE IN TOTAL SCORE
Finance						
Procurement	14 LFIs					
Logistics and Admin	13 LFIs					
Compliance						
HR capacities	12 LFIs					
HR Management systems						
Performance Management		4 LFIs				
Coordination						
MEAL	12 LFIs					
Resource Mobilization	12 LFIs					
Quality Response capacity	13 LFIs					
Total score				15% (2 LFIs)	43-46% (4 LFIs)	

DATA FROM SURVEY

(overall findings below; entire report, with tables and charts, is attached)

In case of a future emergency, do you think PEER has helped you to provide a response that will be:
- Based on emergency needs assessment data: 3.86
- Coordinated with other humanitarian actors to increase complementarity and reduce duplication of efforts: 3.82
- Tailored to the needs of different beneficiary groups: women, elderly, children under 5, disabled, most vulnerable groups, etc.: 3.82
- In line with the strengths and experience of the LFI and their staff: 3.64
- Designed based on the Sphere Handbook guidelines: 3.69
- Timely 3.72
- Able to source funding to meet beneficiary needs: 3.5
- Staffed appropriately to meet beneficiary needs: 3.71
- Based on ongoing Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) activities to ensure changing beneficiary needs are addressed: 3.72

To what degree do you think that, after the PEER project:
(1=not at all; 2 = somewhat; 3= adequately; 4= better than adequately; and 5= completely)
- I will continue applying my new skills and knowledge gained during the project: 3.72
- I will train and coach current and new colleagues in these topics: 3.57
- I and my organization will continue using the new tools, manuals and policies: 3.67
- I and my organization will share our new capacity with other, non-PEER project, organizations: 3.55

NOTES FROM INTERVIEWS

(attached as zip file)

Young Syrian refugees take part in a fun day at the Latin School in Zarqa, Jordan. *Photo by Andrew McConnell for CRS/Caritas Jordan*