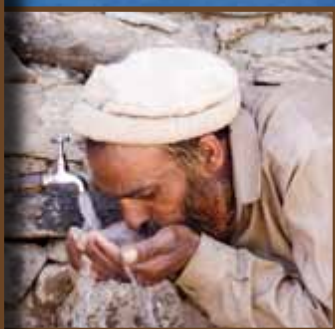


# **INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT (IHD):** The Concept & the Framework



**A BRIEF  
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## DEFINITIONS:

**Justice Lens** : CRS examines issues with a “justice lens,” assessing social, economic, cultural and political structures in the context of justice and based on the principles of Catholic social teaching, primarily the principle of protecting the sacredness and dignity of the human person.

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**Livelihoods** : People’s livelihoods are the many activities they engage in to support themselves and their families. They gather wood, dig a fish pond, raise sheep and weave jackets. They hunt game and grind millet, sell eggs and make chutney and salsa.

## INTRODUCTION



1.1

In 2002, Catholic Relief Services staff from the Emergency Response Team and Agriculture Technical Advisors from regions and headquarters met in Ghana to coordinate and improve their work. The most important results of that meeting were several strong requests from the field:

*“We need an agency framework to guide programming.”*



1.2



1.3

*“We need practical ways to incorporate the Justice Lens into our programs.”*

*“We need a framework that links the Justice Lens with the FFP Food Security Framework and our relief and development goals.”*



1.4

In response, CRS developed the Integral Human Development (IHD) Conceptual Framework. The framework is based on the concept of integral human development as found in Catholic social teaching (CST). Many CRS staff around the world provided input to create the framework that CRS is using today.



*CRS' work is about bringing a vision to life, and this vision is integral human development for all. The agency's mission is to serve the poorest and most vulnerable. In order to serve, we must be able to see the world they live in. The IHD concept provides the basis for our vision. The IHD "Conceptual Framework" is a diagrammatic representation that helps to guide our thinking,*

and to more clearly see and understand the world of the poor, including both their strengths and their needs.

### **What is the IHD Concept from CST?**

The IHD concept envisions a world where all people are able to live to their full potential, meeting their basic physical needs sustainably, while living with dignity in a just and peaceful society. It is based on "right relationships".

Three key elements of IHD include:

- *Holistic*: Integral Human Development promotes the good of every person and the whole person; it is economic, social, political, cultural, ecological and spiritual. It also promotes the integrity of creation.
- *Solidarity*: Integral Human Development promotes the rights and responsibilities of each person and of every person to one another.
- *Justice and Peace*: Integral Human Development promotes a just and peaceful society that respects the dignity of every person.

## What is the IHD Conceptual Framework?

The IHD “Conceptual Framework” is just a diagrammatic representation that helps us to think about a situation in an holistic way that promotes integral human development.

- It is a way of making sense out of a complicated world.
- It is useful for analyzing and explaining complex situations.
- It is an holistic checklist for understanding and guiding programming.

## What the IHD framework is NOT

- It is not a replacement for the CRS Justice Lens.
- It is not a magic bullet for solving all problems.
- It is not a blanket mandate for multisectoral projects.
- It cannot replace a good development practitioner.
- It does not replace proven techniques and tools – though it helps us choose which tools to use.

**What it does do** is help us bring all of our frameworks and approaches together.

This framework helps us to operationalize the Justice Lens and to link relief and development programs and tools for greater impact. It is a framework that we can use to reduce risk in the most vulnerable communities. It can help us to foster human dignity and social justice in all CRS programs.



## THE IHD FRAMEWORK: AN OVERVIEW

A key purpose of the Framework is to help CRS and our partners become more effective in assisting the people we serve to improve their livelihood **outcomes**. The primary livelihood outcome we seek is Integral Human Development. That is, people are able to live to their full potential in an atmosphere of peace, social justice and human dignity.

Livelihood outcomes are the result of the livelihood **strategies**, which are based primarily on our many different **assets** – the resources we have to work with and build on.

**Systems and structures** are the institutions, rules and social norms that we work within. They affect *how* different assets can be used and in some cases, *who has access* to specific assets. Individuals or communities with a lot of assets may also be able to *change some of the “rules.”* So there are important interactions between systems and structures and assets.

Our strategies also have to take into account risks that threaten lives and livelihoods. These are listed as **shocks, cycles and trends**.

**See the diagram at the center of this booklet.**

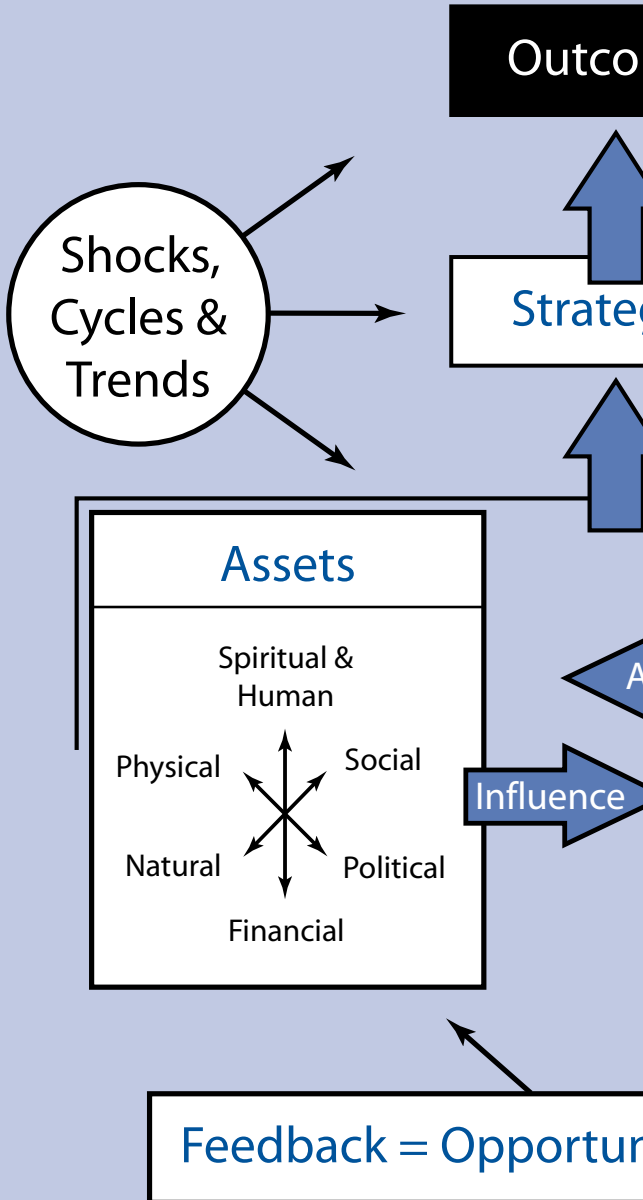
The IHD graphic depicts these basic concepts: we develop livelihood strategies based on available assets, and we use these assets within the local context (systems and structures). Finally, we take into account the major sources of risks to lives and livelihoods as we develop our strategies.





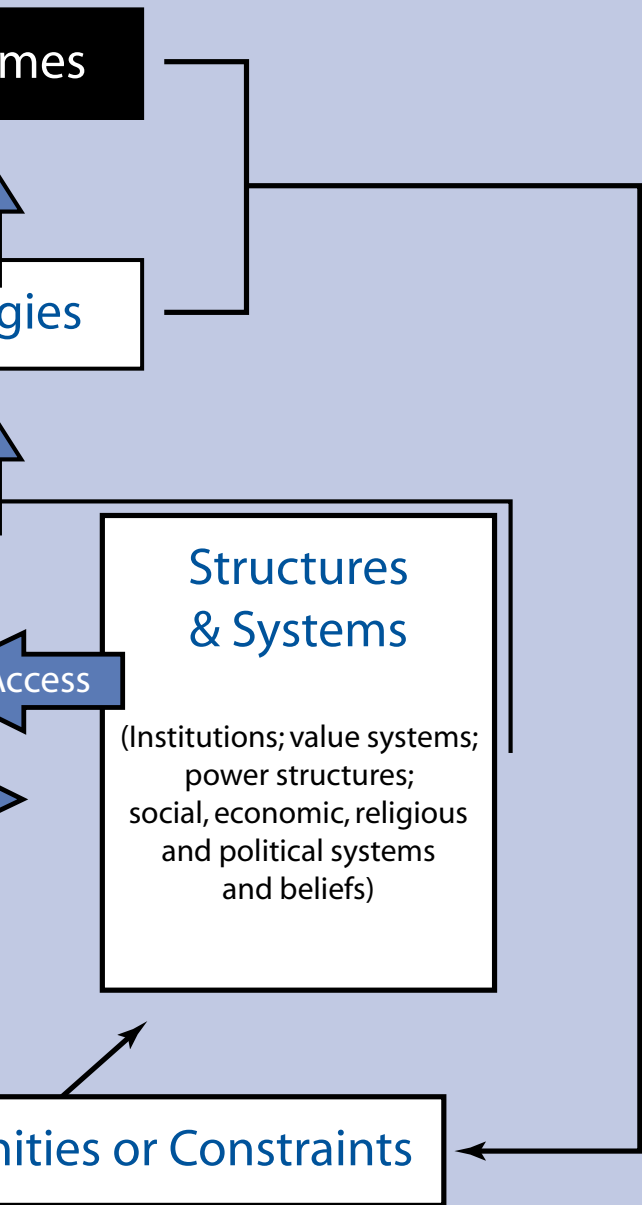
In the IHD Framework, we think of six basic livelihood strategies (see box below). These strategies are not mutually exclusive. It is common for more than one to be applied at any given time, in any given situation.

- *Coping/Survival* – getting through difficult periods.
- *Risk Reduction* – reducing vulnerability to shocks, cycles and trends.
- *Empowerment* – increasing the influence of people and communities to advocate and claim rights and services.
- *Asset Recovery* – rebuilding assets lost in a disaster.
- *Asset Diversification* – increasing resilience by having many different types of assets to depend on in crisis, thus reducing vulnerability to the loss of one or a few asset types.
- *Asset Maximization* – increasing the quantity and quality of assets to improve the capacity of households to leave poverty and reduce vulnerability.





# DEVELOPMENT (IHD) FRAMEWORK



# ASSETS, SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES AND THE VULNERABILITY CONTEXT IN DETAIL



8.1

People, groups or communities with a lot of assets (whether financial, physical, social or political) are often the ones who have power. They can influence the systems and structures around them. Identifying the relationships between assets and systems and structures is very important when it comes to understanding issues of poverty, human dignity and social justice that will form the foundation of good program design.

## Assets

Assets are the resources that people use to generate livelihoods and to weather crisis and shocks. But what are assets? There are six basic categories in the IHD Conceptual Framework:

- Each individual has **Spiritual and Human** assets. These include education, religious faith, individual health, life experience and wisdom, intelligence, livelihood skills, and physical strength.

- **Social** assets are support networks – our family and friends, religious groups, and the organizations to which we belong.
- **Political** assets reflect the power people have in their communities and families. Individuals have a capacity to advocate for resources and for change, and the ability to claim their rights (e.g., the right to education, healthcare or voting).
- **Financial** assets are cash or items that can be converted to cash quickly and easily. Financial assets might include crops, livestock, wool rugs, gold, income from a job or remittances from abroad.
- **Natural** assets include important resources like soil, water, plants, trees, animals, air, regular rainfall and oceans.
- **Physical** assets include homes and sheds, equipment and tools, wells and clothes.

## Systems and structures

**Systems** organize and regulate behavior and processes. Examples of systems are:

- Legal systems
- Market systems
- Political systems
- Social and cultural systems

**Structures** are *organizations* that shape and influence our values and behavior, or *tangible things* that affect what we can do and how we do it. Some examples are:

- Political parties
- Churches and mosques
- Labor organizations
- Government ministries (e.g., agriculture, education)
- Road, rail and communication networks

*People with power can control structures and systems.* They can decide:

- Who can access services and assets.
- Who gets important information and who does not.
- Who participates in decision making and who does not.

## **Risk and vulnerability**

All of us face certain threats to our lives and livelihoods, such as illness, severe weather or accidents. Different individuals have different levels of vulnerability to specific risks. For example, the elderly and the very young are more susceptible to the risk of getting the flu during an outbreak. Wealthy people are less vulnerable than poor people to the risks imposed by cyclones and hurricanes. Rich and poor alike try to account for the major risks they face when developing and implementing their livelihood strategies. The IHD framework recognizes this fact, and categorizes threats in terms of **shocks, cycles and trends**.

**Shocks** are sudden, intense events that can harm people's lives or livelihoods. Shocks include epidemics, conflicts and natural disasters like the tsunami, the Pakistan earthquake and Hurricane Mitch.

**Cycles** occur regularly. Examples of cycles are floods, disease that comes with the rainy season or crop prices that fall after harvest and rise steadily as food supplies dwindle.

**Trends** can be positive or negative. Economies can improve or decline, environments can degrade or heal, and long-term weather patterns can change.

Understanding and addressing the primary sources of risk is a vital part of developing successful livelihood strategies and achieving integral human development. This link between relief and development comes from thinking carefully about how to reduce risk and vulnerability, and it is one of the key elements of the IHD Conceptual Framework.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The IHD Conceptual Framework can help to identify constraints and opportunities for livelihoods. It can help to identify appropriate interventions that strengthen local assets, and increase human dignity and social justice. It can help decrease risk and vulnerability and improve lives. It leads us to ask:

- To what extent are people achieving integral human development in their lives?
- What are people currently doing to make a living?
- What policies, institutions and values support or constrain people's ability to earn a living and to live in peace, with dignity and social justice?
- What shocks, cycles or trends support or constrain people's livelihoods, equity and human dignity?
- What are people's strengths and opportunities, and what can they do to improve their livelihood outcomes?

We hope this framework helps CRS staff and partners to serve the poor with the best programs possible.

## Other useful documents:

- CARE. 2002. *Household Livelihood Security Assessments: A Toolkit for Practitioners*. Prepared for the PHLS Unit by TANGO International Inc., Tucson, Arizona. [http://www.proventionconsortium.org/themes/default/pdfs/CRA/HLSA2002\\_meth.pdf](http://www.proventionconsortium.org/themes/default/pdfs/CRA/HLSA2002_meth.pdf)
- Action Aid International. 2004. *Participatory Vulnerability Analysis: A step-by-step guide for field staff*. Johannesburg. [http://www.actionaid.org.uk/100262/participatory\\_vulnerability\\_analysis.html](http://www.actionaid.org.uk/100262/participatory_vulnerability_analysis.html)

## PHOTO CAPTIONS:

Cover (clockwise from left)

- C.1 : A woman in Malawi provides food for her family.
- C.2 : In Pakistan, Mr. Duriaman takes a drink from his village's new water system, built with assistance from CRS after the 2005 earthquake. *Jim Stipe for CRS*
- C.3 : A rural child in Bolivia. What does his future hold?

Inside Pages

- 1.1 : Finding new ways to improve household nutrition and income in Malawi.
- 1.2 : A head of household in Malawi.
- 1.3 : A healthy child attends school in rural India.
- 1.4 : Children of Malawi families targeted for assistance.
- 2.1 : A woman in Bolivia works with her group to collect and evaluate traditional varieties of potatoes.
- 3.1 : A beneficiary of Project LISTEN in Malawi.
- 4.1 : Children are the future.
- 5.1 : Poor women in India gain strength from working and saving together.
- 8.1 : Working together to improve lives and livelihoods.

Back Cover

- B.1 : Members of a Savings and Internal Lending Community (SILC) based in Uganda during a weekly meeting to save and repay loans. *Mary Oldham/CRS*



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