



PROGRAM SNAP SHOT

CRS' Farmer to Farmer Program: Building Agricultural Sector Competitiveness in East Africa

BACKGROUND

CRS is implementing a new five-year program to promote sustainable economic growth, food security and agricultural development in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Tanzania. CRS' Farmer-to-Farmer program sends U.S. volunteers with agricultural expertise to share skills and help build capacity for African farmers through short-term training and technical assistance projects.

Volunteer technical assistance from U.S. farmers, educators, agribusinesses, cooperatives, and universities helps developing countries improve productivity, access new markets, and conserve environmental and natural resources. Farmer-to-Farmer volunteers work with farmers, producer groups, rural businesses, and service providers to develop the local capacity necessary to increase food production and rural incomes, expand economic growth, and address environmental and natural resource management challenges. This people-to-people exchange promotes international goodwill, understanding of U.S. foreign assistance programs, and private involvement in development activities.

CRS' APPROACH

CRS has extensive experience in promoting sustainable economic growth, food security, and agricultural development worldwide. CRS' agricultural programs focus on:

Resilience

CRS promotes prosperous and resilient agricultural livelihoods, market-based recovery, and developing farmer skill sets to improve productivity and diversity, including value chains.

Capacity Building

CRS strengthens competitiveness in existing commercial value chains for specific commodities and helps protect development advances against the many shocks and stresses farmers face around the world.

Gender

CRS promotes the genuine participation of women, supporting more just and equitable livelihoods as well as other needs of female farmers.

Civil Society

CRS cultivates strong relationships across civil society and public and private sectors to "connect the dots" across a myriad of stakeholders—from local civil society partners and governments to small-scale farmers and international businesses.



CRS supports rural families in their bid to attain food security, achieve incremental gains in prosperity, and engage more effectively in markets through three stages:

Recover (Assets)

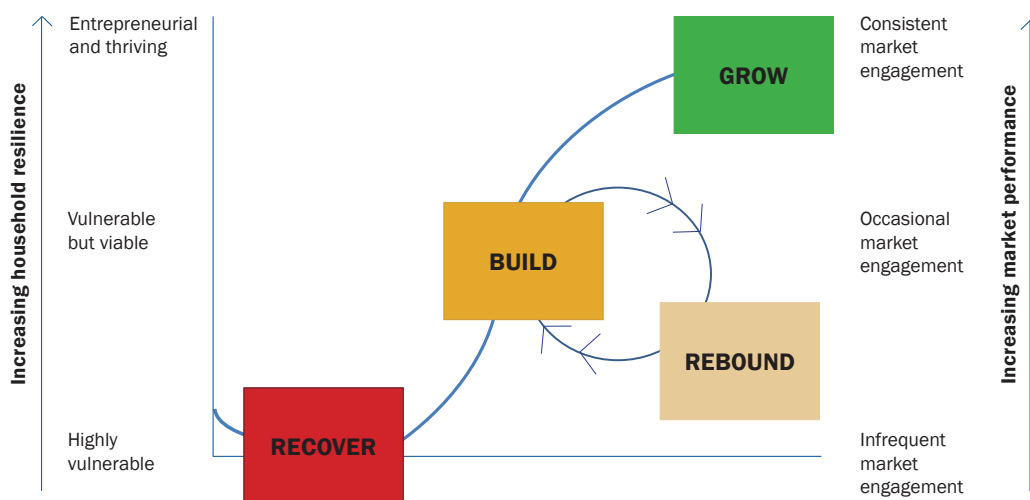
A market-oriented approach to post-disaster recovery and subsequent development of integrated sustainable seed systems for smallholders.

Build (Skills)

An integrated approach to skills development that enables smallholder farmers to engage successfully with markets

Grow (Services)

A tool-kit that facilitates and brokers the inclusion of organized smallholder farmers in value chains that connects them with modern markets.



PROGRAM REACH

As a new implementer of the 28 year old Farmer to Farmer Program (F2F), CRS will send US volunteers to almost 500 project assignments over the 5-year life of the project, to increase the productivity and marketing of key priority value chains, including livestock and grains, in line with USAID’s Feed the Future initiative. The program will benefit at least 350 host organizations, and train over 19,000 people, more than half of whom will be women. CRS has been in east Africa since 1965 and sees women as a growth engine for agriculture in the region.



A CRS farmer with his family’s goats outside his home in Nyeri, Kenya.

US PARTNERS

CRS is partnering with five U.S. institutions to enhance our reach into America’s diverse agriculture sector to recruit volunteers: the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Foods Resource Bank, National Association of Agricultural Educators, American Agri-Women and the University of Illinois, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Economics.

ABOUT CRS

Established in 1943, CRS is engaged in humanitarian relief and development efforts in nearly 100 countries worldwide. CRS works with partner organizations, strengthening their capacity to respond to emergencies, fight disease and poverty, nurture peaceful and just societies, and promote human development. Although our mission is rooted in the Catholic faith, our operations serve people based solely on need, regardless of their race, religion or ethnicity.

For more information, visit farmertofarmer.crs.org.

All photos by Sara A. Fajardo/CRS.