

- Be aware that, to be safe, nothing is off the record, even in casual conversations with journalists or things that are overheard by journalists.
- Speak only on what you know.
- Be polite and professional—always. Do not lose your temper even in the rare instances when a reporter might try to invoke such a response. You are in control.
- Do not criticize government policies, practices, or individuals, or other aid agencies. Remember that CRS needs to maintain good relationships in order to continue its work effectively.
- Do not speak on behalf of others.

Taking Reporters To The Field

- It is always the job of the Regional or Country Representative, or his or her designated media representative, to determine which situations might be off limits to press personnel (such as when their presence could provoke hostility, or hinder or prevent staff members from carrying out their jobs).
- Television crew or photographers can very dramatically and negatively alter the dynamic of a field visit. Such obtrusiveness is particularly important for staff to remember in cases where discretion is necessary, such as in dealing with tense militia members, police, or soldiers, or in situations where such intrusiveness may present ethical issues. In all cases, it is always best to request permission, in advance if possible, for images to be taken.
- CRS may be requested to allow journalists to transmit stories on the agency's communication equipment. All implications of doing this should be very carefully weighed before making a decision.

Security Management Assessment Checklist

The following may assist country programs to review internal management policies and procedures that have an impact on staff safety and security. Not all categories or questions will apply to all contexts.

1. Location

Are CRS Buildings in a safer or more dangerous area (province, city, district, area of a city) than other NGOs?

- Consider the location of threats (dangerous areas).
- Consider the reach of criminals from dangerous areas into safer ones (e.g., roaming gangs).
- Consider the reach of belligerents (e.g., being close to strategic installation, police/military camp, ministries).
- Consider the access to an evacuation road.
- Are CRS staff or programs in a specific, dangerous area for a short time (e. g., traveling through or on assessments and monitoring missions)?
- Are we fully cognizant about how a conflict may change quickly, making relatively safe locations more dangerous?

2. Exposure Of Staff and Property

Are CRS Buildings Adequately Protected?

- Are buildings protected against robbers (fence, wire netting on windows, solid doors and safety locks, etc.)?
- Are buildings adequately lighted at night?
- Are guards well-briefed? Do they have job descriptions?
- Are buildings well identified as CRS property (if deemed appropriate)?
- Are keys and spare sets well-managed?
- Do CRS buildings have access to an autonomous power supply in case of power cuts

(generator, solar panels)?

Office

- Is it in a good place for radio communication (elevated position, far from high buildings)?
- Are radio communications installed in a discreet place?
- Is the safe installed in a discreet place?
- Are inventories of material updated on a regular basis and is property properly identified?

Residences

- Is VHF communication possible between all residences?
- Is it possible to park vehicles inside the compound?
- Do all residences maintain emergency stocks of water and food?
- Is there a safe place to be used as shelter (e.g., a room without windows, a bunker, etc.)?
- If a shelter has been built: has the construction been done according to proper standards?
- Can radio contact be maintained from the shelter/bunker?

Warehouse

- Is it occupied exclusively by CRS?
- Are accesses well-protected?
- Are stocks of dangerous items (such as fuel) separated from others?
- Do people smoke inside the warehouse?
- Is there a fire extinguisher, sand?
- Is it clean, inside and outside?

Financial Transactions

- Is it reliable to open an account in a local bank?
- Is it reliable to withdraw money through a local bank?
- Is it reliable to obtain cash locally by using checks?

If there are no banks in rural areas:

- How is cash requested (internal mail/radio communication/phone)?
- How often is money transported?
- In what amount (average)?
- What means of transportation is used?
- Are there procedures for money transportation (only by plane, with CRS international staff, maximum amount, etc.)?
- Is there a "cash-withdrawal waybill" for transportation of cash?
- Is there a maximum amount that can be kept on hand in the field?
- Is there a safe in each location?
- Who has access to the safe?

3. Value Of Property

In what ways, by reducing the value of property, could CRS vulnerability to banditry and direct threats from belligerents be reduced?

- Keeping a minimum of cash?
- Minimum stock of property?
- Using lower valued vehicles in cities (when 4X4s are not needed)?

4. Impact Of Programs

Is there a strong risk that aid provided by CRS will be diverted by belligerents?

- Is there a precedent of humanitarian aid being stolen from beneficiaries?
- Are beneficiaries compelled (taxed) to contribute a portion of aid received to local authorities or belligerents?
- Does aid relieve pressure on the belligerent's public administration (a rebel organization