



Annet and her siblings now have a safe and peaceful home in Uganda.
Photo by Philip Laubner/CRS

OVER THE
NEXT 10 YEARS

CRS WILL PROVIDE
1.5 MILLION
PEOPLE

WITH **SAFE AND**
DIGNIFIED HOMES

Building Homes—Uganda

Home and community are the foundations of family life. But too many people around the world today are displaced and uprooted, separated from their homes and all they represent: safety, privacy, loved ones and support networks.

This is the reality for millions of refugees in Uganda—the site of one of the largest refugee crises in the world.

In Uganda, Catholic Relief Services is working with refugees to create safe and dignified homes, so refugees have space to recover and rebuild their lives. The country is now battling COVID-19 infections. In efforts to ensure safe and dignified homes and communities, we are putting steps in place so people's lives aren't further derailed by COVID-19.

Going Far

Through Go FAR: The Campaign for Catholic Relief Services, CRS is ensuring people around the world have safe and dignified homes and communities, and are prepared for future crises. **Because we should, and because we can.**

Uganda is one of the countries where we will pilot our global model. Our approach goes beyond providing shelter and immediate relief. We support people's diverse needs, promote sustainable solutions and local leadership, and work with partners to influence the government and broader humanitarian community for lasting impact. We are confident in these goals, given our deep experience, rich partnerships and documented, tested and innovative practices in shelter programming worldwide.

We are in a unique position to adapt our emergency programming in ways that incorporate measures to prevent the risks and spread of COVID-19. This includes providing communities with information and hygiene materials, and strengthening the capacity of local partners to respond.

CRS recognizes the role of trust and credibility when supporting communities in a context of misinformation and fear. Our longstanding presence in Uganda—and relationships with the refugee communities, local health institutions, governments and organizations—has been critical to our ability to integrate prevention measures for COVID-19 into our shelter programming.

“I pray to God to restore peace.”

—Annet

The Need

When renewed conflict broke out in South Sudan in July 2016, an unprecedented number of refugees fled across the border into Uganda. People from the Democratic Republic of the Congo have also fled to Uganda, seeking refuge from violence, unrest and an Ebola outbreak. More than 80% of these refugees are women and children.

Many are living at the Bidi Bidi and the Kyangwali refugee settlements, but still lack access to basic shelter, clean water, sanitation and living supplies. The situation is especially challenging for women, households headed by children, and people who are elderly or have disabilities.

For these refugees who have risked so much to seek safety, there is now another threat. The growing number of COVID-19 cases across the African continent is extremely concerning, as health systems are already strained, and people's access to clean water and hygiene supplies is limited.

The level of vulnerability is especially high for uprooted and refugee communities, who live in multi-generational families in confined living spaces, with poor sanitation, limited access to water, poor health services and infrastructure—creating an environment for COVID-19 to spread.

The Opportunity

At CRS, we're called to serve the whole person, family and community, and to help people reach their full potential. We see safe homes as the first step toward uprooted families rebuilding their lives—and the fabric of their communities—for meaningful relationships, recovery and resilience.

Working closely with community members, local partners, the government and other organizations, we are providing 7,500 people in Uganda with comprehensive support—building homes, preventing the spread of COVID-19, providing access to water and sanitation, strengthening livelihoods and promoting community engagement and empowerment.

Building safe, dignified homes

CRS will provide refugees and Ugandan families with a range of support for building homes by:

- **Helping 3,750 people in Bidi Bidi** and 2,750 people in Kyangwali to construct safe, dignified homes with sanitation facilities, including latrines, bathing shelters and water taps.
- **Training construction crews** on safe construction techniques.
- **Providing shelter designs** and information on local market supply.

Preventing the risk and spread of COVID-19

CRS and our partners will prevent the spread of COVID-19 by restricting large gatherings and increasing home visits, limiting construction crews to six people, disinfecting surfaces, ensuring unwell staff and participants stay home, and:

- **Providing hand-washing materials** and raising awareness on prevention and safe hygiene for refugee communities, service providers and all CRS and partner staff.
- **Incorporating intensive hand-washing** and social distancing in all program activities, including distributions, registrations, trainings and market fairs.

Providing water, sanitation and hygiene

CRS will work with local sanitation entrepreneurs and families to promote clean environments, including cleaning latrines and providing feminine hygiene products, and information on their proper use and care.

Supporting livelihoods

CRS and partners will help refugees and host community members restore their livelihoods by:

- **Organizing savings groups** for 2,160 people in Bidi Bidi and 1,212 people in Kyangwali.
- **Helping small-scale farmers**, and refugee and Ugandan business owners access markets and employment.
- **Training entrepreneurs** in business skills.

Promoting community ownership and engagement

CRS enables communities to develop their own solutions and encourages local ownership. We will ensure vulnerable refugees and host community members in Ugandan settlements are active participants in all programming. Families will use a digital system to select the type of support they need, adapting as their needs change with time. We will also establish community committees to design and monitor activities, and provide regular feedback. To further engage community members, CRS will create resource centers in the settlements to provide information and referrals, legal services, training and rental space for small business owners. The centers will also enable local government, partner agencies, non-profit organizations and the private sector to collaborate, integrate services and share information, including about issues related to COVID-19.

Homes of Peace

Annet's parents died from illness, leaving her to care for her siblings. When war broke out, Annet was forced to flee South Sudan. Her neighbors were being killed.

She embarked on a dangerous journey with her brothers and sisters, traveling by night to seek refuge in Uganda.

When they first arrived at Bidi Bidi, they stayed in a tent, which didn't protect them from rain. But then CRS helped them build a safe, secure home, and provided them with food and supplies.

"I am very happy that CRS built me a house," says Annet. "I can imagine being happy in this house."

The Legacy

CRS is helping thousands of people like Annet build a safe and healthy environment where they can thrive. But our reach does not end in Uganda. Through **Go FAR**, we will provide 1.5 million people around the world with safe and dignified homes, and help protect them from future crises. **It's what we should do. And we can.**

Learn More

about Annet's story:
crs.org/go-far-annet

