



GHANA

2023 IFRC network country plan

Funding Requirement **CHF 6.5M**

Appeal number **MAAGH002**

In support of the Ghana Red Cross Society



10

National Society branches



54

National Society staff



77,625

National Society volunteers

People to be reached



1M

Climate and environment



150,000

Disasters and crises



430,000

Health and wellbeing



75,000

Migration and displacement



180,000

Values, power and inclusion

IFRC network multiyear focus

Longer term needs

- Disaster risk reduction and anticipatory action
- Epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response
 - Water, sanitation and hygiene
- Climate change adaptation and environmental protection
- Migration and displacement-related needs

Capacity development

- Communication and advocacy
 - Resource mobilization
 - Financial management

Key country data

Population **31.7M**

Long-term Climate Risk Index **113**

Human Development Index rank **133**

Population below poverty level **23.4%**

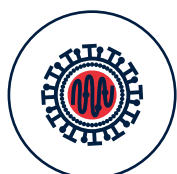
Hazards



Floods



Drought



Disease outbreaks



Migration and displacement

Funding requirements

Total 6.5M CHF

Through the IFRC

4.5M CHF

Through Participating National Societies

→ **1.2M** CHF

Host National Society

→ **860,000** CHF

IFRC Breakdown

Longer term needs

1M CHF

Climate and environment

310,000 CHF

Disasters and crises

2.3M CHF

Health and wellbeing

750,000 CHF

Migration and displacement

40,000 CHF

Values, power and inclusion

116,000 CHF

Enabling local actors

Participating National Societies

Italian Red Cross

Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Netherlands Red Cross

Swedish Red Cross*

Swiss Red Cross

NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

The Ghana Red Cross Society was established in 1958 and admitted to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1959. It is the largest volunteer-based humanitarian service organization in the country and has a presence in all 10 regions, with 153 district chapters and 77,625 volunteers. It works directly under the Ministry of Health as an auxiliary to public authorities in the humanitarian field.

Every district chapter supports communities in need through volunteers trained in first aid, disaster management, water and sanitation, health and disaster risk reduction. The volunteers also respond to emergencies and carry out community rescue missions.

In 2021, the National Society reached more than 45,000 people in water service provision, 10,000 in disaster response, and 5,000 with commercial first aid training.

The Ghana Red Cross has been a major stakeholder with the Ministry of Health and the Government of Ghana in the fight against COVID-19 since the start of the pandemic. This has included providing unconditional cash transfer programming to help alleviate suffering during the lockdown period, such as the loss of jobs.

As part of Ghana's vaccination campaign, the National Society deployed volunteers to sensitize the public to the need for vaccination, and it raised awareness in marketplaces, churches, mosques, community information centres and radio stations. Volunteers also assisted health staff during national immunization days by helping to bring people to local vaccination centres, significantly increasing coverage compared with previous initiatives. These COVID-19 vaccination rollout campaigns reached more than five million people with critical messages.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION IN 2023

Joint situational analysis

Ghana is in West Africa, sharing borders with Togo to the east, Ivory Coast to the west, Burkina Faso to the north, and the Gulf of Guinea and the Atlantic Ocean to the south. It has a population of more than 31.7 million with an annual growth rate of 2.1 per cent, the lowest since independence. The population is primarily youthful, with 50 per cent below the age of 18 years. It is expected to reach approximately 35 million by 2025 with 55 per cent living in urban areas.

Ghana's major settlements lie in the south and include Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi-Takoradi, Ho, Sunyani, Cape Coast and Tema. Major settlements such as Tamale, Bolgatanga and Wa are located in the north. Ghana's urban population is steadily increasing, and it is now estimated that there are more people in urban than rural areas. The 2021 census recorded a rural to urban population ratio of 42:58, and the rate of urbanization is

significantly affected by the growing numbers of slums and peri-urban communities.

Agriculture is the primary source of livelihood for Ghana's poorest households, and it also covers 90 per cent of the country's food needs. About 52 per cent of its labour force is engaged in agriculture, contributing to 54 per cent of GDP and 40 per cent of export earnings. Changing rainfall patterns, however, have had a devastating impact on food security and nutrition. Productivity suffers from inadequate irrigation facilities, poor roads, inadequate storage facilities, land degradation, and bad farming and fishing practices. Such negative factors have had significant implications on farming and fishing communities' livelihoods and economic empowerment.

Over the last two decades, Ghana has taken major strides towards democracy under a multi-party system, with its independent judiciary winning public trust.

Ghana consistently ranks among Africa's top three countries for freedom of speech and the press. President Nana Akufo-Addo's re-election after the Supreme Court dismissed the opposition's election petition gave the governing New Patriotic Party a second term.

Following the attainment of middle-income country status in 2010, after two decades of above five per cent GDP growth coupled with the discovery of offshore oil reserves, per capita growth has remained relatively high. Ghana now ranks as a lower middle-income country, with poverty rates slashed by half. The COVID-19 pandemic and the March 2020 lockdown halted Ghana's rapid growth, resulting in a sharp decline in commodity exports. The economic slowdown in 2021 had a considerable impact on households. In 2022, more than 3.4 million people in Ghana lived in extreme poverty, the majority in rural areas. Inequalities persist between the north and south of the country, and between the urban and rural populations.

Ghana has progressed in terms of gender equality and women's empowerment, but social norms remain inadequate. The poor are disadvantaged in terms of owning assets and accessing financial institutions and services, quality education, health care, and safe water and sanitation facilities. This demographic, particularly women and children, are also disproportionately affected by natural hazards and the adverse effects of climate change. Despite the expansion of publicly supported mitigating measures in the form of social protection

programmes, they are still inadequate. Income inequality is also a growing concern.

While Ghana is one of the most stable countries in the region, the security situation in the north is threatened by chieftaincy, religious disputes and political violence. Radicalization and polarization tendencies continue to fuel farmer-herder competition over land resources, the exploitation of ground resources related to mining (for example, gold and bauxite) and timber felling. The potential spillover of extremist threats from Burkina Faso remains a concern for the authorities, despite strengthened collaboration with the armed forces and law enforcement agencies of neighbouring countries as part of the Accra Initiative.

Regarding natural hazards, Ghana remains exposed to floods, particularly in the northern savannah belt. It also faces associated risks of landslides. The recurrence of floods and droughts is becoming a common phenomenon, often associated with high temperatures and intense heat. Already affected by coastal erosion, especially along the eastern coastline, such regions are likely to be affected by further sea level rise and storm surges by the end of this century. Furthermore, areas around Accra, including the Akosombo Dam, are exposed to seismic hazards. Ghana's rapid rate of urbanization has put pressure on infrastructures such as housing and social amenities, thus increasing disaster vulnerability. Most urbanized cities such as Accra and Kumasi face significant wastewater management challenges leading to flash floods and diarrhoeal disease epidemics.

Strategic priorities

Climate and environment

Ghana is under the climatic influence of the Sahel region and two oceans. This makes it highly vulnerable to climate variability and change, which threatens future growth and development. Rising sea levels, drought, higher temperatures and erratic rainfall negatively impact infrastructure, hydropower production, food security, and coastal and agricultural livelihoods. Approximately 25 per cent of the population live along

the coast in rapidly expanding urban areas like Accra, which makes them especially vulnerable to flooding and water-borne diseases. Drought and reduced rainfall threaten access to reliable power sources, which are already erratic and insufficient. The climate and socio-economic environment in Ghana's semi-arid, coastal and wetland areas make communities vulnerable to food insecurity and unstable livelihoods. In turn,

these lead to unsustainable agro-ecological systems, crop failure and unproductive rangelands.

Temperatures in Ghana have risen by approximately 1°C since the 1960s, an average increase of 0.21°C per decade. The country will continue to get warmer, with mean temperatures projected to increase by 1.0°C to 3.0°C by the middle of the century and by 2.3°C to 5.3°C by 2100. Projected warming will likely occur more rapidly in the northern and inland areas than in coastal regions. In addition to rising temperatures, substantial increases are expected in the frequency of days and nights considered 'hot', with an anticipated rise of 18–59 per cent by the middle of the century. Increased heat and extreme heat conditions will significantly affect human and animal health, agriculture, water resources and ecosystems.

The longstanding extractive industries in Ghana also have proven destructive, polluting most of the country's water resources and degrading arable lands. Deforestation, too, is a significant concern. According to Global Forest Watch, between 2001 and 2021, Ghana lost 1.41 million hectares of tree cover, equivalent to a 20 per cent decrease since 2000, resulting in 739Mt of CO₂ emissions. In 2010, Ghana had seven million hectares of natural forest, extending over 30 per cent of its land area. By 2021, it had lost 101,000 hectares, equivalent to 63.8Mt of CO₂ emissions.

The third goal of Ghana's National Development Plan (2018–2057) – to build well-planned and safe communities while protecting the natural environment – highlights the country's planned forest management approach concerning climate variability, change and management. In June 2022, the Government of Ghana, through its President, announced plans to plant 20 million trees in that year alone. This signifies its robust approach to tree planting. The plan aims to implement the Ghana Forestry Development Masterplan (2016–2036) by promoting sustainable consumption and the production of forest resources as well as the development of commercial nurseries.

The Ghana National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy intends to:

- Ensure a consistent, comprehensive and targeted approach to increasing climate resilience and decreasing the vulnerability of the population
- Deepen the awareness of the general public and policy-makers about the critical role of adaptation in national development efforts
- Position Ghana to draw funding for meeting its national adaptation needs
- Strengthen international recognition to facilitate action
- Ease the mainstreaming of climate change and disaster risk reduction into national development

Mains areas of action and support

The Ghana Red Cross is part of the [IFRC Global Climate Resilience Programme](#), which aims to foster an unprecedented scale-up in locally led climate-smart disaster risk reduction and adaptation efforts to prevent and reduce climate-related disaster impacts, and build community-level climate resilience. The programme aims to support 500 million people in 100 of the most climate-vulnerable countries, focusing on the least funded, marginalized communities. This holistic, multi-year programmatic approach consists of four operational pillars: (1) scaling up climate-smart disaster risk reduction, anticipatory action and preparedness; (2) reducing the public health impacts of climate change; (3) addressing climate displacement; and (4) enabling climate-resilient livelihoods and ecosystem services.

With the IFRC network support, the Ghana Red Cross will back community-led solutions to address challenges, improve behaviours and promote climate action and environmental protection. It will also expand collaboration with multiple stakeholders. The National Society will focus on planting and caring for trees in the northern part of the country, which suffers from forest loss and land degradation. It will seek to collaborate with public and private sectors to promote the planting and care for 200,000 trees in 2023. It will do this in alignment with governmental plans and the IFRC's Pan-African initiative on Tree Planting and Care.

Disasters and crises

For real-time information on emergencies, see IFRC GO page [Ghana](#)

Ghana is prone to several natural and human-induced hazards, leading to disasters affecting more than 100,000 people every year. According to the Department of Geography and Resource Development of the University of Ghana, of the 9,821 recorded disasters between 1900 and 2005, hydrometeorological disasters were the most common, with 7,586 occurrences. This was followed by geological and biological disasters, which accounted for 1,252 and 1,083 cases respectively.

Floods: Flooding occurs during Ghana's rainy season (June to September) and affects the regions of Greater Accra, Northern, Upper East, Eastern, Volta, Western, Central, Ashanti, Upper West and Brong Ahafo. In recent years, floods have become more frequent in Ghana, affecting all parts of the country. An estimated 70,000 inhabitants, on average, are affected by flooding in Ghana each year. Recent trends indicate that climate change has resulted in an extension of the flooding season into November. Flood-prone areas are located mainly along riverbanks, beaches and dam sites. Urban and metropolitan areas such as Accra, Kumasi, Tema, Tamale, Cape Coast and Sekondi-Takoradi are also affected due to poor drainage systems, human activities and their low-lying topography.

Drought: Drought in Ghana is characterized by two main features – the reduction in the amount and frequency of precipitation and the reduction in streamflow. The specific regions prone to drought are the Savannah, and the forest and coastal belts of Ghana. Three major droughts from 1900 to 2015 have affected approximately 12.5 million people.

Seismic hazards: Particularly earthquakes, these are most prominent in Ghana's coastal and eastern regions. Some communities in Eastern, Greater Accra and Central regions are also likely to be affected. A significant challenge has been construction and sand extraction activities along prominent ridges and coastal lines in earthquake-prone areas.

Pest infestations: Ghana's dependence on food imports has increased its exposure to armyworms, significantly affecting farmers' livelihoods and food security by reducing harvests. Diminished productivity and increased costs of pesticides make it difficult for farmers to meet their families' nutritional, health and educational needs.

Food insecurity: During the lean season in 2020, the World Food Programme noted that more than 21,000 people suffered from food insecurity in Ghana, particularly in the northern region. Agriculture is mainly rain-fed, and less than one per cent of cultivated land is irrigated. Farmers in southern Ghana can grow more food because they have two rainy seasons, while the north has only one.

Major accidents: Accidents can also create major problems in Ghana. On 20 January 2022, a giant blast occurred in the Apeate community near Bogoso, about 300km west of the capital, Accra. The explosion happened when a motorcycle went under a truck carrying explosives en route to the gold mine at Bogoso. After the blasts, local people rushed to the scene. A second blast occurred a few minutes later, destroying dozens of buildings. By 26 January, 17 people had been confirmed dead, while 59 were injured and referred to Bogoso Government Hospital, where they received treatment. As of 26 January, 3,300 people (1,122 males and 2,178 females) were affected by the event, excluding those registered at the various health centres. Reports from the National Disaster Management Organization indicate that the blasts destroyed 500 buildings, making 1,500 people homeless. The explosion shattered major roads in the area, stranding numerous commuters. Schools, markets and other services at the community level were equally affected, disrupting activities, as children could no longer go to school, and community members lost their livelihoods. Sanitation facilities were destroyed by the explosion in some parts, leading to high incidences of open defecation.

The Government's National Development Plan identifies food and nutrition security as one of the ways to create an equitable, healthy and prosperous society. To attain

and sustain food and nutritional security throughout Ghana, the Government has made it a priority to:

- Promote sustainable nutrition-sensitive food production systems
- Ensure the development of sustainable food maintenance systems
- Implement programmes to adequately address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and breastfeeding women and the elderly
- Promote nutrition security
- Promote nutrition education in health care centres and schools
- Improve food safety standards

To enhance its preparedness and response to disasters, the Government of Ghana has also outlined strategic interventions such as developing a National Disaster Management Framework; enhancing the resilience of vulnerable communities and critical infrastructure; strengthening public education and awareness in disaster risk reduction; and raising public education and awareness in disaster risk reduction. The National Development Plan emphasizes the need for trained local authorities with appropriate resources to assess disaster risks and support the development of mechanisms to reduce risks, prevent losses, respond effectively, and recover quickly from disasters.

Main actions and areas of support

The Ghana Red Cross works very closely in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) and is a member of the National Coordination Forum in Disaster Management. The National Society currently has 33 national disaster response teams, 10 regional emergency response teams consisting of 135 members, 85 trained and established district disaster response teams across the country, and 45 community disaster preparedness and response teams consisting of 910 members.

The Ghana Red Cross responds to the many disasters affecting the country, whether provoked by natural or other hazards, such as the explosion of early 2022, for

which the National Society received an IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) [allocation](#). The Ghana Red Cross immediately activated its district disaster response teams from nearby districts and deployed 52 team members. First aid was provided to 59 injured people, and search and rescue and evacuation operations were carried out. These activities were jointly implemented with the National Ambulance Service and fire fighters. The National Society dispatched 20 emergency family tents and 20 shelter repair kits to accommodate 105 displaced persons camped at Appiatse Relief Centre at Bogoso. These kits were already prepositioned in a warehouse, which enabled the National Society to support the affected families swiftly. It did this in collaboration with the Swiss Red Cross, which is present in-country. The volunteers provided psychosocial support to 200 affected people. The National Society also provided cash and voucher assistance to 400 households, as well as 274 dignity kits, 400 hygiene kits, 18,000 aqua tabs and the installation of 20 handwashing facilities.

The Ghana Red Cross developed experience in cash transfer programming during COVID-19 and with IFRC support. The use of cash assistance is the preferred modality when markets are functional. The National Society has an existing framework agreement with Fidelity Bank to carry out cash transfers through Mobile Money. The financial services provider provides a statement of disbursements at the end of the operation, and the National Society confirms this by comparing beneficiary declaration notes. It has developed an extensive cash and voucher assistance risk register with identified mitigation measures, applied as necessary, and will continue strengthening its readiness for cash at scale.

With IFRC network support, the focus of the National Society in 2023 will be on preparedness and readiness to respond to shocks and on enhancing community risk resilience. It will include early warning, early action and anticipation to mitigate risks from multi-hazards negatively affecting the lives, livelihoods, homes and living conditions of vulnerable communities and the most disadvantaged and hard to reach.

The Ghana Red Cross plan will introduce food security support as part of the IFRC Pan-African Zero Hunger Initiative, which aligns with the Ghana National Development Plan. In addition, planting multi-purpose trees contributing to environmental protection will benefit food security and income generation streams for the population.

In 2022, the Ghana Red Cross undertook a self-assessment exercise enabling it to analyze disaster and emergency profiles and capacities. This will result in a plan for Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) at all levels. The National Society will therefore support the Government in risk assessment and elaboration of contingency plans at various levels, leading to the positioning of necessary resources. In 2023 and beyond, the national and regional disaster response teams will be strengthened and equipped with the essential skills and tools, including preparing stocks based on disaster profiles across the country. Community-level disaster response units will be improved through the enhanced presence of district chapters. At the national level, it will reinforce coordination with the Emergency Operational Centre, while participation in the inter-agency working group on emergencies is strengthened. This is in line with the IFRC Pan-African Red Ready initiative.

Health and wellbeing

Ghana has a complex disease burden influenced by risk factors such as the physical environment, education, socio-economic situation, population lifestyles and demographic characteristics of the overall population. Historically, major health problems affecting Ghanaians have been primarily communicable, maternal, perinatal and nutritional diseases. Recently, other conditions such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, mental health and neglected tropical diseases have exacerbated Ghana's health situation. Non-communicable diseases are also rapidly becoming common in developing countries such as Ghana.

Several nationwide research studies have revealed weaknesses and inadequacies in disease surveillance and response systems. These include underqualified staff, cultural beliefs and lack of trust in the formal health care sector. The studies have also identified

gaps such as delayed reporting, low-quality protective equipment (for example, gloves and aprons), insufficient staff and a lack of laboratory capacity.

Ghana is among the most cholera-prone countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The last major cholera outbreak occurred in 2014, with more than 29,000 cases and 250 deaths reported in 130 districts of all 10 regions of Ghana. Most cases emanated from urban metropolitan communities, customarily associated with a lack of access to water and sanitation. Weak or non-existent waste management systems exacerbated by unplanned urbanization are also common in overcrowded informal settlements.

Access to water, sanitation and hygiene services remains a challenge in Ghana, provoked mainly by a lack of availability and quality of service. There is an apparent wealth disparity in basic water access, with the wealthy nearly twice as likely to benefit than the poor. Hydrologically challenged regions such as the Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions have lower than national average access to essential water, meaning improved water within 30 minutes by foot. Additionally, urban dwellers are more likely to have basic access than those in rural areas.

Only one in every five households in Ghana enjoys an improved sanitation facility. More than one in every five still practice open defecation, nearly half of the poorest quintile households, which significantly drops as wealth increases. Open defecation is more prevalent in rural areas. Sharing of sanitation remains dominant, and one in every four households uses public facilities. Nearly half of the population have access to mobile or fixed handwashing facilities with soap and water. About one in every five women feels excluded from social activities during menstruation. The low levels of sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services give rise to higher incidences of water-borne diseases, which affect, to a greater extent, women as well as children under the age of five.

In 2022, Ghana launched a five-year (2022–2026) National Health Promotion Strategy, which aims to improve the quality of health promotion services and increase collaboration for health service provision.

Main actions and areas of support

The strategy of the Ghana Red Cross is to support government efforts towards ensuring sustainable improvement in the quality of life of the most vulnerable individuals, households and communities. It aims to scale-up health programmes and projects targetting the most vulnerable.

The outbreak of infectious diseases such as Marburg and monkeypox in 2022 highlighted the need to maintain active disease surveillance and mechanisms for rapid response. Having a network of branches and volunteers to support the authorities in early detection, contact tracing, social mobilization and community engagement for further infection control, the National Society is well placed to support the government authorities in this work. Community engagement and accountability will be a key strategy for delivering health information to prevent infectious diseases among communities.

The Ghana Red Cross, as a water and sanitation service provider, will continue to run water supply systems in the regions, ensuring they maintain a sustainable service to 50,000 inhabitants. To address remaining capacity gaps within the National Society, the IFRC network will provide the necessary skills to manage the services as a business. This also constitutes part of social services, ensuring that the systems are autonomous and not-for-profit. Further expansion of these systems will provide improved household connections. Through the Swiss Red Cross and IFRC support for new water supply systems, such networks will reach an additional 75,000 people.

A Memorandum of Understanding developed between the Ghana Red Cross and the Ghana Water Company will provide a framework for broader collaboration in urban water services. An urban water, sanitation and hygiene pilot project in Kumasi and Accra cities will be implemented, focusing on low-income groups, thus creating demand. It will also subsidize household connections and community hygiene promotion interventions, and ensuring that communities have an effective feedback mechanism with the Ghana Water Company.

The National Society will continue to provide much-needed support to COVID-19 vaccine rollout at the community level in collaboration with the Ghana Health Service and other sectoral actors. Volunteers will engage with communities through local information centres, interactive radio and television sessions, and house-to-house campaigns. The Government and partners have recognized the contribution of the Ghana Red Cross in accelerating vaccine uptake.

A continent-wide initiative between the IFRC and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to invest in building resilient public health security infrastructure on the continent will reinforce the fight against COVID-19. Under the US\$39 million Saving Lives and Livelihoods initiative funded by the Mastercard Foundation, the IFRC and African National Societies are building a programme to ensure that 60 per cent of African people are vaccinated against COVID-19. The partnership between the Mastercard Foundation and Africa CDC will support the procurement and delivery of tens of millions of COVID-19 vaccines and hasten economic recovery on the continent. Under this programme, the Ghana Red Cross will deliver critical risk communication and community engagement activities to vulnerable communities in support of COVID-19 vaccine uptake. Other programme partners will provide procurement and logistics services to a central warehouse (UNICEF), in-country logistics (World Food Programme), managing COVID-19 vaccination centres (Amref Health Africa and GHSS) and safety surveillance (Akros).

The Ghana Red Cross will contribute to promote eye health in the Northern, North East and Savannah regions targetting 1,300,000 people to be reached with eye health services including outreach programmes in schools, health promotion, screening and surgeries. The National Society will also train 500 volunteers in the three regions to ensure continued knowledge sharing.

As part of the reforms within the National Society, the revision of the Ghana Red Cross Act will also demand a review of all the programmes in the Strategic Plan 2021–2025 to align with the new focus and challenges.

Migration and displacement

Given Ghana's urbanization rate of 56.7 per cent in 2019 (according to the World Bank), general neglect of infrastructure in rural Ghana has emerged. An over-concentration of economic benefits in urban areas has resulted in recent years in a drastic increase in migration from rural zones to cities such as Accra, Kumasi, Tema and Takoradi, as well as emigration to foreign countries.

In addition, although emigration has been increasing faster than immigration since the 1990s, Ghana remains an important destination country. Most non-Ghanaian residents are nationals of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), followed by immigrants from other African countries, Europe and North America. Students make up a high proportion of arrivals. The overall immigrant population has remained relatively stable over the last two decades. In contrast, the number of asylum seekers and refugees, mainly from Liberia, has sharply increased.

More than two-thirds of people migrating from Ghana stay within West Africa, although a growing proportion are leaving the region. The two most important destinations for emigrants are the US and UK. People on the move have increased vulnerabilities to abuse and health risks. Irregular migrants may not be aware of their rights to health, security and other essential services along the way or at their destination. They may also find themselves in dangerous situations.

Despite the efforts of the Government and its partners, persistent challenges remain in all of Ghana's migration areas:

- Migration governance – including limited coordination, lack of reliable data, difficulty in finding helpful information, age and disaggregated data
- Border management – such as corruption and document and identity fraud
- Irregular migration – there are issues with migrant smuggling and trafficking and difficulties with re-admissions
- Legal migration – including brain drain and selection criteria

- Assistance to returning migrants – the available reintegration assistance is insufficient compared with the current need, and there are inadequate psychosocial and social support services
- Internally displaced persons, asylum seekers and refugees – there is poor emergency support and limited access to sustainable solutions
- Host communities – they are insufficiently involved and there is some mistrust
- Diaspora engagement – there is a lack of investment and the diaspora is not sufficiently leveraged

Available support for skills development and employability is limited for returnees and the whole resident population. There are insufficient sustainable alternatives to irregular migration or migration in general. Youth are particularly affected and represent a significant proportion of returning and potential migrants.

Main actions and areas of support:

The Ghana Red Cross is part of the IFRC three-year [Global Route-Based Migration Programme](#), which aims to improve the safety and dignity of people on the move along deadly and dangerous land and sea-based migration routes across Africa, the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa. The programme aims to support 4.7 million people on the move and people in host communities annually through three operational pillars: (1) improving access to assistance and protection, including through humanitarian service points; (2) strengthening National Society capacities; and (3) local to global humanitarian diplomacy.

The IFRC will support the Ghana Red Cross in understanding migration dynamics and delivering appropriate humanitarian services to migrants, displaced people and those affected by the migratory and displacement phenomenon (including families who stay behind), in coordination with relevant local and international actors. The National Society focus will be in the northern part of the country, which shares a border with Togo and Burkina Faso. There are also concerns related to political instability and increasing cases of militants along the border with Burkina Faso. The IFRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will

support the National Society in enhancing the capacities of its regional branches in northern Ghana to deliver tailored assistance for dealing with the flow of migrants and emigrants.

In support of the Ghana Red Cross, the IFRC will further engage with stakeholders such as the European Union, the Ghana Refugee Board, UNHCR and NADMO in responding to the needs of migrant populations in the country.

Values, power and inclusion

Ghana has progressed in gender equality and women's empowerment, but social norms remain inadequate. Ranked 135 out of 162 countries in the 2019 Gender Inequality Index, participation in decision-making is still low. Only 14.6 per cent of parliamentarians are women. The education level, too, remains lower for women. Only 55 per cent of adult women enjoy secondary education compared with 71 per cent of adult males. On average, women have only 6.6 years of schooling.

Ghana does not fully meet the minimum standards for eliminating trafficking, although it is making significant efforts. Ghana is a source, transit and destination country in trafficking women and children for sexual exploitation and domestic and commercial labour. According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crimes global report on trafficking (2018), forced labour was the most detected form of exploitation in sub-Saharan Africa (63 per cent). In 2019, the Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC) recognized that 41.9 per cent of trafficking victims in Ghana were women, while 43.5 per cent of trafficked victims had Ghanaian citizenship. Furthermore, 88.3 per cent of victims with Ghanaian citizenship were children, while 93.1 per cent of trafficking victims were children. Children are, therefore, the biggest trafficked group from and into Ghana, as well as internally. A significant challenge is the internal trafficking of children from their home villages towards the fisheries of Lake Volta, where more than half the children working in and around the lake are victims of forced labour. These victims are not allowed to attend school and have inadequate housing and clothing. Their employers control them through violence and intimidation, obliging them to subsist on limited access to food. They also force boys under five

years old to work, often in dangerous conditions. Girls work onshore and are thus more vulnerable to sexual abuse and forced marriage.

In Ghana, people living with disabilities account for 3.7 per cent of the population. According to a research paper by Abdul-Aziz Seidu et al (2021) entitled *The Level of Inclusiveness of People with Disabilities in Ghanaian Health Policies and Reports: A Scoping Review*, the level of inclusiveness of disability issues in Ghanaian health policies and reports is very low. According to UNICEF, about one in every five children aged two to 17 years have a functioning difficulty and this is more prevalent in the five- to 17-year age group than in children aged two to four years. The highest proportion of children with functioning difficulties were found in Volta, Eastern and Upper West regions, while the fewest come from the Northern and Greater Accra regions.

Furthermore, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 650,000 people in Ghana have a severe mental disorder. A further 2.2 million are suffering from moderate to mild mental illness. The treatment gap is 98 per cent of the total population believed to have a mental disorder.

Youth unemployment is particularly acute – nine per cent of young people between the ages of 15 and 24, and, according to UNDP (2020), 30 per cent of young people, are neither in school or employed. This will only intensify with the projected growth rate in Ghana's youth population over the next decade.

Main actions and areas of support

In its operations, the Ghana Red Cross incorporates protection, gender and inclusion, and community engagement and accountability. As part of needs assessments and analysis, gender and diversity analysis is included in all sector responses, to understand how different groups have been affected, and this then informs operational strategies. Effective complaints and feedback mechanisms ensure community feedback in the implementation of plans of action. As situations change, this helps incorporate community voices in any change of strategy. The IFRC will support the Ghana Red Cross to further train staff and volunteers to adopt an

inclusive approach in its programming, ensuring that issues of protection, gender and inclusion are included in all its programmes. The IFRC and the Ghana Red Cross will support those at risk or survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, by increasing the National Society's capacity to prevent, respond to and mitigate risks, through the coordinated development of programming standards and tools.

Key to ensuring inclusivity in all Ghana Red Cross programmes is the involvement of all minority groups, including people living with disabilities and the participation of all gender identities and backgrounds.

The IFRC will enhance the Ghana Red Cross's capacities to reach more local branches and increase awareness and actions. It will do this through the youth's powerful role and engagement with the education community. This ensures that significant efforts will achieve more inclusive working dynamics, greater diversity, protection of people, dignity, and contributions to resilience and peaceful environments. Since the National Society was involved in designing an education in emergency contingency plan with the Ministry of Education and other national stakeholders, this plan will enhance learning for children and youth, who are often disadvantaged during emergencies.

Enabling local actors

The Ghana Red Cross is committed to pursuing institutional strengthening, and it carried out the self-assessment part of the Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) process in 2017. The self-assessment is designed to capture the strengths and weaknesses of National Societies concerning a wide range of organizational capacities. The National Society is also committed to the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) process and is in the action and accountability phase. The PER Approach is a continuous and flexible process that enables National Societies to assess, measure and analyze the strengths and gaps of their preparedness and response mechanisms, and ultimately take necessary action to improve.

As part of its strategic plan, the Ghana Red Cross aims to strengthen its organizational development, to enable it to plan and implement programmes and projects effectively and efficiently. The IFRC network is committed to supporting the National Society in its development, according to the priorities it has identified for itself.

Engaged

The Ghana Red Cross will increase its visibility and public trust through improved communications and advocacy. It will also strengthen its auxiliary role with local and national partners, and work better as a coordinated

network with other organizations. This is also in line with a new UN framework on working with local organizations.

Looking ahead in 2023 and beyond, the IFRC network will also support the Ghana Red Cross to continue the digital transformation of its systems and strengthen data management, through the Digital Divide Initiative funded by the Icelandic Red Cross.

Accountable

The IFRC network will support the development of a resource mobilization unit and strategy to help the Ghana Red Cross mobilize resources internally for its core and programme costs.

The financing modalities between the IFRC and National Societies are changing. In Ghana, there will be a transition from the traditional working advance system to a funds transfer, or Working with Project Partners, modality. This will initially be achieved with a country-level financial systems assessment, and the development of a plan of action. The IFRC network will support further training of finance teams.

As an accountability mechanism to partners, the IFRC will support the National Society in developing a solid country operational plan and the mechanism for monitoring and reporting.

The Ghana Red Cross Board has approved a risk management framework, with board and senior programme staff training in place. There will also be a risk management register formulated to ensure that solid risk perception and mitigation measures are in place. A strategy and plan of action will be developed to mitigate the risk of fraud and corruption, sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse.

Trusted

In 2022, the National Society embarked on the revision of the Red Cross Act. The process, spearheaded by the National Society and the legal adviser of the Ministry of Health, will be completed with parliamentary approval and the signing of the bill by the President. In 2023, dissemination of the Act to national, regional and sub-regional levels will be accomplished, enabling the revision of policies and strategies to realign with the new Act.

The IFRC will also support the development of operational plans and budgets. As a constitutional requirement, the National Board will discuss and approve these plans and budgets. In 2023, the National Society will hold general elections. The IFRC will provide support with the induction of the newly elected Board into the Red Cross, with the help of the ICRC.

The Ghana Red Cross will institutionalize the role of security management within its respective systems, particularly in volatile and high-tension operating contexts.

As young people are critical for the National Society and its future development, its youth programme will be expanded to ensure that young people will have a dedicated input into each component of its action, such as climate change, disaster risk reduction, health and care, and the challenges associated with migration.

THE IFRC NETWORK

The IFRC

The IFRC supports the Ghana Red Cross in strategic and operational coordination, National Society development, and humanitarian diplomacy. It also promotes accountability as a cross-cutting theme. The IFRC provides support to the National Society through its country cluster delegation in Abuja and its country office in Ghana, where it has legal status with the Government. The office plays a role in representation, advocacy and coordination with the Ghana Red Cross and participating National Societies, thus supporting the IFRC network's strategic priorities and membership services.

The Ghana Red Cross received funding from the IFRC's [Capacity Building Fund](#) to support the review and dissemination of the Ghana Red Cross Act in 2022, with an elaborate dissemination exercise beginning late 2022 and continuing in 2023 and beyond.

In recent years, the IFRC supported the Ghana Red Cross through several [DREF operations](#) concerning election preparedness, floods and dam spillage, and explosions. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IFRC, through its [Global Emergency Appeal](#), has supported the National Society in its response, and also supported it in cash preparedness activities, including training and support for staff and volunteers in 2021.

IFRC membership coordination

The IFRC coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, situations and needs; agree on common priorities; co-develop common strategies to address issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian access, acceptance and space; mobilize funding and other resources; clarify consistent public messaging; and monitor progress. It also means ensuring that strategies and programmes in support of people in need incorporate clarity of

Participating National Society Support - Bilateral

Name of Partner NS	Funding Requirements	Climate	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing	Migration	Values, power and inclusion	Engaged	Accountable	Trusted
Iranian Red Crescent				●					
Italian Red Cross		●							
Netherlands Red Cross				●					
Swiss Red Cross	CHF 1.15M	●	●	●				●	●

Total

1.15M

humanitarian action, and development assistance, and reinforce the auxiliary role of National Societies in their respective countries.

The Ghana Red Cross is part of the four IFRC Pan-African initiatives focusing on Tree Planting and Care, Zero Hunger, Red Ready and National Society Development. These initiatives are reflected in the relevant sections of this plan.

The Ghana Red Cross enjoys longer-term partnerships with several participating National Societies:

The **Iranian Red Crescent** has a clinic in Accra providing clinical and preventive health services to its catchment areas. It collaborates with the Ghana Red Cross to provide outreach services in the outskirts of Accra city.

The **Italian Red Cross**, though not having an in-country presence, is funding the planting and care of 15,000 trees in Ghana. This funding support was scheduled to end in October 2022.

The **Netherlands Red Cross** has no country presence in Ghana. However, through the IFRC, it has started supporting an urban pilot water, sanitation and hygiene project targeting Kumasi and Accra city, primarily

targeting low-income communities with a number of interventions. The pilot project began in 2022, aiming to increase demand for safe drinking water and better service delivery from the Ghana Water Company. Low-income communities willing to get connections will have their costs subsidized. The project will also address community health through a hygiene promotion package to accompany the supported household connections. An innovation to this project delivery will be using cash and voucher assistance to subsidize the household connections and to deliver hygiene products to women and adolescent girls. The project will increase community awareness of preventable water, sanitation and hygiene diseases.

The **Swiss Red Cross** has been active in Ghana since 1983, particularly in health, disaster risk reduction, water, sanitation and hygiene, and National Society development. It is currently operational in four regions of the country, providing technical and administrative support while the Ghana Red Cross implements the programmes. In National Society development, the Swiss Red Cross supports the Ghana Red Cross in institutional preparedness, branch development, financial sustainability, sound financial management and resource mobilization.

Movement coordination

The Ghana Red Cross coordinates closely with IFRC, participating National Societies and the ICRC to ensure complementarity of support and alignment of approaches. In emergencies, it holds regular meetings of International Red Cross and Crescent Movement partners present in Ghana, such as weekly meetings to respond to the explosion in early 2022. It implements this in line with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) principles, and the newly adopted [Seville Agreement 2.0](#).

Through its regional office in Abidjan, the ICRC supports the Ghana Red Cross in communications, restoring family links, safer access and international humanitarian law. It has also supported the induction of new members elected to the governance board of the National Society. Through the collaboration of the Ghana Red Cross, the ICRC has engaged with the Government of Ghana as a member of the security council on matters related to small arms and cross-border security issues.

Coordination with other actors

The Ghana Red Cross works directly under the Ministry of Health as a parent ministry. In discharging its mandate as an auxiliary to the public authorities, the National Society works closely in consultation and collaboration with other sectoral ministries and departments. NADMO is responsible for emergency coordination at all levels. The National Society collaborates closely with NADMO for rapid assessments during emergencies and humanitarian assistance, and this involves collaboration with district directors and regional coordinators of NADMO.

The National Society also collaborates with other main stakeholders including Ghana's health service, district assemblies, traditional leadership, UN agencies and other civil society actors.

In response to COVID-19, UNAIDS has supported the Ghana Red Cross with targeting key populations (such as those living with HIV/AIDS) in accessing COVID-19 vaccines. With UNICEF, the National Society has a standing agreement to intervene in social mobilization activities in water, sanitation and hygiene in emergencies, in the northern regions of Ghana.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [IFRC Global Plan and Country Plans](#)
- [Subscribe for updates](#)
- [Donor response](#) on IFRC website
- [Live Disaster Response Emergency Fund \(DREF\) data](#)
- Operational information: [IFRC GO platform](#)
- National Society data: [IFRC Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network, with **192 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** and around **14 million volunteers**. Our volunteers are present in communities before, during and after a crisis or disaster. We work in the most hard to reach and complex settings in the world, saving lives and promoting human dignity. We support communities to become stronger and more resilient places where people can live safe and healthy lives, and have opportunities to thrive.

Contact Information

Bhupinder Tomar

Head of Delegation
IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for
Nigeria, Togo, Benin & Ghana, based
in Abuja

T +91 9717791000

bhupinder.tomar@ifrc.org

Louise Daintrey

Head of Strategic Engagement
& Partnerships
IFRC Regional Office for Africa,
Nairobi

T +254 110 843978

louise.daintrey@ifrc.org

Ghana Red Cross Society

W redcrossghana.org
