



BEYOND BORDERS

Report from IPED's International Peace and Development Fellows

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Laura Groggel, CRS Lesotho

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

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Laura (fourth from left), with some members of the Women's Farming association in Lesotho

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Lesotho focuses its programming primarily on food security, agriculture and early childhood development and education. During my time here, I assisted the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) team with their survey design, data collection and analysis for improved programming in the above areas.

I had exposure to many different areas of work. Specifically, I designed the baseline survey for an International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) rural micro-finance project where 500+ households were surveyed.

I also worked closely with the Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development (IECCD) project manager in improving tools for monitoring and learning. I trained project staff on new M&E tools and helped

with the data-entry templates to aid analysis. For learning, I wrote a case-study document outlining the best-practices and lessons learned in various IECCD projects. The case-study was published and shared with partners and potential donors in an international conference.

The rest of my time was focused on business development. I co-authored a key technical narrative for a \$2.6 million Irish Aid-funded proposal for Natural Resource Management (NRM) and Government advocacy. Additionally, I was instrumental in coordinating the NGO consortium involved in the Irish Aid proposal, as well as liaising with project stakeholders. Furthermore, I led a local team in the research and development of a concept note campaign led by USAID whose

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Jericka Youngken, CRS Ecuador



Jericka (far right), with some staff of CRS Ecuador

I was directly involved, *Humanitarian Relief and Integration of Refugees and Displaced Populations on the Colombia-Ecuador Border*, also includes a nationwide advocacy and awareness-raising campaign that includes radio programs and community events focused on breaking down cultural barriers and negative perceptions of Colombian refugees.

As part of my work, I traveled to the field and met with the beneficiaries of this project. I gathered accounts of the ongoing violence and conflict in Colombia. Their stories were used in donor reports and on information campaigns for Catholics in the United States.

I also had the opportunity to work individually with project managers from each of our 5 countries to help them develop an accountability plan. We implemented suggestion boxes, comment books, community bulletin boards, and feedback surveys as means of creating more transparency and two-way communication in our projects.

In all of these experiences with CRS, I relied on the skills and knowledge I amassed during my time in IPED and am extremely grateful for the opportunity to see theory put to action. ■

As an International Peace and Development Fellow with the CRS South America Zone (SAZ) I had the unique opportunity to support programs and operations in five different South American countries. My main responsibilities included producing communications materials for our website and donor relations, participating in the development of new proposals, and assisting program managers with their

accountability to beneficiary measures.

In partnership with the Scalabrini Mission, and through funding from the US State Department's Bureau of Population, CRS works along Ecuador's northern border to provide emergency humanitarian aid and psychological and legal assistance to families and individuals displaced by the armed conflict in Colombia. The project where

International Peace and Development Scholarship

All matriculated IPED students in good academic standing are invited to apply for IPED's International Peace & Development Travel Scholarships. Up to four 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 Spring 2014, these travel scholarships were in partnership with Catholic Relief Services. Students were assigned to Ecuador, Lesotho, and Cameroon.



Jericka while enjoying the view of Avenida America (foreground) and Pichincha volcano (background) from the CRS office in Quito, Ecuador.

I am grateful that IPED's International Peace & Development Travel Scholarship provided me the opportunity to travel and work with Catholic Relief Service's Cameroon Country Program. CRS's role here focuses on health and governance, and I had the pleasure of working on two major programs.

The first was a United Nations High Commission on Refugees sponsored project that provides health services to urban based refugees in two of Cameroon's major cities, Yaoundé and Douala. The growing influx of refugees from the neighboring countries furthered the demands of the project. I specifically worked with the Monitoring & Evaluation team. I was tasked to prepare and participate in the quarterly visits to the public health centers and pharmacies that CRS partners with.

The second project was the Strength in Solidarity initiative in which CRS works alongside partners in the local church to assess and share CRS's technical expertise. My participation on this initiative covered detailed assessments of the financial, organizational, and programming capacities of the National Episcopal Conference, civil society organizations, and prospective church dioceses.

My IPED experience was vital in the role I played in CRS



Brendan O'Leary,
CRS Cameroon

Brendan in front of the CRS headquarters in Yaoundé, Cameroon

Cameroon. Much of my contributions in Strength in Solidarity program stemmed from coursework in *Project Planning, Implementation, and Development*. Likewise, the concise and direct synthesis in my writing, encouraged throughout courses like *Economic Development Policy*, was also critical in the completion of my tasks. Furthermore, the critical analysis developed in *Applied Eco-*

nometrics was crucial in identifying the sensitivity, trends, and forecast of the data from the Health Information System.

I am incredibly grateful for both the opportunity and reception I received. I am confident that this experience has refined the skills cultivated in IPED in a tangible and professional manner. ■



Laura Groggel

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goal was to use innovative technology in improving children literacy. Finally, because of the M&E experience I gained in IPED, I was put in charge of developing the M&E plan for this concept note- including the results framework, key indicators and intermediate results.

I was fortunate to have seen the
Laura in rural Lesotho

beautiful Lesotho countryside while accompanying the CRS project managers in their data collection and field monitoring visits. The exposure to the field reminded me of the true poverty that exists in rural Lesotho. With this reminder, I continually worked, with the motivated and talented staff at CRS Lesotho, in building important skill sets for a successful and impactful career in development. ■

Matt Protacio, CRS Lesotho



and made a real effort to respond to our personal development and provide mentorship.

I worked with program managers in their monitoring and reporting tasks related to projects on food security. Aside from this, I coordinated with Laura Groggel, another Peace and Development Intern, in developing proposals for new projects on watershed and rangeland management. We also formed proposals on strengthening civil society capacity to address the needs of the very poor. Through the course of our work, we developed a skill to produce sound proposals in a quick and concise manner.

I have found CRS to be very open and supportive of the development of its staff. Because of the mentorship and development experience I received here, I believe that my time in Lesotho has been very valuable. I had the impression that my projects have impact to the community and that I was able to provide a contribution to my colleagues. I highly recommend this fruitful experience to anyone interested in doing development work and to those who are passionate about doing field engagements. ■

Receiving an opportunity to spend six months working with CRS Lesotho had been a blessing. I was given tasks related to the ongoing projects when I arrived that were mostly related to food security. I was able to get a lot of good hands-on experience using the skills in *Project Management* and *Data Analysis*

I picked up in IPED. In addition, the course materials in instrument development, sampling strategy, and survey administration were all helpful. I made an effort to focus on statistical analysis and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) to prepare myself for future careers of this nature. My coworkers were very accommodating



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