

William (Bill) Schmitt

William (Bill) Schmitt was born and raised in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. He completed his undergraduate degree at Marquette University in 2001 (International Affairs, Political Science and Spanish) and earned a Masters in International Public Affairs from the La Follette School at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2005.

After graduate school, Bill began working for Catholic Relief Services (CRS) in 2006 as a Fellow in Nicaragua, where he worked primarily with cooperatives of small coffee farmers. The following year he moved on to West Darfur, Sudan, to serve as the Area Coordinator and helped manage CRS's emergency humanitarian intervention in the Northern Corridor of West Darfur. In October 2008 Bill moved to Bamiyan, Afghanistan, to set up a new field office and oversee the implementation of activities in agriculture, watershed restoration, and women's self-help groups in one of the poorest and historically most marginalized regions of the country. Following a short-term assignment as the Emergency Team Leader for the 2009-2010 West Sumatra earthquake response, Bill served as the Regional Technical Advisor for Emergencies in Latin America and the Caribbean from 2010-2012, during which time he supported the agency's large-scale response to the catastrophic earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.



From 2012-2015, Bill was the Country Representative for CRS in Afghanistan, where he was responsible for overseeing more than 360 staff members in five provinces nationwide, where, together with partners, CRS continues to implement programs focused on community-based education, agriculture and rural livelihoods, and natural resource management. From 2015 until late 2018 Bill served as the Country Representative in Turkey, overseeing the Turkey-based team as part of the broader CRS response to the ongoing humanitarian crisis inside Syria and across the region, particularly in neighboring countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq.

Bill moved back to Milwaukee with a desire to be closer to family and friends and to collaborate with others to help bring about positive change back in his hometown. In the summer of 2019 Bill accepted a short-term position as Interim Executive Director at United Methodist Children's Services (UMCS), a non-profit social service agency and low-income, supportive housing provider in Milwaukee's Washington Park neighborhood. That interim assignment developed into a longer-term calling, with Bill moving into the permanent Executive Director role in February of 2020.