



BEYOND BORDERS

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FORDHAM | IPED

Fordham University's Graduate Program in International Political Economy and Development trains graduate students in the advanced interdisciplinary analysis of global economic relations and international development issues. Graduates frequently pursue professional careers in global finance, international economic policy, global environmental policy, and international relief and development.

Beyond Borders shares the experiences of IPED students who underwent internships with Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Over the course of the summer, interns are assigned to the development projects of CRS abroad, where they gain invaluable experience in international relief, humanitarian aid, and development.

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Owen Fitzgerald Returns to West Africa



Owen Fitzgerald (back) with school children after a handwashing demonstration in Burkina Faso

My time as an intern with CRS in Burkina Faso marked my third stint in West Africa. Before enrolling in IPED, I lived in Mali and Ghana for four years. My love for this region and its people only continue to grow. Burkina is filled with beautiful, hospitable people, and my colleagues made this an incredible experience.

CRS Burkina Faso is a rather large country program. Its staff work in agriculture, emergency response and recovery, health, education, savings-led microfinance, water and sanitation, and governance. Last year, generous support enabled CRS Burkina to invest approximately \$20 million, directly serving more than 600,000 people.

I spent my first week in the country in January 2018 shaking off jet lag and brushing up on my French in a proposal design workshop for a \$50 million project. Each year, the poorest inhabitants of the North-Central region of Burkina experience an extended "hungry season" as a result of a variety of causes, including climate change, food production shortage, and fluctuating market prices. To combat this, the United

States Agency for International Development (USAID) developed a multi-sector food security project for the region. CRS will submit a proposal to serve as the lead implementing organization.

This was my first time working through the proposal design process. The experience proved to be a tremendous learning opportunity. Professionals flew in from all over the world to meet with our local expert staff and take part in the workshop and overall proposal design process. For the subsequent two months, I had the privilege to work with knowledgeable and passionate people to assist in putting together what emerged as an exceptionally comprehensive proposal.

Following the completion of the initial proposal design, I shifted from the business development team to serving an ongoing water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) focused project called Kom Yilma II. "Kom Yilma" means "Happy Healthy Child" in the local Moore language. The "II" signifies that the project is in its second phase.

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Liya Khalikova Helps CRS in Haiti

As an International Peace and Development Fellow, I spent five months with CRS Haiti in Port-au-Prince. CRS has been operational in Haiti since 1954 and works to tackle poverty, create more powerful and just societies, and help communities develop the knowledge, understanding, and skills to bring about desired change so they can drive their own recovery and development. CRS's current portfolio focuses on urban development, agricultural production, value chains, quality education, health, and disaster risk reduction.

Haiti is CRS's largest country program in Latin America and the Caribbean, with two more offices in the south of the country. As an intern, I supported strategic and business development and communication units. Specifically, I worked to develop a strategic influence plan for health programming and business development initiatives for possible funding, while also engaging in a variety of communication activities.

My main task was to assist in developing a sector influence plan for the health program. Sector influence plans help country programs examine sector programming as a whole, rather than as individual projects, and determine the big issues they want



Liya Khalikova at CRS Haiti

to address and how projects can be platforms to influence and catalyze change. With my supervisor, I worked on the first stages of the strategic plan development, conducting research and writing contextual analyses that looked at the current national country context related to health program-

ming. I also co-led several workshops to gain necessary information and develop sector focus areas and influence goals.

Additionally, I worked on business development initiatives, including possible funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). I focused on research and report writing for capture planning and prepositioning. Tasks included market assessment, competitiveness analysis, and competitors and partners' evaluations.

As part of the communication team, I mainly worked on reporting activities and writing a variety of documents, including brochures and one-pagers. I also traveled to Les Cayes and worked as a photographer for a local community workshop.

My fellowship was a rewarding opportunity that granted me field experience, constant learning, and professional growth as well as the opportunity to apply project management and design tools I learned with IPED. I developed professional skills while doing what I like most — applying research techniques and working for a good cause with one of the leading international humanitarian organizations. I am very grateful for IPED's support during this journey. This experience prepared me for a future career in international development and my next assignment in the Russia and Eurasia Program with the Center for Strategic and International Studies.



(From left) Christopher Bessey, CRS Haiti's country representative; Liya Khalikova; and Dr. Henry Schwalbenberg

Tess Hart Reaches out to Asian-Pacific Communities

Through Fordham University's International Peace and Development Travel Scholarship, I was afforded the opportunity to intern with the CRS Asia Pacific Sub-Region, based in the Philippines and with offices in Timor-Leste, Indonesia, and Micronesia.

I spent the first month of my internship in Dili, Timor-Leste, where I helped a non-violent communication facilitation training for a gender-based violence project, Peace Begins at Home. This project integrates livelihoods and savings and internal lending communities (SILC) to holistically address household resource management and healthy communication between partners and families. I also assisted CRS's Monitoring Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning team with reporting documentation and drafting a complete baseline report for Peace Begins at Home.

From March through June, I was based in Yap, Micronesia, CRS's newest office. The Adaptive Community Transformation (ACT) on Yap Project is working with communities in disaster risk management (DRM), climate change adaptation (CCA) agriculture, and water sanitation and hygiene (WASH). I assisted CRS staff in implementing our community-led disaster risk management process as well as updating the CRS Yap DRM-CCA Guide and implementation activities therein. Additionally, I worked with mobilization officers to improve facili-



Tess Hart (fourth from left) studied in the Philippines with IPED before returning with CRS.

tation skills and coordinated with government and municipal leaders to build partnerships in preparation for community outreach activities. Finally, I helped draft municipality level disaster risk management and CCA plans based on the outputs from our meetings.

My experience at Fordham was invaluable in preparing me for my internship, both through project assessment and gender and development courses and hands-on opportunities like the Fordham Francis Index. Having a strong foundation in policy analysis and with practical tools allowed me to contribute across the phases of ongoing projects. Because I will join CRS as an International Development Fellow in Niger in September, this internship experience has also been an excellent way for me to familiarize myself with CRS processes and better prepare for success in the future.

International Peace and Development Travel Scholarship

All matriculated IPED students in good academic standing are invited to apply for IPED's International Peace and Development Travel Scholarships. Up to four scholarships are offered each year. Scholarship recipients spend six months at the conclusion of their studies working overseas with an international non-profit relief and development agency.

For 2018, three travel scholarships were awarded in partnership with Catholic Relief Services. Students were assigned to Burkina Faso, Haiti, and the Philippines..



Tess Hart (left) previously worked in Micronesia with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps and Chuuk Women's Council.

Owen Fitzgerald, Burkina Faso

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Kom Yilma II promotes and supports positive WASH behavioral habits for students, teachers, parents, and community members in 99 primary schools and 19 pre-schools. This was right up my alley, given my background in civil engineering and construction management and experience with WASH projects in Haiti, Mali, and Ghana. I worked with a team of architects and the Burkina government's division on early childhood development to design culturally appropriate latrines adapted specifically for pre-school children. Presently, the majority of pre-schools do not have latrines, and children practice open defecation.

Throughout my internship, I drew on IPED project design and proposal development as well as conflict resolution coursework. My two-month French language immersion with Alliance Française last summer was also crucial, as nearly all CRS Burkina business is conducted in French.

This internship and IPED prepared me for the next steps in my career. Each year, CRS selects 25 candidates from a pool of 500 to 800 applicants into their International Development Fellows Program. The program is a fast-track to upper management at CRS. I am very excited to have been selected to serve as a fellow for CRS Madagascar and will begin in September 2018.

I am grateful to IPED for all the support I have received these past two years. It has been an honor to serve with the CRS Burkina team and to be part of a mission that is forever improving the lives of those who are most in need.



Owen Fitzgerald (right) with Sean Callahan, president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services



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