



TOMAK- FARMING FOR PROSPERITY (TIMOR-LESTE)

Expressions of Interest

Catholic Relief Services Timor-Leste

Organisation

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Organisation Profile

[Catholic Relief Services](#) (CRS) has over six decades of experience efficiently managing complex, food security and agricultural programs globally. CRS maintains a broad portfolio which includes agriculture and markets, nutrition, and local capacity strengthening. *In FY14, the total life value of CRS' food security and market based agriculture programs with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) alone was over USD 797 million.* CRS agriculture interventions have assisted over **one million farmers** and involved 132 practitioners across 12 countries to successfully engage farmers with markets. CRS supports over 70 nutrition-relevant projects worldwide, serving nearly **four million beneficiaries**, and explicitly links agriculture with nutrition through women's empowerment, water and sanitation, promotion of bio-fortified crops, home gardening and hermetic grain storage. Also, CRS' rich experience in developing partner capacity, with tools such as the *Institutional Strengthening Guide*, increases CRS' ability to implement high-quality programs through quality national organizations.

Summary of Relevant Experience

CRS has been engaged in Timor-Leste for over 35 years. Recent and current programs have focused on working in areas such as food security, agriculture, nutrition and peacebuilding in vulnerable communities in the Eastern Districts of Timor. CRS layers its projects for holistic implementation, overlapping nutrition, agriculture and livelihoods to build healthier and more resilient households.

CRS is currently implementing a World Bank administered project to change dietary habits of **5,500 pregnant and lactating women and 4,470 children** in 275 care groups located in 50 sucos of Baucau and Viqueque to reduce severe and chronic malnutrition. Through the use of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials developed in conjunction with DFAT, the Government of Timor-Leste, and UNICEF; CRS is creating a demand for a community driven nutrition program through extensive community consultations and information, education and communication on improved nutrition habits. CRS is sub-prime in a complementary USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) funded project in the same geographic areas will **teach 400 farming households how to build keyhole gardens**, catering to Timorese women's lifestyle restrictions through their proximity to the household and minimal watering time and care. CRS is also organizing and training keyhole garden farmers to form **120 savings groups with 2,400**



members in the Eastern Districts, providing loan access to stimulate small business development. Finally, CRS offers extensive technical support in maize production from planting to seed selection and post-harvest storage to farmers in Baucau, Viqueque and Lautem.

CRS has worked in value chain development through its Development of Candlenut Enterprises (DOCE) project in the eastern districts of Baucau, Lautem, and Viqueque. The project helped farmers improve production, post-harvest, and marketing practices; improve candlenut quality in line with market requirements; engage farmers in collective marketing; and expand production to meet demands. By the end of the project, **over 1,400 targeted households were selling an average of 522kg per year – representing a more-than-threefold increase in sales from baseline.** These figures represent an *annual household earning of \$835 in candlenut profit, 40% higher than the average (non-oil) per capita income in Timor-Leste.*

CRS closely implements its projects through local partner civil society organizations, including faith-based NGOs who build upon existing networks. CRS finds close accompaniment essential to quality implementation, and through doing so, systematically builds local partner capacity. CRS works jointly with local partners through strategic assessments, monitoring visits and action planning to improve financial reporting, establish performance planning, manage inventory and create policies for better accountability. During implementation CRS also accompanies partners to communities to ensure partners understand how to implement effectively. CRS works with partners to comply with donor regulations and are following national labour law and non-profit legal requirements. CRS has a particularly positive relationship with local faith-based institutions, which enjoy tremendous credibility and relevance at the community level on issues such as health and gender based violence.