Project Management Standards Summary

Acknowledgments

Catholic Relief Services is the official international humanitarian agency of the United States Catholic community. CRS' relief and development work is accomplished through programs of emergency response, HIV, health, agriculture, education, microfinance and peacebuilding. CRS eases suffering and provides assistance to people in need in more than 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality.

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Contents

Acronyms

APP	Annual Program Plan
BD	business development
CoP	chief of party
CP	country program
CR	country representative
DIP	detailed implementation plan
DRD/MQ	deputy regional director for management quality
DRD/PQ	deputy regional director for program quality
FM	finance manager
HOCAI	Holistic Organizational Capacity Assessment Instrument
HoOps	head of operations
HoP	head of programming
HQ	headquarters
HR	human resources
ICIP	Internal Control Improvement Plan
ICT	information and communications technology
IDEA	Institutional Donor Engagement and Advancement department
KPI	key performance indicator
RFO	regional finance officer
RTA	regional technical advisor
SMT	senior management team
SRFMP	Sub-Recipient Financial Management Policy
STA	senior technical advisor
TDY	temporary duty assignment

Introduction

Projects are at the core of CRS' mission to support vulnerable people around the world to meet their basic needs and positively transform their lives. As part of the global Church, CRS believes the social mission of the Church requires organization "if it is to be an ordered service to the community" (Deus Caritas Est, 2005, p. 20).

The quality of CRS' project management is connected to our guiding principles of a preferential option for the poor, subsidiarity and stewardship, as well as our accountability to the millions of people we and our partners serve around the world. Stewardship and accountability are also important to the donors who support our projects. In a funding environment of increasing complexity and competition, effective project management is critical to our ability to demonstrate good stewardship and secure new project funding.

We have developed these standards to improve our **project management**—so that irrespective of a project's size, context, focus, or funding, the CRS staff working on it can be sure they are doing the right things at the right time. This kind of consistency will not only make our projects more effective, but also make our project management more efficient, allowing us to deepen our focus on our mission.

Why does CRS need project management standards?

Although there is CRS and external guidance on the "how to" of project management (e.g., *ProPack II*, *A Guide to the PMD Pro*), before developing these standards, CRS had not clearly articulated what was expected—of whom and when—for project management to succeed. This has contributed to inconsistency and weaknesses in project management practice.

The CRS project management standards:

- **Define the "what" of project management** in CRS—the level that all CRS projects should meet and, whenever possible, exceed.
- **Identify a clear set of actions** that must be performed repeatedly in a common, consistent way across all CRS projects.
- **Provide an objective perspective** from which to assess project management performance and promote shared accountability for success.

"We live in a time that sets high standards for transparency with respect to governance and accountability within the Church and its development activities."

Caritas Internationalis
Management Standards

Glossary

A glossary on Page 27 covers key project-management-related terms.

Who is the audience of the project management standards?

The primary audience is all CRS staff who play a significant role in project design, start-up planning, implementation and close-out, namely:

Project and program managers, officers, and (deputy) chiefs of party (CoP) and other programming staff.[1] While the standards use only "project manager" and "CoP", these terms also encompass project director responsibilities.

Finance, human resources and other operations staff
Although they may not be full-time project staff, they are often involved in key project-related activities (e.g., financial, material, and human resource planning and management, partner capacity strengthening).

Business development (BD) and donor engagement staff as certain standards relate to ensuring projects meet donor expectations and requirements.

Country program senior management
The country representative (CR), heads of programming (HoP), and heads of operations (HoOps) —given their roles in leadership, partnership, donor engagement, and in creating an enabling environment for effective project management.

The standards intentionally promote cross-disciplinary collaboration among programming, finance, human resources (HR) and other operations staff. Experience shows that this collaboration is critical to project management success.

The standards include frequent reference to the project team, by which we mean all programming, finance and other operations staff with a specific responsibility within the project. The project manager or CoP leads this cross-disciplinary team, normally under the overall supervision of the HoP, who is also therefore part of the project team. For some projects, regional or headquarters staff might also be part of the team—for example, award management officers for certain U.S. Government grants, or technical advisors for projects with specific technical needs.

Our partner organizations are autonomous and thus **partners** are **not** a primary audience of the CRS project management standards, though CRS will use the standards and associated tools and guidance to work with partners interested in improving their own project management capacities. CRS will also make project management tools and guidance available to partners through the **Compass project management guidance website** and such platforms as the **CRS Institute for Capacity Strengthening**. CRS will promote linkages between these agency-specific standards and the Caritas Internationalis Management Standards.

> The standards intentionally promote cross-disciplinary collaboration among programming, finance, human resources and other operations staff.

Which projects do the standards apply to?

The CRS project management standards apply to **all** CRS development and emergency projects, regardless of project size, context, focus or funding source. In developing the standards, CRS has tried to "right-size," so that smaller projects can use the standards to achieve positive impact, but are not burdened with complex requirements.

The standards are written from the perspective of projects managed by individual country programs—which make up the vast majority of CRS projects. Nevertheless, they are also **applicable to projects that are managed regionally or by headquarters**. The teams responsible for such projects will need to tailor certain items to their specific situations, particularly timelines and people involved.

> CRS' **Compass website** includes a section on each project management key action page that highlights any special considerations when completing the key action in an emergency project, or in a project when CRS is a sub-recipient to another organization. For more on Compass, see page 5.

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1. Other programming staff include MEAL staff, partnership and capacity strengthening staff, and technical advisors.

Country program and regional management will play a key role in promoting the use of and shared accountability for the achievement of the standards across **all** projects.

What is not covered by the project management standards?

■ **Technical programming issues**. These are not technical programming standards for CRS projects. Rather, they focus on **project management** issues, which typically receive much less attention. CRS has extensive sector-specific and other program quality guidance that support technical design and activity implementation.

■ **All details of project management**. The standards do not attempt to address every aspect of project management. Instead, they focus on the most critical issues. Once our projects consistently meet or exceed these standards, we will refine the standards and integrate additional aspects of project management to aim for even greater improvement.

The project management standards and the CRS project management cycle

These standards were developed to highlight critical project management issues within four key **phases** in the CRS project management cycle:

Design

There is a clear relationship between a project's design and its successful management. The standards therefore include a set of items focused on specific design issues that have a significant impact on the project's implementation.[2] Keeping in mind the cross-disciplinary audience of the standards, the design-phase standards highlight for non-programming staff those design actions that require their leadership and participation, as well as the important role that partners play. These standards reinforce the *ProPack I* "standards of quality." Indeed, *ProPack I* is the primary key resource we cite in the design standards.

Start-up

Start-up is a critical, and often challenging, phase of the project cycle. When the start-up is poorly planned or executed, it affects the entire project. The standards focus attention on the this phase, and encourage a new understanding of "start-up," particularly for donor-funded projects. Too often, we wait until the donor has signed the donor agreement before initiating project start-up. As a result, many projects are "late out of the gate" and have trouble completing activities within the proposal schedule. While the timing of start-up will differ according to the specific funding opportunity and project context, the standards emphasize early, rapid start-up—complementing the emphasis in the design phase standards on developing activities schedules with realistic timeframes for project start-up.

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2. While some design standards touch on the "identify need and opportunity" and "submit proposal and secure funding" phases of the project cycle, the main emphasis is on the "design project" phase. We focus especially on critical elements of planning the design process to ensure a quality project and responsive proposal, and on cross-disciplinary collaboration to develop realistic and coherent activities schedules, staffing plans and budgets.

When does start-up start?

- For projects where there is a very **high win probability** (i.e., non-competitive, solicited proposals), start-up activities can begin shortly after proposal submission.
- For **competitive proposals**, certain start-up activities may begin prior to any formal notification from the donor if CRS is confident of winning or if other considerations necessitate initiating pre-notification start-up planning.
- For **highly competitive proposals** where our win probability is lower, start-up activities might begin only after formal notification from the donor of an intent to fund (i.e. during the award negotiation).

Implementation

With a solid design and rapid start-up, projects should begin the implementation phase with a strong chance of success. But dynamic emergency and development programming contexts can disrupt even the best-laid plans. The project management standards in the implementation phase focus on timely, evidence-based, cross-disciplinary management of project activities and resources, in close collaboration with our partners.
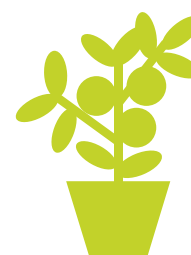
Close-out

Responsible project close-out is fundamental to our commitment to subsidiarity, accountability and stewardship—to partners, the people we serve and the donors who support our work. Close-out, like start-up, is a demanding process requiring advance planning. The standards for the close-out phase emphasize the importance of cross-disciplinary collaboration, along with accountability to partners and communities as projects come to an end. The close-out standards also highlight the need for appropriate close-out staffing, ensuring sustainability, and learning and leveraging as we, partners, beneficiaries and others reflect on the project's impact and management.

Standard 16: Accountable and timely project close-out

Standard 17: Managing human resource transitions responsibly during project close-out

Standard 18: Learning from and leveraging results during close-out

Standard 11: Evidence-based, action-oriented project management

Standard 12: Effective management of goods throughout the supply chain

Standard 13: Effective financial management during project implementation

Standard 14: Managing and developing human resources for quality project implementation

Standard 15: Engaging donors appropriately throughout implementation

DESIGN PROJECT

IDENTIFY NEED AND OPPORTUNITY

SUBMIT PROPOSAL AND SECURE FUNDING

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

CLOSE OUT PROJECT

START UP PROJECT

IMPLEMENT PROJECT

Standard 1: Effective planning for quality project design

Standard 2: Evidence-based, participatory design for project success

Standard 3: Accurate and cost-efficient proposal budgeting

Standard 4: Staffing for quality (technically sound, timely and effective) project management

Standard 5: Early engagement with donor to inform design

Standard 6: Early transition and start-up planning (including pre-award)

Standard 7: Realistic and participatory detailed implementation planning for program impact

Standard 8: Timely and comprehensive project financial set-up

Standard 9: Proactive recruitment and onboarding for timely start-up

Standard 10: Laying the foundations for effective donor engagement and accountability

Structure of the standards

Each standard follows the same format:

- The standard **number and title** summarizing the focus of the standard.
- A concise **standard statement**.
- A list of **key actions** (specific, practical steps—the "**what**") to achieve the standard. Each key action also includes the "**who**" and "**when**."

Each project will ultimately need to define the "who" and "when" more precisely based on the particular situation and the project or country program staffing. In the project management standards as well as on the Compass project management guidance website, we have identified the individuals typically involved in leading and supporting each key action. If a project or country program does not have a staff member with a particular job designation (such as BD), the responsibilities listed in the standards for that position must be assigned to another team member. Likewise, the "when" in the standards refers to the general timing in most circumstances. There are cases where circumstances or donor requirements may require different timelines, and project teams must adjust accordingly.

Within each of the phases, the standards and key actions are not in a specific order. Some actions must be performed at the same time as others. Be sure to check for such relationships before starting a particular key action. Each of the 18 standards with its associated key actions is summarized on a single page.

Compass project management guidance website

CRS has developed a project management guidance website to support staff in achieving the project management standards. The Compass website provides detailed "how-to" guidance for each of the 81 key actions in the project management standards. **The "guidance notes" included in the September 2016 release of the project management standards served as a starting point for Compass, but have now been replaced by the Compass key action guidance.** Compass now serves as the single reference point for guidance on achieving the CRS project management standards.

Each key action page in Compass covers the following:

- **Why** the key action is important for good project management
- **Who** the primary individual responsible for the achievement of that key action is, and who else is involved in carrying out the key action
- **When** CRS staff should carry out the key action
- **How** to complete the key action (specific steps)
- Any special considerations related to **partnership** and the key action
- Any special considerations about how or when to carry out the key action **when CRS is a sub-recipient**
- Any special considerations about how or when to carry out the key action in the context of an **emergency response**
- **Tools and templates** for the key actions that CRS staff can download, modify as necessary and applicable, and use to carry out the "how" steps
- Which CRS **policies and procedures** relate to the key action (with links to these policies)
- Links to **other resources** that may be helpful to consult in carrying out the key action

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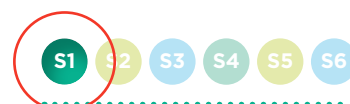
When using this PDF document and the Compass website, navigate between the standards by clicking on the buttons at the top of each page. The button of the standard you are on will be highlighted. In the PDF, return to the contents page by clicking the "home" icon on the top right of each page. Click the "glossary" icon to look up a term.
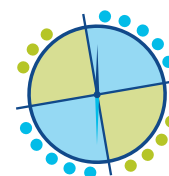
Compass now serves as the single reference point for guidance on achieving the CRS project management standards.

Categories for the project management standards

Within the four project cycle phases described above, the standards are organized in four categories:

- Operations and program planning and management
- Financial management
- Human resource management
- Donor engagement and accountability.

These categories **do not** correspond to specific types of jobs: as explained above, the standards are designed to promote cross-disciplinary coordination. Rather, the categories structure the standards around key components of project management.

Operations and program planning and management

This set of standards centers on management of the "nuts and bolts" of projects to ensure accountability and positive impact for the people CRS and our partners serve. Standards and key actions under this category also include communication and engagement with local government and other community stakeholders.

The standards and key actions in this category focus on project team engagement in realistic design-phase planning, comprehensive planning at start-up and close-out, and adaptive program management during implementation to keep projects on time, on scope and on budget.

Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning, or MEAL, is a critical part of project management, and is integrated across the standards in this category as well as standards under the "Donor engagement and accountability" category.

Financial management

The financial management standards focus on ensuring that **all** project team members involved in project budgeting and budget management have an understanding of the expectations and requirements for effective budget management. The financial management standards involve programming, operations (particularly supply chain) and finance department staff, as well as country program leadership. A particular emphasis of these standards is to establish clarity in project financial management roles, responsibilities and processes, and ensure that accurate project financial information is available for analysis and use in project management decision-making.
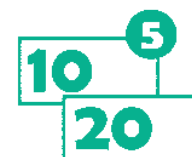
Human resource management

CRS and partner staffing is often the single largest project expense. Many project management challenges and risks are directly related to human resources—specifically, not having the right people in the right place at the right time. The standards in this category highlight the need for support for proper staffing planning during project design, proactive and strategic recruitment and onboarding during start-up, and effective human resource management during implementation and through the end of the project, when staffing transitions can harm close-out.

The standards promote responsive human resource management by both CRS and its partners, and include performance management, staff development and staff care.

Donor engagement and accountability

While CRS has a strong base of individual donors, on average, 70 percent of CRS' operating revenue still comes from public and private institutional donors.[3] Therefore, the CRS project management standards include a specific category focused on engagement with and accountability to institutional donors.[4]

The donor engagement and accountability standards build on the understanding that CRS needs to cultivate donor relationships long before we design a proposal or implement a project. Strong relationships with donors increase the likelihood that we can secure funding for the kinds of projects that we know will have impact, and help us advocate with donors for a realistic project scope, budget and timeframe. Strong relationships also help CRS manage projects more effectively: when we have the donor's confidence, it is much easier to make evidence-based adjustments.

The standards in this category are relevant for **all** institutional donor-funded projects,[5] and are applicable to **all** staff involved in donor engagement and accountability. Specific CRS headquarters staff are responsible for centrally managed donor relationships, while senior field staff are responsible for representing CRS and individual projects with local donor offices. But a wide range of other staff and partners are also involved in donor engagement and accountability—each communication and every interaction with a donor influences the donor's understanding and perception of CRS and our partners.

Other documents and guidance, particularly from CRS' Institutional Donor Engagement and Advancement, or IDEA, department, give details on how to position CRS with donors, and how to identify and prepare for competitive funding opportunities.

The project management standards focus more narrowly on critical aspects of donor engagement and accountability that affect the quality of projects and CRS' effectiveness in managing them, namely:

- Engaging the donor early and often to positively influence the funding opportunity
- Ensuring that staff—both CRS and partner—comply with donor requirements
- Drawing on ongoing projects to highlight CRS and our partners' strengths and added value

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3. Per CRS annual reports, FY13 through FY17.
4. As noted earlier, the standards are applicable to all projects, irrespective of funding source. Achievement of the project management standards will therefore enhance CRS' stewardship of project resources from individual donors as well as institutional donors.
5. Several key actions under the donor engagement and accountability category are also relevant to projects funded with discretionary (allocation) resources. An example is developing a project-specific donor engagement plan (see Standard 10). Such a plan can be used to leverage a privately funded project to establish or strengthen CRS' position with institutional donors.

Partnership and the CRS project management standards

Partnership is fundamental to how CRS sees itself in the world. We believe that change occurs through our local partners. By sustaining and strengthening local institutions, our partners enhance a community's ability to respond to its own problems. In recognition of the fact that the projects we support are generally implemented with and through partners, partnership-related actions are an integral part of these standards.

CRS strives for partnerships founded on a long-term vision and a mutual commitment to peace, justice and social change. Our commitment to subsidiarity and investment in our strategic partner relationships transcends projects. The project management standards build on the understanding that partnership and strengthening partner capacity are ongoing processes that occur throughout the project cycle as well as outside of projects. Our ability to achieve the project management standards will only be strengthened by these investments.

Some key actions in the project management standards refer to broader partnership-strengthening activities (e.g., annual reflections and use of the Partnership Scorecard). However, most partnership-related actions in the standards focus on project management-specific issues and capacity strengthening activities directly related to them.

Partnership-related actions are included under all four categories described above, and take into account the diversity of CRS partnerships. For example, key actions under the financial management standards emphasize the importance of partner involvement in project budget development and management, and CRS' accompaniment of partners to support their financial management.

Partners also appear as part of the "who" in many key actions, again reflecting the importance of partnership in CRS project management.

In recognition of the central role partners play in CRS project management, each key action page on the **Compass** project management guidance website includes a section on partnership considerations related to that specific key action.

For questions on partnership and partner capacity strengthening issues that are not addressed in the standards, please refer to CRS' partnership resources, including those available via the **Institute for Capacity Strengthening**.

Phase: Design

CATEGORY: OPERATIONS AND PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

STANDARD 1: Effective planning for quality project design.
Establish a robust proposal development team and a realistic timeline that follows standard CRS guidance for project design and ensures partner collaboration and support in the design process.

KEY ACTIONS

1	Form a qualified and experienced team to design the project and develop the proposal.
Who	Country representative, head of programming, head of operations, country program business development staff (as applicable), regional business development staff, deputy regional directors
When	■ For external funding opportunities: Before or as part of making the "go" decision ■ For discretionary-funded projects: When the decision is made to develop a new project
2	Make partnering decisions based on partner capacity and performance, what each can contribute, the proposal guidelines, and the operational and competitive environment.
Who	Proposal decision-maker; country representative, if not the proposal decision-maker; proposal coordinator or capture planning manager; other proposal development team members; senior management team; senior program and operations staff; IDEA staff
When	■ Well before developing a new project
3	Develop and implement a bridge staffing plan to ensure current activities are properly managed while the new proposal is being developed.
Who	Senior management team members and any other supervisors of proposal development team members; proposal coordinator; proposal development team members; proposal decision-maker; TDY staff or other program and operations staff providing coverage
When	■ For external funding opportunities: Ideally during capture planning for opportunities CRS is tracking. For unexpected opportunities, within 1 week of the "go" decision. ■ For discretionary-funded projects: As necessary
4	Plan a participatory process: Working backward from the submission deadline, develop a realistic timeline for designing a quality project and writing a responsive proposal.
Who	Proposal coordinator, proposal development team members, partners
When	■ For external funding opportunities: Develop the timeline and proposal checklist as soon as possible and no more than 3 days after the "go" decision ■ For discretionary-funded projects: Develop the timeline as a first step after deciding to develop a new project
5	Confirm that funding is available to cover the project design and proposal development costs.
Who	Proposal decision-maker, proposal development team members, finance manager, proposal decision-maker, country representative
When	■ In parallel with preparing the proposal development timeline detailing project design and proposal development steps ■ Ideally, before the funding opportunity is released; otherwise within 3 days of the "go" decision

Phase: Design

CATEGORY: OPERATIONS AND PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Standard 2: Evidence-based, participatory design for project success.
Employ evidence-based, participatory processes to design a project that can deliver high-quality results on time, on scope and on budget.

KEY ACTIONS

1	**Determine the project scale and scope based on evidence and experience.**
Who	Proposal technical lead; proposal development team including partners; technical advisors and proposal reviewers; proposal decision-maker; head of operations and/or procurement or supply chain manager; reviewers; regional business development staff and IDEA staff
When	■ As early as possible in the design process, with adjustments as necessary based on new or updated information
2	**Include partners in key decision-making including on technical design, project activities schedule, partner scopes of work, and project management structures.**
Who	Proposal coordinator; proposal technical lead; proposal budget lead; other proposal development team members; proposal decision-maker; partner proposal development team and partner leadership; finance manager and/or head of operations
When	■ Throughout project design
3	**Build sufficient time into the project activities schedule for start-up, scale-up and close-out.**
Who	Proposal technical lead; other proposal development team members including the proposal coordinator, budget and human resources leads, and any other operations leads and key partner staff; head of operations; procurement and supply chain manager; other subject-matter experts; IDEA staff (as applicable)
When	■ During project activities schedule planning
4	**Solicit feedback and guidance on the feasibility and consistency of technical design, staffing and management plans, supply chain plans and budget.**
Who	Proposal coordinator; designated reviewers (program, finance and other operations) from the country program, region and global/HQ, where relevant; proposal development team members
When	■ At all review stages, including concept note and full proposal

Phase: Design

CATEGORY: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

> **Standard 3: Accurate and cost-efficient proposal budgeting.**
> Develop an accurate and cost-efficient proposal budget including a budget narrative based on project activities and timeline, and in accordance with CRS policies and donor requirements.

KEY ACTIONS

1	**Establish amounts for indirect and allocated direct costs, and identify potential high-level budget constraints and decisions so the proposal development team can begin budgeting for direct-direct costs ("back of the envelope" calculation).**
Who	Proposal budget lead and country representative; finance manager (FM); proposal coordinator; other proposal development team members
When	■ For proposals for external funding: Initial "back of the envelope" calculation within 2 to 3 days of a final "go" decision, followed by more detailed budget determinations and planning ■ For discretionary funded projects: As soon as CRS has identified a general project funding amount
2	**Develop a detailed budget and budget narrative in line with the project activities schedule and staffing plan, and adjust as necessary.**
Who	Proposal budget lead; proposal coordinator; other proposal development team members (e.g., technical, MEAL and human resources leads); finance manager, if not the budget lead; head of operations; country representative and senior management team; partner budget lead(s); proposal decision-maker; regional finance officer; IDEA staff
When	■ According to the proposal development timeline; finalize by deadline in the timeline
3	**Decide on partner sub-awards, including the award type, based on the donor's regulations and the partners' capacity and proposed project responsibilities.**
Who	Proposal decision-maker; country representative, if not the proposal decision-maker; proposal coordinator; senior management team, especially the head of operations and head of programming; subject-matter experts from IDEA, as applicable; partner leadership
When	■ As early as possible in the proposal development process
4	**Work with partners to develop detailed budgets and budget narratives in line with the project activities schedule and staffing plan, and adjust as necessary.**
Who	CRS proposal budget lead; CRS proposal technical lead; CRS proposal coordinator; CRS finance manager; partner's budget lead and other partner proposal development team members; CRS head of operations; CRS proposal MEAL lead and any sector leads; CRS proposal decision-maker or country representative
When	■ According to the proposal timeline; finalize by deadline in plan

Phase: Design

CATEGORY: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Standard 4: Staffing for quality (technically sound, timely and effective) project management.
Plan for an adequate complement of CRS and partner staff for quality project management.

KEY ACTIONS

1	Jointly determine an appropriate project staffing structure, position descriptions, and profiles needed at CRS and partner levels.
Who	Proposal human resources lead; proposal coordinator; proposal decision-maker; senior management team; country program human resources staff; proposal development team, including proposal coordinator and technical lead; IDEA staff; partner senior leadership; technical advisors; finance manager and/or head of operations
When	■ Organize the initial discussion during capture planning (as possible, for competitive opportunities) or the project design workshop ■ Refine plans as early as possible during post-design workshop planning and budgeting
2	**Make a start-up staffing plan and budget.**
Who	Proposal decision-maker; proposal team human resources lead; country representative and senior management team; human resources manager; head of operations; finance manager; head of programming; proposal technical lead and coordinator; partner senior leadership; regional management team, as necessary
When	■ During project design ■ Update the plan as necessary in early start-up
3	**Proactively recruit for key personnel/project leadership positions.**
Who	Hiring manager; proposal team human resources lead; country program human resources manager; headquarters talent acquisition specialist; proposal coordinator; country representative and/or another member of the senior management team, as necessary
When	■ For competitive funding opportunities: Ideally during capture planning; initiate recruitment at latest within 1 week of the "go" decision ■ For other proposals: As early as possible during the proposal development process

Phase: Design

CATEGORY: DONOR ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Standard 5: Early engagement with donor to inform design.
Engage donors prior to and (as possible) during project design and proposal development to encourage a manageable and realistic project scope, budget and timeline in line with donor priorities.

KEY ACTIONS

1	Engage with donors to guide funding to sound projects that meet priority needs of those CRS seeks to serve.
Who	Country representative or IDEA staff (for centrally managed donor relationships); head of programming; project managers/chiefs of party; senior managers and technical advisors (regional and headquarters, including from the Humanitarian Response Department); country program and regional business development staff; headquarters advocacy staff
When	■ Ongoing
2	Engage in capture planning for specific funding opportunities, including efforts to influence the call for proposals.
Who	Capture planning manager; country representative or delegate; regional business development staff; head of programming; project managers/chiefs of party; IDEA staff; country program senior management team; technical advisors; human resources manager; headquarters human resources staff, as necessary
When	■ When CRS has determined that a prospective funding opportunity is of interest
3	Take advantage of opportunities to influence, clarify and provide feedback on the donor's priorities for a specific funding opportunity.
Who	Country representative or delegate; proposal coordinator; head of programming; IDEA staff; proposal development team members; regional and country program business development staff; project managers/chiefs of party; country program, regional and/or HQ technical advisors, as applicable; partner leadership and partner proposal development team members
When	■ Throughout the process of preparing for a specific funding opportunity ■ During proposal development (as permitted)
4	Ensure that the project activities schedule, staffing plan and budget take into account the donor's decision-making processes and timelines, as well as compliance considerations.
Who	Proposal coordinator; proposal development team (technical, human resources and budget leads); field and headquarters procurement and supply chain management staff; field and headquarters risk and compliance staff; IDEA staff
When	■ During capture planning and project design
5	Respond to donor feedback and questions on the proposal promptly and professionally.
Who	Proposal coordinator (or other individual identified by the country representative); country representative; country program business development staff; members of the proposal development team; country program senior management team; regional business development staff; IDEA staff, as applicable; and technical advisors, as necessary
When	■ Depending on the donor's timeline

Phase: Start-up

CATEGORY: OPERATIONS AND PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Standard 6: Early transition and start-up planning (including pre-award).
Transition from the design/proposal team to the project start-up team and plan and conduct early start-up activities.

KEY ACTIONS

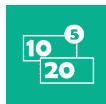| 1	Document the rationale behind the project design and budget decisions to facilitate start-up and handover to the project start-up team.
Who	Proposal transition manager, proposal development team members
When	■ Throughout proposal development process with final documentation compiled immediately after proposal submission ■ Update documentation as necessary during donor review and final notification
2	**Develop CRS and partner-level plans and budgets for early start-up activities.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; key operations and program staff from the proposal development team and any project staff available at the time of plan development; country representative and other members of the CRS senior management team; staff from each partner/consortium organization
When	■ No later than 1 month before the anticipated project start date ■ Earlier for larger, more complex and other strategic projects ■ As soon as possible for emergency projects
3	**Organize CRS and partner-level internal handover from the proposal team to the start-up/implementation team.**
Who	Proposal transition manager and project manager/chief of party; members of the proposal development team and start-up/implementation team
When	■ Handover briefing: In the first week of the project manager's onboarding ■ Handover meeting: Prior to the project design validation meeting and start-up workshop and as soon as possible following project approval once key members of the start-up/implementation team are in place
4	**Conduct partner capacity assessments and prepare for capacity strengthening.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party or other individual trained in CRS' approach to partner capacity assessment; staff with partnership and capacity strengthening expertise from the country program, region or headquarters; country representative and senior management team; technical advisors and subject-matter experts from programming, finance and other operations
When	■ Follow schedule laid out in the early start-up plan; conduct the assessment by the end of the first quarter at the latest
5	**Set up an appropriate project governance structure.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; country representative; country program senior management team; partner senior leadership; other stakeholders, as appropriate
When	■ Set up the governance structure so that it is operational within the first month after project approval • For externally funded projects: Set up the structure no later than 3 weeks after learning of the donor's intent to fund • For other projects: Within 3 weeks of project start-up

Phase: Start-up

CATEGORY: OPERATIONS AND PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Standard 7: Realistic and participatory detailed implementation planning for program impact.
Develop, jointly with partners, an evidence-based detailed implementation plan that includes programmatic, financial, procurement, logistics and donor engagement activities.

KEY ACTIONS

1	Validate key project design decisions based on an updated review of the project operating context (risks, issues and opportunities).
Who	Project manager/chief of party, if part of the design process, or other designated individual with a thorough understanding of the project design; members of the project design/proposal development team; all available CRS and partner members of the project start-up/implementation team; head of programming and head of operations, if not part of the proposal development team; country representative; technical advisors, as necessary
When	■ The operating context review and validation process always takes place before detailed implementation planning ■ For most projects, operating context review and validation can be incorporated into the start-up workshop ■ For projects where there have been significant changes in the operating context and/or where CRS anticipates making changes to the project, organizing an operating context review and validation event before the start-up workshop may be needed
2	Organize a start-up workshop to orient the project team, partner staff and key stakeholders to the project design and compliance requirements.
Who	Project manager/chief of party; head of programming; head of operations; senior operations staff; MEAL staff; regional or HQ staff who may play a specific role in the project (e.g., IDEA staff, or an HQ or regional program and/or operations advisor); CRS and partner project team members

When	■ Per the timing in the early start-up plan and per any donor requirements. Generally:
	  • For projects shorter than 12 months: In the first month
	  • For projects longer than 12 months: In the first quarter
	  • For emergency projects: As soon as possible

3	Update/refine the proposal activities schedule to develop a comprehensive detailed implementation plan for the first year of the project.
Who	Project manager/chief of party; CRS and partner programming and operations staff; CRS and partner senior management, especially for large, complex, or otherwise strategic projects; technical advisors and deputy regional directors, as applicable

When	■ Per the timeline developed in the early start-up plan and any donor requirements. Generally:
	  • For projects shorter than 12 months: In the first month
	  • For projects longer than 12 months: In the first quarter
	  • For emergency projects: As soon as possible

4	Develop the project MEAL system.
Who	MEAL coordinator and project manager or chief of party; CRS and partner project team members (including CRS and partner project MEAL staff); ICT4D and supply chain management staff, as required; additional CRS MEAL staff from the country program, region and HQ, as necessary
When	■ Within the first 3 months of project start

Phase: Start-up

CATEGORY: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

> **Standard 8: Timely and comprehensive project financial set-up.**
> Set up a project financial management system based on updated activity plans that supports a quick start-up and effective financial management throughout the project.

KEY ACTIONS

1	**Review the draft donor agreement to make sure that CRS can meet the donor's financial requirements.**
Who	Head of operations, or finance manager if there is no HoOps; IDEA staff for centrally signed agreements; finance manager and other relevant subject-matter experts, depending on the award and as required by the Agreement Process Map; deputy regional director for management quality (DRD MQ), or the IDEA staff's supervisor; agreement owner; and regional finance officer, if requested by the DRD MQ
When	■ Immediately after the donor shares the draft agreement
2	**Work with partners to assess their financial management capacity and develop improvement plans.**
Who	Head of operations; project manager/chief of party; finance manager or other assigned finance or compliance staff; head of programming or other assigned programming staff; country representative
When	■ For new sub-recipients or other sub-recipients requiring an updated assessment: Conduct sub-recipient financial management assessments before preparing the sub-recipient agreement ■ Assessments may be conducted during the design stage. If assessments were not completed during the design phase, complete the assessment(s) in the pre-award start-up period if possible.
3	**Refine the project budget based on changes in the operating context and detailed implementation planning, including all program and operations activities.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; finance manager and/or finance officer or accountant; head of operations; supply chain management staff including procurement, as necessary; human resources; and CRS partners
When	■ For budget refinements related to the operational context: Shortly after project approval and before detailed budget entry ■ For budget refinements related to detailed activity planning: Immediately after the DIP development
4	**Enter the budget into the financial system in a way that facilitates analysis and reporting.**
Who	Budget manager, finance manager, head of programming, head of operations, regional staff
When	■ Immediately after signing the agreement or receiving a pre-award letter, with updated budgets entered at the beginning of each subsequent fiscal year
5	**Review and document project-specific financial management requirements, roles and responsibilities.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; head of operations; head of programming; finance manager and other finance staff assigned to the project; other project staff with specific financial management responsibilities
When	■ After completion of the handover from the proposal development team to the project start-up/implementation team, but before project implementation begins; ideally before the project start-up workshop
6	**Work with partners to set up project-specific financial management and reporting processes, formats and schedules, and orient partner staff on them.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; finance manager and/or other assigned finance staff; partner staff; regional finance officer and/or deputy regional director for management quality, if necessary; IDEA staff, as applicable
When	■ As part of signing sub-agreements and prior to transferring project funds to partners; early in the start-up phase if partners are scheduled to implement activities in the first few months of the project ■ For externally funded projects: Start the process upon receipt of the draft donor agreement

Phase: Start-up

CATEGORY: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Standard 9: Proactive recruitment and onboarding for timely start-up.
Staff the project in time with the right people using recruitment and orientation best practices.

KEY ACTIONS

1	**Make sure there are staff in place for project start-up.**
Who	Head of programming; HR manager; project manager/chief of party or acting project manager; deputy regional directors for program quality and management quality; head of operations; country representative
When	■ For competitive proposals with a high win probability, initiate planning for start-up staffing within 2 weeks of proposal submission, and finalize the plan upon receiving notification of the donor's intent to fund the project ■ For other competitive proposals, initiate planning as soon as there is an indication of a potential win
2	**Ensure that project human resources plans and contract arrangements conform with local labor laws, industry best practices, CRS policies and current market analysis.**
Who	HR manager or officer, project manager/chief of party, headquarters HR department
When	■ As part of the start-up recruitment processes ■ For externally funded projects, begin the process (e.g., adapt contract templates) as soon as CRS receives notification of the donor's intent to fund the project
3	**Make sure all proposed project positions for CRS and partners have clear job descriptions.**
Who	HR manager or officer (for national staff) and HQ talent acquisition specialist (for international staff); hiring manager; project manager/chief of party (for positions for which the project manager is not the hiring manager); country representative or delegated approver

When	■ Externally funded projects:
	  • For proposals with a high win probability: Develop/finalize any job descriptions for staff not designated as key personnel or project leadership shortly after proposal submission
	  • For other proposals: Develop/finalize job descriptions as soon as there is an indication of a win
	■ Discretionary funded projects: Develop/finalize job descriptions during early start-up

4	**Proactively recruit for positions based on the project needs and on CRS and industry best practices.**
Who	Hiring manager, HR manager or officer or headquarters talent-acquisition specialist; head of programming; head of operations; country representative and senior management team members, as necessary
When	■ Proposals with a high win probability: Begin recruiting for remaining project positions within 2 weeks of submitting the proposal ■ Other competitive proposals: As soon as there is an indication of a potential win ■ Discretionary funded projects: In the early start-up period, so that qualified staff are in place in time for the official project start date
5	**Provide new project staff with comprehensive onboarding.**
Who	Supervisor, project manager/chief of party and other key staff identified by supervisor
When	■ Within first 6 months (for all project staff); ideally faster for existing CRS staff ■ Emergencies: Reduce the onboarding timeframe to a few days or 1 week maximum

Phase: Start-up

CATEGORY: DONOR ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Standard 10: Laying the foundations for effective donor engagement and accountability.
Lay the foundations for successful donor engagement throughout the project.

KEY ACTIONS

1	Review the draft donor agreement in line with CRS policies and local laws, and negotiate any adjustments needed.
Who	Agreement owner. See the Agreement Process Map in the Agreements Policy & Procedure for other roles involved
When	■ As soon as CRS receives the draft donor agreement ■ Per the Agreements Policy & Procedure, use this guidance for agreement modifications/amendments
2	**Orient CRS and partner staff on the donor requirements.**
Who	Head of operations; head of programming; project manager/chief of party; IDEA staff; CRS and partner project team (programming and operations); CRS and partner senior management
When	■ During the start-up workshop and as part of support to partners with project financial set-up ■ During onboarding, especially for staff hired after the start-up workshop
3	**Develop project templates that support compliance with donor and grant requirements.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; head of operations; MEAL staff; finance manager or designate; risk and compliance staff; supply chain management staff, as applicable; information and communication technology staff; IDEA staff (for centrally funded awards); CRS and partner project staff
When	Finalize templates before the submission of the first report(s) or any other early deliverable, generally: • For projects shorter than 12 months: In the first month • For projects longer than 12 month: In the first quarter • For emergency projects: As soon as possible
4	**Prepare a plan on how to engage with the donor(s) during the project (influence, communication, marketing).**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; CRS and partner project team; country representative and senior management team; country program and/or regional business development staff; IDEA staff; country program communications staff; and Marketing and Communications (MarCom), where applicable
When	■ For development projects: In the first quarter (with ongoing updates) ■ For emergency projects: Within the first month
5	**Submit high-quality start-up deliverables to the donor on time.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; project team, including program, operations and senior management team, and IDEA staff, as applicable; regional technical advisor for MEAL
When	■ Per donor requirements (as summarized in the project Award Management Deliverables Calendar)

Phase: Implementation

CATEGORY: OPERATIONS AND PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Standard 11: Evidence-based, action-oriented project management.
Make collaborative, timely and informed decisions to ensure that project activities deliver intended impact to beneficiaries within the approved time, scope and budget.

KEY ACTIONS

1	Promote and facilitate intentional project reflection, learning and adaptation.
Who	Project manager/chief of party; head of programming; country representative; CRS and partner project team; technical advisors (country program, regional and global); country program and regional business development staff; IDEA staff; Program Impact and Quality Assurance communications team
When	■ Ongoing throughout project implementation ■ Aim to hold at least one high-level project learning event per year

2	Identify and address project implementation issues and risks in a timely manner.
Who	Project manager/chief of party; CRS and partner project staff (program and operations); country program senior management team; members of the project governance structure
When	■ Throughout project implementation • Use regular project team meetings to identify and analyze new risks and issues, and to review the status of critical issues and risks requiring active management. • Use quarterly and annual planning and review meetings to comprehensively review project risks and issues

3	Collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative monitoring data and community feedback relevant to project decision-making and learning needs.
Who	Project MEAL coordinator (i.e. MEAL officer) and project manager or chief of party; partner MEAL and programming staff; project sector leads; other CRS project team members (program and operations, especially any sector leads)
When	■ Ongoing throughout project implementation

4	Organize cross-disciplinary, evidence-based project review and planning meetings, in line with CRS MEAL policies and procedures.
Who	Project manager/chief of party and project MEAL coordinator; CRS and partner project team members (program and operations); sectoral technical advisors; country program senior management team and partner senior management, as necessary; any other members of the project governance structure
When	■ Quarterly (or other regular frequency) review and planning meetings: Organize 1- to 3-day meetings focused on lower-level project results, community feedback and changes in context, to inform quarterly planning and reporting ■ Annual review and planning meetings: Organize 3- to 5-day meetings focused on higher-level project results, progress and lessons learned, to inform strategic decisions and longer-term planning, and update the MEAL system as necessary

5	Proactively manage and review partner relationships.
Who	Project manager/chief of party; programming staff, including partnership point person (if one exists) and other project staff (project officers, project assistants); finance and other operations staff; country representative; head of programming; head of operations
When	■ Ongoing throughout project implementation ■ Annually for Partnership Scorecard and Partnership Reflections (as necessary and agreed upon)

Phase: Implementation

CATEGORY: OPERATIONS AND PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Standard 12: Effective management of goods throughout the supply chain.
Manage the supply chain effectively and efficiently, through close collaboration among program, finance and other operations teams, to source, store, maintain and deliver project goods either to beneficiaries or for internal consumption.

KEY ACTIONS

1	Collaboratively update and execute supply chain management plans in line with project objectives and the DIP.
Who	Supply chain manager or equivalent, project manager/chief of party, supply chain staff, finance manager, project staff, partner staff
When	■ Ongoing, throughout implementation, cyclically with monitoring of supply chain
2	Monitor implementation of supply chain activities to share key information with stakeholders and make improvements where needed.
Who	Supply chain manager, supply chain staff, MEAL coordinator, project manager/chief of party, finance manager, partners
When	■ Monitor supply chain KPIs on an ongoing basis, with quarterly analysis and decision-making on performance improvement ■ Monitor supply-chain-related data within the project MEAL system per the frequency established in the project MEAL plan and operating manual

Phase: Implementation

CATEGORY: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Standard 13: Effective financial management during project implementation.
Achieve financial consistency, accountability and stewardship through adequate, continuous financial planning, monitoring, controls and reporting.

KEY ACTIONS

1	**Prepare annual and quarterly financial projections based on the updated detailed implementation plan.**
Who	Budget manager, procurement/supply chain staff, human resources staff, finance manager, head of operations, head of programming, country representative
When	■ Prepare annual budget projections: • During development of the Annual Program Plan (APP) • Over the course of the year, for carry-over funds, and for awards/modifications and other spending authorizations or reallocation of resources that are received and were not anticipated in budgets ■ Finalize quarterly forecast projections per the annual agency planning calendar
2	**Analyze monthly budget/forecast comparison and aging reports to review spending against the detailed implementation plan, and make decisions accordingly.**
Who	Budget manager, finance manager, other members of the project programming team, head of programming, head of operations, country representative
When	■ Monthly, with budget comparison and aging reports circulated within 5 days of month-end financial close. ■ Quarterly reviews coincident with re-forecasts are also opportunities for financial analysis and decision-making
3	**Monitor sub-recipients' finances, and accompany partners to implement financial management capacity strengthening plans.**
Who	Head of operations or operations manager; finance manager or designated finance staff; project manager/chief of party or designate
When	■ Per the requirements in the Sub-Recipient Financial Management Policy (SRFMP) and individual partners' Internal Control Improvement Plans (ICIPs)
4	**Prepare financial reports that reflect all project expenditures in the financial system, for project manager review and submission to donors as required.**
Who	Finance manager or HQ Overseas Finance staff; project manager/chief of party; head of programming; IDEA staff, if applicable; HQ Overseas Finance grants analyst; senior management team
When	■ As requested by the PM/CoP based on donor deadlines ■ See Standard 16 for information on project **final** financial reports
5	**Ensure timely project advances and review of partners' liquidation reports, documenting and providing feedback on good practices and needs for improvement.**
Who	Project manager; finance manager or other designated finance staff; country representative or designate
When	■ Following the first project advance, advances should be issued within 15 calendar days from receipt of the partner's liquidation report (see Sub-Recipient Financial Management Policy)

Phase: Implementation

CATEGORY: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Standard 14: Managing and developing human resources for quality project implementation.
Manage project human resources proactively through quality supervision, rigorous performance and development planning, and assessment and timely action to address staffing needs.

KEY ACTIONS

1	**Provide performance management support to project team staff according to their responsibilities and priorities.**
Who	Supervisor; country representative and senior management team; project manager/chief of party and other project team members (programming, finance and other operations)
When	■ Ongoing throughout implementation with key activities based on the CRS performance management calendar
2	**Identify gaps in staff skills in project management, and develop and implement plans to address them.**
Who	Supervisors; project team members (programming, finance and other operations); technical advisors; country representative and senior management team; project manager/chief of party
When	■ Annually, with regular check-ins throughout implementation
3	**Prioritize staff care and support to encourage retention and project team continuity.**
Who	Supervisors; project manager/chief of party; country representative and senior management team; human resources manager or officer
When	■ Ongoing, but particularly at times of stress such as around major deadlines or project events
4	**Monitor project staffing needs and act proactively to minimize gaps.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; other supervisors; HR manager and/or officer; senior management team
When	■ Ongoing, with periodic formal meetings as required
5	**Support partners to strengthen human resource management and systems.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party and, as possible, a staff member with a background in human resources; CRS and partner human resources managers
When	■ Ongoing, based on identified needs in the partner capacity assessment using CRS' Holistic Organizational Capacity Assessment Instrument (HOCAI)

Phase: Implementation

CATEGORY: DONOR ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Standard 15: Engaging donors appropriately throughout implementation.
Engage with donors throughout project implementation to ensure accountability and compliance and to strengthen donor relationships.

KEY ACTIONS

1	Ensure that regular program, finance and other operations compliance checks are conducted throughout the project lifespan.
Who	Project manager/chief of party; project/country program risk and compliance staff (if part of project/country program staffing); finance manager; head of operations; head of programming; MEAL staff; supply chain management staff; other programming and operations staff; IDEA staff for centrally funded projects; global and regional risk and compliance staff; partner leadership and project staff
When	■ Continually, as per the project detailed implementation plan and supply chain management plans as well as the sub-recipient financial management policy, project reporting cycles and donor regulations as stipulated in the project agreement
2	**Communicate changes and risks to donor in a timely manner, and seek donor approval where necessary.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; country representative; senior management team; IDEA staff; members of the project governance structure
When	■ As required throughout the project, per reporting timeframes established by the donor, and particularly at reporting times
3	**Prepare donor reports that are high-quality and meet donor requirements, and submit them on time.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; project team including program (including MEAL), finance and other operations staff; senior management team; HQ Overseas Finance (for financial reports); technical advisors and IDEA staff as applicable
When	■ As per donor regulations and requirements outlined in the award agreement
4	**Plan for and use donor visits and other communication activities to advance the CRS-donor relationship and influence donor perspectives on programming and operations issues.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; country representative; head of programming; head of operations; technical advisors; IDEA staff; for project donor visits specifically, partner leadership and project staff (e.g., project officers) and operations staff (e.g. logistics and administration staff)
When	■ As in the project donor engagement plan ■ As appropriate at other times during implementation

Phase: Close-out

CATEGORY: MULTI-CATEGORY

> **Standard 16: Accountable and timely project close-out.**
> Close out the project in a way that is responsive and accountable to beneficiaries, partners, host or local governments and donors.

KEY ACTIONS

1	Form a cross-disciplinary team to plan and implement project close-out activities.
Who	Country representative with the head of programming and head of operations; project manager/chief of party; finance manager; human resources manager; supply chain manager or equivalent; IDEA staff, as applicable (e.g. for centrally funded awards)
When	■ For multi-year projects: Form the project close-out team 12 to 18 months before the project end date, depending on project length and complexity ■ For projects of 12 months or less: Form the project close-out team 3 to 4 months before the project end date
2	**Develop a comprehensive, realistic project close-out plan that details roles, responsibilities, timelines and activities, and reflects donor requirements.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; members of the CRS cross-disciplinary project close-out team; partners; other subject-matter experts
When	**Overall close-out plan**, including programmatic and staffing plan elements: ■ For multi-year projects: Develop the initial project close-out plan 12 to 18 months before the project end date, depending on project length and complexity ■ For projects of 12 months or less: Develop the initial project close-out plan 3 to 4 months before the project end date
3	**Closely monitor and manage implementation of the close-out plan, including timely communication with the donor.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; members of the cross-disciplinary project close-out team; partner project staff; country program senior management or the project-specific close-out core group, as applicable; headquarters staff, as applicable
When	■ Ongoing from the start date of the project close-out plan, through the project end date and award close-out, if applicable, typically: • For multi-year projects: Beginning 12 to 18 months before the project end date/award expiry • For projects of 12 months or less: Beginning 3 to 4 months before the project end date/award expiry
4	**Prepare and store all required close-out documentation and other key project documentation, records and data.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; members of the CRS project team; members of the CRS cross-disciplinary project close-out team; IDEA or other HQ staff
When	■ Develop/finalize a plan to retain, archive or dispose of project documents, records and data early in the close-out process ■ Retain agreed documents, records and data after finalization and submission (as applicable), in line with the project close-out plan and any donor deadlines
5	**Engage with partners, project participants and other key stakeholders throughout the close-out period, to manage relationships and expectations.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; CRS and partner project team; partnership and capacity strengthening specialists, as necessary; country program senior management team
When	■ Per the project close-out plan. Typically: • For multi-year projects: Starting at least 12 months before the project end date • For projects of 12 months or less: Starting at least 3 months before the project end date

Phase: Close-out

CATEGORY: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Standard 17: Managing human resource transitions responsibly during project close-out.
Ensure continuity of adequate, qualified staff throughout close-out to fulfill commitments to all stakeholders.

KEY ACTIONS

1	Encourage retention of key project staff until the end of the project period.
Who	Project manager/chief of party; head of programming; human resources staff; country representative and senior management team; deputy regional director for program quality or management quality
When	■ For multi-year projects: Ongoing during the close-out period, with a more intensive focus in the final 6 months before the project end date ■ For projects of 12 months or less: Ongoing, with a more intensive retention focus from at least 3 months before the project end date
2	Closely monitor close-out staffing plans and work with project staff to manage their separation from or transition within CRS.
Who	Project manager/chief of party; head of programming; head of operations; human resources staff; country representative and senior management team
When	■ For multi-year projects: After development of project close-out staffing plans, with more intensive monitoring of plans beginning 6 months before the project end date ■ For projects of 12 months or less: After development of project close-out staffing plans, with more intensive monitoring beginning 3 months before the project end date
3	Monitor staff resignations or transitions toward the end of the project, and arrange coverage as necessary.
Who	Project manager/chief of party; head of programming; head of operations; country representative and senior management team; human resources staff; deputy regional directors for program quality and/or management quality, as necessary
When	■ Throughout project close-out, particularly in the final months
4	Support partners to implement their close-out staffing plans.
Who	Project manager/chief of party; partner leadership; CRS human resources staff; country program or regional partnership specialists; country representative and senior management team members
When	■ For multi-year projects: Beginning 6 to 12 months before project end date, depending on project duration and complexity ■ For projects of 12 months or less: Beginning at least 3 months before project end date

Phase: Close-out

CATEGORIES: OPERATIONS AND PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT
DONOR ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

> **Standard 18: Learning from and leveraging results during close-out.**
> Engage beneficiaries, partners, donors, host or local governments and other stakeholders in project close-out evaluation and reflection activities with the intent of learning from and leveraging the project.

KEY ACTIONS

1	**Design a project final evaluation or after action review appropriate to project scope and stakeholder information needs.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party with MEAL lead or individual designated as the evaluation manager; CRS and partner MEAL staff; other CRS and partner project staff, including any sector leads; head of programming; country representative, as applicable; regional MEAL advisor
When	■ Initiate planning of the final evaluation or after action review so that it can be conducted in the last 6 months of the project or per donor requirements
2	**Conduct a final evaluation or after action review that engages stakeholders in interpreting results and generating learning.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party and the MEAL lead for the evaluation (with external evaluator if applicable); CRS and partner project team members (including sector specialists, MEAL staff and operations staff); country program senior management team; regional technical advisors; country program and/or regional business development staff; members of the project governance structure; IDEA staff, as applicable
When	■ In the final 6 months of the project, unless otherwise required
3	**Share project learning with stakeholders for influence, sustainability and scale-up of successful project approaches.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; project team members; country program MEAL staff; country representative and senior management team; sectoral technical advisors; country program and regional business development staff; IDEA staff, as applicable
When	■ Finalize a plan for sharing final project learning as part of overall close-out planning, building on final evaluation or after action review planning ■ Refine and implement the plan throughout the close-out period
4	**Write a comprehensive final project report that summarizes project achievements and learning.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party; project team, including programming (MEAL, sector leads, project officers) and operations staff; head of programming; head of operations; country representative as needed; IDEA staff, as applicable
When	■ Per the timeline and deadline in the project close-out plan and any award agreement
5	**Upload key project learning-related documents to Gateway (and donor databases as applicable) for institutional memory and accessibility and for use in donor engagement.**
Who	Project manager/chief of party, or IDEA staff (for centrally funded awards); IDEA or PIQA staff, as appropriate
When	■ After document finalization and, if applicable, following submission to the donor and any post-submission revisions

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
Accompaniment/ Accompany	Thoughtful and consistent coaching and mentoring after specific interventions such as workshops, organization design, or on-the-job training. It is successful when it includes other methods of continuous learning such as peer-to-peer learning, job sharing and secondment, program and management quality assurance. (CRS Partnership and Capacity Strengthening Unit)
Accountability	How an organization responds to and balances the needs of all stakeholders (including beneficiaries, donors, partners, and CRS itself) in its decision-making and activities and delivers against this commitment. (ECB 2010 in *ProPack I*)
Activities schedule (aka implementation plan, work plan, or timeline)	A schedule that breaks down the broad activity-level objectives into more specific actions, listing them in a Gantt chart (bar chart) that includes a timeframe, and names the person or organization responsible. Activities schedules are typically prepared at project design/proposal submission stage. *(ProPack I)*
Adaptive management	An approach to tackling complex challenges. The starting point is an assumption of uncertainty about what will work to address the challenge. It is then characterized by a flexible approach involving testing, monitoring, getting feedback and—crucially—making course corrections, if necessary. (*Adaptive management: What it means for CSOs*, Bond 2016)
Aging report	A monthly finance report that presents aging of outstanding receivables (including advances provided to staff, partners and vendors, etc.) and payables (including invoices received by CRS for payment and not yet paid). (*CRS Finance Policies and Procedures Manual*)
Agreement owner	The designated or approved CRS staff member responsible for facilitating agreement review, incorporating feedback, adhering to a schedule for review, following up with other participants in the review process, and distributing the agreement and related documents at various points in the process.
Allocated direct costs (aka cost allocation charges)	Expenses that benefit multiple donor source/projects (DSPNs) in a country program, but for which the level of benefit is less easily identified at the time of incurrence. These types of costs are "allocated" to cost centers based on the benefit that each cost center receives from the expense. The allocation process involves the use of specified factors and formulas for aligning expenses to each cost center based on the benefit received. Refer to Finance's Cost Allocation Policy (POL-FIN-ALL-020) and its related procedures for more information. (*CRS Finance Policies and Procedures Manual*)
Authorization chart	A table listing all employees that can approve commitments or payments of a certain dollar value for a specific DSPN. The country representative approves the Map of Authority and the finance manager ensures it is up-to-date.
Award amount	The total estimated value of the award over the life of the project per the award agreement from the donor.
Award close-out	The process that follows the expiration date (project completion date or end date listed in the agreement) of an award-funded project. Sometimes referred to as "financial and administrative closure," it includes final reporting on project expenditure, reporting on the final status of all property and equipment purchased with project funds, audit certification if required, submission of all final technical programming deliverables including reports, and any final reporting related to intellectual property created through the project. The award close-out period may extend for several weeks or months beyond the grant/award expiration date.
Award kick-off meeting	An initial meeting following award signature, coordinated by the award manager, designed to outline deliverables, terms and conditions of the award, as well as the responsibilities and expectations of participants. At a minimum, participants should include the PM/CoP, HoOps, HoP and other senior managers. This meeting is separate from the project start-up meeting.
Award manager	The individual responsible for managing a project in accordance with the terms of the award, and who represents CRS to the donor for that award. This is not a position, but rather an assigned role: this individual can be on IDEA staff, chief of party, head of programming or project manager.
Back donors	When funds are passed on from one organization to another, the original donor is sometimes called the 'back donor.' For example, if CRS receives emergency funding via a European Caritas partner, a European government organization may be the back donor.

TERM	DEFINITION
"Back of the envelope" calculation	A rough calculation done to get a sense of how much is available for programmatic activities, and to help inform partner budget ceilings. The Cost/Budget Lead plugs in rough staffing costs, travel and partner requirements, and NICRA helps establish the funds available to work with. This step does not replace using the DIP as the basis for budgeting, but it can help in design discussions about the feasible scope of project activities, and can help prevent tension and/or misaligned expectations with partners. *(CAG 5th Edition)*
Branding and marking	According to USAID, "branding" refers to how a program or project is named and positioned, and who the funding is from. It identifies the sponsor of the work. "Marking" refers to applying graphic identities or logos to program materials or project signage to visibly acknowledge contributors; it identifies organizations supporting the work. Note that other donors may use other terms.
Budget Comparison Report (BCR)	A financial reporting tool that compares actual expenses to the budget for a specific DSPN over a given time period. It assists budget managers in monitoring a project's burn rate and/or in making decisions related to budget realignments, modifications and project life extension requests where necessary. *(CRS Finance Policies and Procedures Manual)*
Budget manager	The individual assigned and vested with management oversight of one or more business units. They must be in the D-band or higher, and designated by the division or department head.
Call for Proposals (*see also* Solicitation) aka RFA, RFP, APS	A formal document issued by a funder to request applications, proposals, offers, or quotations. The exact term used will differ by donor and funding mechanism (assistance or acquisition), but all of the following would fall under the umbrella of 'call for proposals': Request for Applications (RFA), Request for Proposals (RFP), Grant Application Request, Annual Program Statement (APS). In some cases, the donor may also initially issue a call for Concept Notes (CN) or Expressions of Interest (EOI). The applicant/s who pass through the CN- or EOI-review phase may then be requested to submit a proposal.
Capacity	The ability of individuals and organizational units to perform functions effectively, efficiently, and in a sustainable manner. *(ProPack I)*
Capacity building	*See* Capacity strengthening
Capacity strengthening	A deliberate and continuous process that improves the ability of an individual, group, organization, network, or system to enhance or develop new knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs), systems, and structures needed to function effectively, work toward sustainability, and achieve goals. In CRS, capacity strengthening includes: • Capacity building – improving knowledge, skills, and attitudes of individuals or groups to function more effectively. • Accompaniment – Coaching and mentoring in combination with training workshops, conferences, on-the-job learning or other methods. • Institutional strengthening – Improving an organization's systems and structures to function effectively, work toward sustainability and achieve specific results or goals. *(ProPack I)* *NOTE:* CRS uses the broader term "capacity strengthening" rather than "capacity building," which in CRS' experience is typically not sufficient on its own. For CRS, capacity building means "building on what already exists."
Capture planning	The process of identifying particular funding opportunities, assessing the environment, and implementing strategies for increasing the chances of winning a specific opportunity. Capture planning occurs before solicitation release. *(ProPack I)*
Cash forecast	A financial tool used to present an entity's (e.g., country program, office or partner) cash needs for a determined period, typically a quarter.
Commitments	Legal liabilities arising from sub-recipient agreements and purchase orders greater than $10,000 in value, executed by or on behalf of CRS country programs.
Cost Application Guidance (CAG)	A CRS internal guidance document intended to assist proposal development teams to prepare budgets and Budget Notes to comply with U.S. government (USG) requirements and to present clear, logically organized cost applications that show clear linkages to, and tell the same story as, our technical applications. The *CAG* provides a blueprint for responding to a typical USAID solicitation. However, much of the basic budgeting guidance provided within is also applicable and adaptable to non-USG funding opportunities. *(CAG 5th Edition)*

TERM	DEFINITION
Cost driver	A factor that causes a change in the cost of an activity. Examples are the number of beneficiaries or the number of groups served. An activity can have more than one cost driver attached to it. *(ProPack I)*
Critical path	The sequence of activities that represents the longest path between the start of the project and the project's end. *(A Guide to the PMD Pro)*
Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP)	A set of updated schedules, plans, targets and systems that have sufficient detail to permit smooth and effective project implementation. It is completed after a project proposal is approved and funded and before implementation begins. DIPs may be done on an annual basis or for the life of the project. If done for the life of a project, the DIP is still revised and updated annually. *NOTE:* While activities schedules are prepared during proposal development, DIPs are more detailed and are prepared after approval.
Direct costs	Costs charged directly to a project or grant based on the level of effort or benefit received. Direct costs are either directly charged ("**direct-direct**") or allocated ("**allocated direct"**). *(CRS Finance Policies and Procedures Manual)*
Direct-direct costs	Costs associated specifically and entirely with a proposed project. These include direct labor, direct materials and supplies, direct sub-awards and consultants, direct travel, and other direct costs. The costs in this tier are entirely dependent on the project design. *(CAG 5th Edition)*
Discretionary resources	CRS private unrestricted or lightly restricted funds that can be budgeted at management's discretion; previously referred to as "allocation."
Donor engagement team	HQ-based team in the Institutional Donor Engagement and Advancement (IDEA) department, responsible for managing CRS' relationship with a specific set of institutional donors. CRS has donor engagement teams for U.S. government donors and subsets thereof, non-USG public donors, foundations and corporations, and The Global Fund.
Donor Source Project Number (DSPN)	An 11-digit code used by CRS to identify cost centers by donor (4-digit code), country program or department (3-digit code), and project number (4-digit code). CRS uses DSPNs to track all its expenses.
DUNS number	The Data Universal Numbering System, or *Dun & Bradstreet DUNS Number*, is a unique nine-digit identifier for businesses. It is used to establish a Dun & Bradstreet business credit file, and is a requirement of all entities to bid on U.S. government proposals.
eBudget (Adaptive Planning)	The online, cloud-based platform used by CRS to prepare and monitor its annual budgets and quarterly spending forecasts.
Exit interview	An interview or questionnaire conducted with an individual who is leaving an organization. At CRS, exit interviews are conducted in the spirit of development and growth for the agency. The purpose is to gain insight about employee experiences with CRS, and to collect data on reasons for turnover, both preventable and not preventable. This information is analyzed and applied to support CRS' continuous improvement as an employer.
Exit meeting	Consultative meetings held with stakeholders such as partners, beneficiaries, donor and government personnel during the project close-out process that help to ensure participation and accountability. In larger projects, exit meetings can also be a way to involve stakeholders in the development of the close-out plan. For smaller projects, exit meetings can be used to clarify any questions regarding the project close-out process, the handling of any project assets and any potential follow-on activities.
Expense forecast	An estimate of total project and country program expenditure. It is used to identify potential spending shortfalls and to take corrective action to ensure project spending remains on track.
Fixed assets	Assets with a useful life of 3 years or more, a purchase price of US$5,000 or more, and titled to CRS, including qualifying group purchases. *(CRS Domestic Finance Fixed Asset Policy/Procedure)*
Gateway	CRS' online system for business pipeline and project portfolio management, built on a Salesforce technical platform.
"Go/no-go" decision	The decision of whether or not to pursue a specific funding opportunity. Go/no-go decisions may be made at multiple points; a preliminary go/no-go decision may be made based on a draft solicitation or intelligence such as information in a forecast of upcoming funding opportunities. The go/no-go decision is often revisited after the formal release of a solicitation.

TERM	DEFINITION
Holistic Organizational Capacity Assessment Instrument (HOCAI)	The instrument CRS uses with partner organizations to conduct a self-analysis of organizational strengths and challenges, develop an action plan, and improve organizational functions through capacity strengthening. With HOCAI, CRS creates a standardized framework to help organizations engage in a process of continuous assessment and improvement that will sustain organizational capacities.
Human resource management	The organizational function that deals with issues related to personnel, such as compensation, hiring, performance management, safety, wellness, benefits, employee motivation, communication, administration, training and spirituality.
Indirect cost recovery (ICR)	An indirect cost is an expense that has been incurred for common or joint objectives and that cannot be readily identified with a particular award, project or other direct activity. Indirect costs at CRS' country programs are recorded in Donor Source 1050 and are limited to those expenses associated with country representatives or equivalent country manager positions, International Development Management Fellows (IDFP-Mgmt.), and general representation. CRS classifies regional management, HQ-based program support and support services departments as indirect costs.
	ICR is the process whereby a donor allows a grant recipient to recover some of the costs incurred to administer its award. These costs are not charged individually or directly to an award. They are charged to an award using a cost recovery rate pre-approved by the donor. Indirect cost recovery on U.S. Government awards is commonly referred to as NICRA, since it is obtained through a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with USAID, its cognizant federal agency. *(CRS Finance Policies and Procedures Manual)*
Internal Control Improvement Plan (ICIP)	A corrective action plan prepared by sub-recipients (partners) who score below 75 percent for a given functional area of the SRFMP assessment checklist. The ICIP should include a calendar that provides specific dates for implementation of the internal control improvements needed. In no case should any improvement be scheduled for full implementation more than 6 months after the issue was detected and formally communicated in writing.
Intra-agency financial transactions	Transactions in which an expense incurred in one location is charged to a DSPN held in a different location. E.g., a plane ticket purchased in Madagascar for the CR to travel to the regional office in Zambia may be charged to a regional DSPN held in Zambia.
Issue	A risk that has now occurred (*See* Risk). It can take the form of an unresolved decision, situation, or problem that will significantly impact the project.
Issues log	A project document or database that serves as a tool within a wider issue management process. It helps a project manager/chief of party to document and summarize project issues, identify who is responsible for resolving each issue, and track issue status.
Issues letter	A formal communication from a donor after a review of a proposal or application. An issues letter may also be called a "Request for Clarification and Application Revision" letter, a "Final Revised Application" letter, a "Best and Final Offer" letter, etc. The letter includes donor questions and comments to which the applicant must respond in order to remain in consideration for award of the grant or contract.
Key personnel	This is a specific term used by the USG. Many RFAs require that the applicant identify key personnel for the project; some require that the applicant propose specific individuals for key personnel positions and submit CVs for key personnel candidates. The key personnel candidates themselves must be approved by the donor and any changes to key personnel during project implementation must have prior approval from the donor.
Launch event/ workshop	An externally focused event to formally launch a project; typically involves representatives of the project donor (if externally funded) as well as other donors, government, and community representatives.
Light checks	Spot-checking exercises, using a limited number of randomly selected forms from enumerators, partner organizations, etc. Light checks on data quality include regular reviews of data completeness (e.g., that forms contain all necessary information) and, if a database is used, comparison of data from original forms with what is entered into the database. Light checks help to identify and address any potential data issues immediately, thereby minimizing errors, and to ensure data quality.
Light data collection	In an emergency response, refers to collecting data from a small (typically random, but sometimes purposeful) sample of individuals served by the emergency response.

TERM	DEFINITION
Liquidation report	A financial report containing the prescribed information submitted by a sub-recipient to account for expenses it incurred against a CRS project.
Mass separation	A human resources term used to describe when a large number of staff is terminated, made redundant or reach the end of their contracts. In CRS, the most common example of mass separation is when a large project ends.
Motorized fixed/ capital assets	A category of fixed or capital assets that includes motors, such as vehicles, generators, trucks, tractors, forklifts, motorboats, etc.
Negotiated Indirect Cost Recovery Agreement (NICRA)	An agreement issued out of USAID's Office of Acquisition and Assistance that standardizes the indirect costs an organization can charge to a USAID-funded grant or contract. Each organization negotiates its indirect cost rates with one government agency that has been assigned cognizance. The resulting NICRA is binding on the entire government. The NICRA contains both final rates for past periods and provisional (billing rates) for current and future periods. (USAID)
Network diagram	A pictorial summary of the decisions and flows that make up a procedure or process (e.g., delivery of an output) from beginning to end.
Performance improvement plan (PIP)	A CRS human resources tool used to communicate clear performance expectations, and provide resources and coaching to assist the employee in areas requiring improvement. This process is designed to be used as a constructive tool and a communication mechanism for remediation.
Phase down	To reduce the level of an activity but continue to provide support. The phase-down stage may be preparatory to phase-out or phase-over. (*Hello, I must be going: Ensuring quality services and sustainable benefits through well-designed exit strategies*, B. Levinger and J. McLeod, 2002)
Phase out	To discontinue support or involvement in a project activity. There is no attempt to find a new sponsor to continue the activity. (Levinger and McLeod 2002)
Phase over	To substantially reduce support for a project activity or service but also identify a successor institution that will continue providing the service. The sponsor assists the new institution in developing needed capacities and resources. (Levinger and McLeod 2002)
Pooled staff (aka shared staff)	Country program staff salaries that cannot be assigned to specific projects, but which benefit the country program's full array of projects, are distributed to all projects using one of the three cost allocation pools (Vehicle Expense Pool, Facility Cost Pool or Project Support Pool). Assignment of such staff to Cost Allocation Pools is defined in the Cost Allocation Process Procedure (PRO-FIN-ALL.020.02) and is based on the type of position. *(CRS Finance Policies and Procedures Manual)*
Pre-award letter (PAL)	A letter issued by the donor prior to the signature of the award. PALs are used in situations where the project must commence immediately and all programmatic and technical issues are resolved. Typically, a PAL will set forth the date from which an awardee will be reimbursed for program costs prior to the signature date of the award. For USG funding, the PAL is generally no more than 20 percent of the total program budget. Per 22 CFR 226.25(e) (1), PALs enable the recipient to incur allowable pre-award costs for up to 90 calendar days prior to award.
Pre-teaming agreement	*See* Teaming agreement
Program	A group of [related] projects managed in a coordinated way that provides benefits or achieves objectives that would not be possible with an individual project. *(A Guide to the PMD Pro)*
Program manager	A CRS staff member who oversees a group of related projects (generally projects related to a particular technical programming sector).
Project	A set of planned, interrelated actions that achieve defined objectives within a given budget and a specified period of time. *(A Guide to the PMD Pro)*
Project charter	A document that formalizes the project governance structure including the roles and responsibilities, and norms of the governance structure, and establishes project tolerances and decision-making authority.
Project close-out	An important final stage of the project cycle for any CRS project, whether funded by CRS discretionary resources or institutional donor funds. It involves multiple tasks related to program, financial, human resources, supply chain, and other operations closure. Project close-out as used in Compass is an overarching term that includes activities both before and after the project end date. For projects funded by institutional donors, the term also encompasses the specialized activities of award close-out.

TERM	DEFINITION
Project cycle	The set of actions (design, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning) in all phases of a project. These actions are interrelated and are roughly sequential.
Project design	A key phase within the CRS project cycle that is tightly linked with and interwoven with proposal development. Project design, which focuses on project decision-making and plans, is a process and series of steps that are roughly chronological, but also iterative and dynamic. The clarity and quality of decisions made during project design have a strong impact on project start-up, implementation, and close-out. *(ProPack I)*
Project governance structure	A group of individuals that provides support for a project and is accountable for enabling project success. A project governance structure may consist of a small group of senior leaders for a smaller, less complex project, or a larger project board for a complex, multi-partner project.
Project implementation	A key phase in the CRS project cycle that focuses on translating plans into performance (carrying out the DIP). Project implementation involves coordinating people and other resources to carry out the project's plans in order to achieve the project's objectives. Project implementation is based on a systematic process of rigorously discussing who, what, how, and when; constantly questioning; actively following up; and ensuring accountability.
Project management	Planning, organizing, and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals, outcomes, and outputs. *(A Guide to the PMD Pro)*
Project manager	A CRS staff member who accompanies partners in a specific project with project management efforts during all phases of the project cycle (*See* Project). *NOTE*: In the project management standards, the term "project manager/chief of party" is used for consistency in indicating the "who" for specific actions and guidance notes. In practice, the specific individual could be a project manager, program manager or project director.
Project proposal	A document that captures decisions made during the project design process using a format determined by the donor or CRS. *(ProPack I)* *NOTE*: Project proposals are <u>not</u> included in the CRS project management standards as there is extensive existing CRS and donor guidance on proposal development, including CRS' *Technical Application Guidance* (*TAG*).
Project scope	All the work required to deliver the "what" of the project, i.e., the project deliverables (how the deliverables will be created and delivered). (*A Guide to the PMD Pro*)
Project start-up	The critical first stage of a project following completion of project design and finalization of the project proposal. The major activities of well-planned project start-up include: • Handover and transition from proposal team to project start-up team • Establishing the project governance structure • Conducting partner capacity assessments • Setting up the project financial system • Recruiting and onboarding project staff • Detailed implementation planning • MEAL system development
Project team	All programming, finance, and operations staff with a specific and significant responsibility within the project. These include programming and other staff budgeted directly to the project at full-time or part-time level of effort, as well as "pooled" staff whose time is charged to the project via CRS' cost allocation for shared-direct staffing costs.
Project tolerances	Clear parameters within which a project manager/chief of party (PM/CoP) can act autonomously or needs to seek approval. Project tolerances describe the approved ranges of variation that a PM/CoP is authorized to oversee without seeking the endorsement of members of the project governance structure. Tolerances may relate to such things as budget and project timeframe, project scope and quality. For example, a project tolerance might describe the percentage by which a project, or line items in a project, can over- or under-spend without the approval of members of the project governance structure; or the acceptable number of days of delay in the implementation schedule before approval from the project governance structure is required.

TERM	DEFINITION
Proposal decision-maker	A senior staff member (typically the country representative) with responsibility for making strategic decisions related to CRS' response to a specific funding opportunity. This includes partnership/consortium-related negotiations and agreements; recruitment and selection of key personnel; definition of preliminary budget parameters (including any CRS cost-share); other critical budget decisions; and review and approval of final versions of proposal documents (including budgets). This is a critical, though not full-time, proposal development team role.
Proposal transition manager	The individual responsible for ensuring that proposal documents, supporting documentation, and relevant background information are captured, compiled and handed over to the project start-up/implementation team.
Real property	Land, buildings and leasehold improvements *(CRS Finance Policies and Procedures Manual)*
Risk	Risk is the potential effect of uncertainty on project objectives.
Risk register	A document in which the project manager/chief of party (PM/CoP) records the results of project risk analysis and risk response planning. Risk registers help the PM/CoP to document and track risks, and to work with the project team and members of the project governance structure to assess risk probability and potential impact; prioritize risks; identify appropriate risk management strategies; and continue to monitor and manage risks as they evolve.
Senior management team	The highest-level programming and operations staff in a country program, and typically including the CR, HoP, HoOps or equivalent and finance manager (FM). Additional staff such as the HR manager or BD specialist may also be part of the SMT.
Shared cost calculator	An Excel spreadsheet tool in CRS' *CAG (Cost Application Guidance)* with preloaded formulas to help a country program determine a project's "fair share" of allocated direct costs for purposes of proposal budgets. *(CAG 5th Edition)*
Shared staff	*See* Pooled staff
SitRep	Situation report, used to provide updates in emergency situations (originally a military term).
Solicitation	A term used particularly by the U.S. government. A solicitation is a formal document issued by a funder to request applications, proposals, offers, or quotations. The exact term used will differ by donor and funding mechanism (assistance or acquisition), but all of the following would fall under the umbrella of "solicitation": Request for Applications (RFA), Request for Proposals (RFP), Grant Application Request, Annual Program Statements (APS).
Start-up workshop	An internally focused event involving project staff from CRS and partner organization(s), focused on reviewing key elements of the project design, project roles and responsibilities, communications and decision-making structures and protocols, etc.
Sub-Recipient Financial Management Policy (SRFMP)	The internal CRS finance policy that focuses on financial management of CRS' sub-recipients (partners) including terms for sub-recipient assessment, monitoring, funding, financial reporting and more.
Support Services Recovery (SSR)	The share of total funds that go to support services rather than program services. Since FY2010, the recovery rate of Support Service costs excludes commodities, related warehousing and freight and other in-kind contributions, which makes this calculation more similar to how federal NICRA is calculated.
T-codes	Transaction codes (from T0 to T9), a financial coding system used to define, record and track financial transactions in the financial systems. Common T-codes include Donor Source (T0), Country/Project (T2) and the Vendor Number (T4). Some T-codes are mandatory for completing a financial transaction, while others are optional but are used for facilitating the tracking of certain project expenses.
Team	A small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, a set of performance goals, and an approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.
Teaming agreement	An agreement between two or more entities to increase competitiveness by pooling resources to obtain and perform an award. Used frequently in consortia-based proposal development.
Pre-teaming agreement	In some cases, when there is information about an upcoming funding opportunity, NGOs will establish pre-teaming agreements. These commit them to working together to prepare for the anticipated funding opportunity, and formalize the organizations' intent to jointly pursue the opportunity when released (assuming the details of the opportunity are in line with the respective organizations' capacities). *(Seidman & Associates, P.C.; Shipley Associates)*

TERM	DEFINITION
Tiered costs	All costs in a CRS budget fit into three different tiers. In the first are costs associated specifically and entirely with the proposed project. These are also known as a project's "direct-direct" expenses (*See* Direct-direct costs). The second includes the country program costs that benefit all projects; these are "shared-direct expenses" (*See* Allocated direct costs). The third tier is our indirect costs, which are incurred outside of the country program and are necessary to cover the broader organization's support to every project. *(CAG 5ᵗʰ Edition)*
Total obligated amount	The total amount the donor has committed to spending on the project to date.
Value for money	The optimal use of resources to achieve intended outcomes. A value-for-money perspective in project design means analyzing what drives costs, and then making decisions and choices based on evidence, in order to deliver the desired quality and impact at lower cost. (*DFID's approach to value for money,* DFID 2011a.)
Win theme	A concept presented in a proposal that is designed to persuade a donor of your unique suitability to deliver the project. (summarized from *Why should they choose you - use win themes to differentiate your proposal*, James England)
Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)	A hierarchical task list created by dividing the project into components and the breakdown of the project process into increasingly detailed tasks. (*A Guide to the PMD Pro*)
Workplan	A document that describes the detailed tasks required to complete the sub-activities of a project. (Note that this is not to be confused with the USAID term "Work Plan", which is a specific award deliverable.)

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