

Grand Bargain in 2019:
Annual Self Report – Narrative Summary

Name of Institution: [Catholic Relief Services](#)

Point of Contact (please provide a name, title and email to enable the consultants to contact you for an interview):

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(NB. Please limit your answer to no more than **3 pages in total** – anything over this word limit will not be considered by ODI in their analysis. Please respond to all of the questions below.)

Question 1: Reflecting on the information you have provided in the Excel spreadsheet, please highlight the 2 or 3 key outcomes or results relating to the Grand Bargain that your institution achieved in 2019?

Localization: CRS' new agency strategy, Vision 2030, affirms our commitment to local leadership empowering local communities and institutions to be effective and impactful leaders. Through two CRS multi-year humanitarian capacity strengthening projects, EMPOWER and Respons, CRS assisted 11 local organizations in Latin America to successfully pass the OFDA Pre-Award Survey and 10 to register in the grants.gov system. CRS has also supported partners to win \$7 million in funding for their active emergency responses which includes more than \$5 million in direct USG awards to EMPOWER partners, and assisted two local partners in Lebanon and Jordan to directly submit proposals for \$1million each to USG/PRM with CRS included as the projects' sub-recipient. In March 2019, CRS hosted a forum in Beirut with humanitarian and government professionals to discuss efforts to advance the localization agenda and opportunities to broaden the participation of local institutions in future responses. The discussion was based on findings from CRS' research "[Missing Link – Role of Local Institutions in Refugee Response](#)" which found that local institutions have a comparative advantage over international in addressing the needs of individuals/communities in times of crisis and are especially effective given their extended presence in their communities, understanding of community, and ability to provide rapid, individualized, long-term assistance to meet community needs.

CASH: CRS embarked on a 2-year cash-readiness program. This includes a process of improving the quality and scale of CVA by engendering a more "coherent" approach to cash programming across the agency, including both humanitarian and development programs. To date, the process has included an organizational capacity assessment completed at global level and in 6 countries taking part in the cash-readiness program and problem analysis across the agency, using a set of tools modified from CaLP's OCRT and CRS capacity assessment tool. During a 2-day workshop, the CRS Cash Working Group identified six workstreams to prioritize over the coming 1-2 years: 1) mainstreaming CVA; 2) response analysis; 3) knowledge management; 4) risk and policies; 5) FSP contracts; and 6) data management and integration. The CWG, with field support, is taking forward 4 of these workstreams currently, developing TORs and action plans, and updates on progress at monthly CWG meetings. At the field level, the focus on cash-readiness has led to 6 country programs with little or no previous cash experience to undergo a capacity assessment and action planning exercise; they are now carrying out the readiness activities. 3 of these programs responded with cash to an emergency in 2019 for the first time, thanks to this support. At the global level, cash-readiness activities in 2020 will include: building up of a roster of experts, development of a central resource/tools repository, hiring a Social Protection staff member, and other activities as identified through the aforementioned workstreams.

Question 2: Please explain how the outcomes/results have or will lead to long-term institutional changes in policy and/or practice.

Localization: Starting in 2020, CRS will begin including key performance indicators (KPIs) for local leadership as part of the CRS 2030 Vision strategy. Through business development support, the EMPOWER project will help local partners directly raise an additional \$5 million by the end of 2022 to implement high quality humanitarian responses as well as become eligible to receive U.S. government funding directly. Due to their success, the EMPOWER project is planning to expand in 2020 to include new local partners from Mesoamerica and the Respons project in Haiti will submit a USG requested proposal for a second round of funding to continue supporting 40 local orgs. with emergency CS and small grants for risk mitigation projects.

CASH: CRS' 'coherent approach to cash' initiative is designed to enact agency-wide change. The HQ CWG includes representatives across programming and operations departments, as well as humanitarian and development staff; they are empowered with a workstream-led action plan as well as an agency mandate to improve processes. In 2019 the group revised and updated two outdated finance policies that now can better facilitate cash and voucher programs; the group also developed protocols for FSP contracting, and supported work on data protection and privacy. CRS also has a focus on promoting quality cash programming through its local partners; this localization agenda is part of CRS' mandate and mission. We've been learning that different approaches are sometimes needed with local partners to truly empower them to implement good cash programming, and CRS is trying to learn from these partners and develop systems that support their needs for CVA.

Question 3: How has your institution contributed to the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment¹ in humanitarian settings through its implementation of the Grand Bargain? What results/outcomes have been achieved in this regard? (please outline specific initiatives or changes in practice and their outcomes/results). Please refer to the Guidelines for definitions of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, which are included in this self-report template package.

- CRS **Ethiopia**, through the "Emergency ESNFI Response to conflict affected IDPs" project, seeking to address the humanitarian needs of 2,600 returnee/IDP HHs fleeing conflict with distributions of cash and an emergency shelter kit, mainstreaming of protection and gender has been a priority, including risk analyses prior to distribution, and addressing issues related to gender sensitive/gender-specific needs.
- CRS **Ethiopia** conducted a gender-based violence and PSEA training for staff in October 2019. The training focused on understanding the root causes and consequences of GBV and CRS staff and partners responsibilities vis-à-vis prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in our programs.
- CRS **Uganda** conducted a rapid gender analysis of its emergency response program in Bidi Bidi Refugee Settlement which houses a disproportionate number of women and children. Findings: although women maintain responsibility for the bulk of unpaid reproductive and domestic work, they have taken on additional responsibilities for some productive tasks. Women participate in humanitarian assistance programs and community leadership structures, but still face barriers to meaningful participation and influence in leadership.
- The Resilience and Food Security Program in **South Sudan** organized a gender-reflection event documenting accomplishments in integrating gender across various project sectors, some of which are the following: Specific targeting of women for participation in CRS' signature Savings & Internal Lending Communities (SILC); Empowering female seed vendors to participate in seed fairs activities; Quotas for female leaders in cooperatives and farmer producer groups; Engagement of peer support groups to help with promoting women's leadership; Engagement of women in "non-traditional" roles within WASH, e.g. pump mechanics, management of facilities, collecting water fees, etc.

Question 4: How has the humanitarian-development nexus been strategically mainstreamed in your institutional implementation of the Grand Bargain commitments? Please explain how your institution has linked commitments 10.1 - 10.5 with other commitments from other workstreams.

CRS' 'coherent approach to cash' initiative deliberately includes both humanitarian and development actors, to streamline our processes and systems for cash-based programming across the agency. The hope is to both improve the quality of humanitarian cash programs because development cash programs are strong and to facilitate learning and knowledge sharing from humanitarian cash programs to improve the quality of development programs, as relevant.

¹ Refer to the IASC definitions of gender equality and women empowerment, available [here](#).