



# ZIMBABWE

## 2023 IFRC network country plan

Funding Requirement **CHF 19.3M**

Appeal number **MAAZW002**

### In support of the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society



**168**

National Society branches



**150**

National Society staff



**20,000**

National Society volunteers

### People to be reached



**364,000**

Ongoing emergency operations



**200,000**

Climate and environment



**300,000**

Disasters and crises



**600,000**

Health and wellbeing



**125,000**

Migration and displacement



**300,000**

Values, power and inclusion

### IFRC network multiyear focus

#### Emergency response

- Food insecurity

#### Longer term needs

- Disaster risk reduction and anticipatory action
  - Livelihoods
- Epidemic preparedness and response
  - Migration-related needs

#### Capacity development

- Communications • Partnerships
- Internal systems strengthening
  - Youth engagement

### Key country data

**Population** **15.1M**

**INFORM Severity rating** **high**

**Long-term Climate Risk Index** **15**

**Human Development Index rank** **146**

**Population below poverty level** **38.3%**

## Hazards



Drought



Floods



Tropical storms



Food insecurity



Disease outbreaks



Migration

## Funding requirements

**Total 19.3M** CHF

Through the IFRC

**17.8M** CHF

Through Participating National Societies

→ **1.2M** CHF

Host National Society

→ **300,000** CHF

### IFRC Breakdown

**12M** CHF

Ongoing emergency operations

### Longer term needs

**1.5M** CHF

Climate and environment

**1M** CHF

Disasters and crises

**1.5M** CHF

Health and wellbeing

**465,000** CHF

Migration and displacement

**750,000** CHF

Values, power and inclusion

**550,000** CHF

Enabling local actors

## Ongoing emergencies

### MDRZW016

Zimbabwe Food Insecurity  
Folded under MGR60001 Africa  
Hunger Crisis Emergency Appeal

## Participating National Societies

American Red Cross\*

British Red Cross

Danish Red Cross

Finnish Red Cross

The Netherlands Red Cross\*



# NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

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**The Zimbabwe Red Cross Society** is a humanitarian and developmental organization founded on the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and established by an Act of Parliament, in 1981. It became a member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1983.

The Zimbabwe Red Cross operates in all the provinces of Zimbabwe, through 168 branches providing emergency response and developmental programming to vulnerable communities and individuals. The National Society maintains a large network of 20,000 volunteers to provide its services, has an extensive membership, and is supported by its staff in Harare and branch offices throughout the country. The National Society has established a successful corporate business unit, including a high school and a Red Cross clinic, which generates alternative and sustainable sources of revenue.

The National Society's aim is to alleviate the suffering of the most vulnerable communities in Zimbabwe. Its vision is one of a resilient country that is able to withstand and quickly recover from shocks caused by natural hazards and man-made disasters, and its mission is to provide timely, appropriate and sustainable humanitarian services. In 2021 it reached 145,000 people in need directly through its activities.

The Zimbabwe Red Cross implements various programmes in different thematic areas, covering humanitarian responses and community development programmes. These include:

- Health and social services programmes such as water, sanitation and hygiene; COVID-19 preparedness and response; addressing the problem of HIV/AIDS; sexual reproductive health and rights; life skills training; and child nutrition and food projects

- Disaster management and emergency response programmes, particularly first aid and early warning systems
- Climate change adaptation activities, which aim to ensure food security; livelihoods protection and promotion in vulnerable communities; and building resilient communities

The National Society is guided by its Strategic Plan 2021–2025. Its overall goal is to build healthy, secure and resilient communities through the plan's three key strategic pillars and related areas of focus:

## **People anticipate, respond to, and quickly recover from crises and disasters**

- Early warning and early action
- Disaster preparedness and response
- Building strategic partnerships

## **People lead safe, healthy and dignified lives and have opportunities to thrive**

- Primary health services at the community level
- Food security and livelihoods for communities
- Social protection for people in confined spaces

## **People mobilize for inclusive and peaceful communities**

- Volunteerism, local action and global reach
- Community-based programming and the meaningful inclusion of community structures, with an intention to influence humanitarian action
- Communication and digital transformation, to maximize the National Society's impact

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## IFRC NETWORK ACTION IN 2023

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### **Joint situational analysis**

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country located in southeast Africa, between the Zambezi and Limpopo Rivers. It is bordered by South Africa to the south, Botswana to the southwest, Zambia to the north, and Mozambique to the east. The country faces many political, social

and economic challenges, all which have been exacerbated by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has caused a considerable economic decline, resulting in high prices, cash shortages and a large debt burden. According to the [BTI 2022](#) country report, the

reintroduction of the Zimbabwe dollar has led to record inflation, which peaked at over 700 per cent and dramatically reduced the income of many Zimbabweans.

Low-income households in both rural and urban areas of Zimbabwe are struggling to purchase food and other basic items. Between March and April 2022, for example, the cost of maize meal and bread increased by about 50 and 30 per cent respectively. This is largely due to ongoing macroeconomic challenges, pandemic-related disruptions to global supply chains, and global rises in the price of food, fuel and fertilizers. Fluctuations in exchange rates are also expected to contribute to the rising costs of goods and services for Zimbabweans. According to the World Bank, GDP is expected to grow by 3.7 per cent in 2022, but the economy is projected to recover more slowly in the medium term. This is based on worsening agricultural conditions – with output contracting by 1.5 per cent in 2022, compared to double digit growth in 2021 – because of a reduction in rainfall levels, the rising prices of key inputs, and supply chain disruptions. Mining production and exports are however expected to benefit from high prices overseas, while tourism and transportation are likely to recover and positively impact other sectors too.

In line with its constitution, Zimbabwe holds national presidential elections every five years, and the next set of presidential, parliamentary and local council elections

will be held in 2023. Historically, there has often been an upsurge in violence around election times in Zimbabwe, where increased factional tensions over succession in the ruling party leads to skirmishes at party political meetings. In March 2022, there were violent incidents during the run-up to the by-elections held to fill vacant parliamentary and council seats and, in some cases, National Society volunteers assisted the victims.

Zimbabwe's economic decline has resulted in a severe humanitarian crisis. This has had a negative impact on the capacity of national and local authorities and other institutions, further reducing their ability to provide key social services. The education and health sectors in particular are extremely poor – the Government is unable to provide adequate resources, and this leads to conflicts with educators and health practitioners. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the country's public health crisis; the health sector was not at all prepared for it, with limited intensive care capacity, a shortage of resources and a lack of personal protective equipment for frontline health care workers.

The projected size of Zimbabwe's acutely food insecure population (IPC Phase 3 and higher) remains unchanged compared to the average over the last five years, and is now higher than it was in 2021. The population is also vulnerable to a number of natural hazards and extreme weather events exacerbated by climate change.

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## Ongoing emergency response

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

- Appeal number: [MDRZW016](#) – Zimbabwe Food Insecurity, folded under [MGR60001](#) Africa Hunger Crisis Emergency Appeal
- Appeal launch date: 11 November 2021
- Appeal end date: 31 December 2023
- People affected: 5.8 million
- People to be assisted: 364,000

The Zimbabwe Red Cross has been responding to the food security crisis in the country through a Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) from November 2021. A number of Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) publications up to September 2022 showed a deterioration in Zimbabwe's food security situation and an increased risk of famine. According to the UN World Food Programme Hunger Map LIVE, the number

of people with insufficient food consumption increased by seven per cent to 5.8 million during October 2022, from about 5.4 million at the end of September, and it was estimated that the number of people resorting to 'crisis and above' food-based coping practices increased to 7.6 million.

In view of the deteriorating situation, Zimbabwe is now one of the priority countries supported by the IFRC's regional [Hunger Crisis](#) Emergency Appeal. Launched in October 2022, it aims to scale up the IFRC's immediate and life-saving response to the food insecurity crisis currently affecting the region. Country prioritization is based on a multivariate analysis, which includes the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC), and focuses on those communities experiencing a crisis or worse level of acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 3 and above). Details of the geographic areas covered are provided in each country plan of action. See also under Disasters and Crises for food insecurity in Zimbabwe.

At a time of intense global humanitarian need and competing demands, Sub-Saharan Africa is experiencing one of the most alarming food crises in decades. Approximately 146 million people – a figure approaching half the entire population of the United States – are suffering from acute food insecurity and require urgent humanitarian assistance. Hunger is one of the most undignified sufferings of humanity and has severe repercussions on African communities who face multiple shocks, compromising their lives, livelihoods and prospects. Driven by a complex interplay of insecurity and armed conflict, extreme weather events, climate variability and negative macroeconomic conditions, this crisis is distinct in its magnitude and geographic scope. As such, it requires an exceptional mobilization and a massive effort by all concerned institutions and states to address the drivers that underpin food insecurity in Africa.

### Short description of the emergency operational strategy

Supported by the IFRC network, African National Societies have developed an emergency response which focuses on meeting the urgent food, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene needs of the most vulnerable groups affected by the crisis. It also focuses on protecting livelihoods, while building a foundation for increasing resilience. The four operational pillars of the response are:

**Cash transfers for safety nets and safeguarding livelihoods:** There will be an improvement in food access, and consumption levels will be maintained through the scaling-up of emergency food assistance, primarily through cash transfers to poor households experiencing acute food insecurity.

**Health and nutrition:** Work will be carried out in the areas of nutrition surveillance, knowledge building and health promotion.

**Water, sanitation and hygiene:** Services will include the provision of safe water, the rehabilitation of water supply infrastructure, the in-kind provision of water treatment and storage products, and cash and voucher assistance to support water, sanitation and hygiene objectives.

**Cross-cutting sectors of protection and prevention:** Community engagement and accountability, and protection, gender and inclusion, are critical components

of operations. These themes are vital to ensuring all community members are recognized and valued as equal partners whose diverse needs, priorities and preferences guide the actions of all International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners.

Along with providing direct support to vulnerable people, the operating National Societies such as the Zimbabwe Red Cross will play an important role in enabling and facilitating access to goods and services provided by governments and other humanitarian actors. In-country geographic targeting of affected regions and smaller administrative units (such as districts) is based on data from the IPC Food Insecurity Classification and other recognized references. Targeting is further refined through detailed or disaggregated data from more focused assessments by National Societies and partner agencies where possible.

The groups targeted are acutely food-insecure households struggling to meet their basic needs due to climatic shocks and the compounding effects of other food insecurity drivers. Once geographic targeting is complete, the next step will be to target affected households, based on food security and economic criteria, and this will be agreed (or ideally jointly developed) with communities. Within these food-insecure and poor households, targeting can be further refined by identifying social categories. Protection, gender and inclusion considerations are incorporated into the targeting process, providing an understanding of and response to individuals and groups based on their specific risks, needs and concerns.

### Longer-term strategy

The hunger crisis Emergency Appeal sits within the IFRC Pan-Africa Zero Hunger Initiative, which informs longer-term food security and livelihood plans of National Societies in Africa. The initiative takes a holistic approach to food security, combining rapid support for food security and livelihoods with its long-term strategy of working towards zero hunger and more sustainable development. The regional Emergency Appeal focuses on responding to the immediate needs of the people affected, and its approach facilitates the transition to longer-term programming. Upon the completion of the Appeal, the IFRC – together with the National Society – will continue its long-term work through the Zero Hunger Initiative programming. This will be integrated into the Zimbabwe country plan 2024.

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## Strategic priorities

### Climate and environment

The key threats from climate change in Zimbabwe relate to the general increase in annual temperatures, more variability and unpredictability in the rainfall pattern, and the intensification of extreme weather events. Climate variability and extreme weather events in Zimbabwe have led to droughts and flooding that have threatened livelihoods. The country produces multiple grain crops, including maize, sorghum, mhunga, rapoko and oil seeds, and industrial crops such as tobacco, cotton, edible dry beans and paprika. It is expected that declining levels and changing patterns of rainfall will cause changes to the growing season. This has significant implications for yields, food security and national revenues, because approximately 80 per cent of agricultural production in Zimbabwe is rain-fed. It is projected that crop production across Africa will decline by 12 per cent by 2080.

Zimbabwe is also highly susceptible to the risk of groundwater drought. According to the World Bank Zimbabwe Climate Risk Country Profile of 2021, the proportion of the population at very high risk of groundwater drought could rise from 32 to 86 per cent over the coming decades.

Two thirds of working people in Zimbabwe are employed in the agricultural sector. The threat of the impact of climate change is at its highest in the southern provinces, where smallholder farmers, especially women, depend on rainfall for their food, livelihoods and income security.

Wildfires have historically been one of Zimbabwe's most dangerous natural hazards. From 2001 to 2021, the country lost 3,300 hectares of tree cover from fires, and 221,000 hectares from other causes. The worst year for tree cover loss due to fires during this period was 2009, when 565 hectares were lost (2.9 per cent of the total tree cover loss for that year). The Government of Zimbabwe is currently carrying out a tree planting initiative, and teaching communities about tree planting and preservation across the country, alongside the Forestry Commission and the Environmental Management Agency.

### Main actions and areas of support

The Zimbabwe 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 supported and 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.

The National Society has been strengthening the capacities of vulnerable smallholder farmers through Farmer Field Schools and peer-to-peer support. The aim is to scale up climate-resilient agricultural practices, while improving access to resilient inputs, markets and actionable climate information – all of which is supported by [forecast-based anticipatory and early actions](#). However, with the increasing impacts of climate change, there is a need for developmental agencies to set aside funding to undertake anticipatory humanitarian action in Zimbabwe's most vulnerable communities, while building climate-smart resilience.

With the support of the IFRC network, the Zimbabwe Red Cross plans the following activities in 2023:

**Capacity building:** The National Society will train its staff and volunteers on climate and environmental issues, and the tools, innovations and technology available to address the impacts of climate change. It will strengthen the institutional and technical capacities of communities, and provide the resources for undertaking local action that people can engage in through information and knowledge sharing and providing technical guidance. It will also develop and strengthen community-led early warning systems.

**Coordination and engagement with stakeholders:** The National Society will support the establishment of volunteer and community climate groups for championing climate action at the local level. It will participate in national events on climate change and environmental preservation, such as national tree planting days.

**Knowledge management and learning:** The National Society will conduct climate risk assessments and integrate climate and environment considerations in risk assessment tools. It will also develop a strategy for the implementation of forecast-based action approaches into National Society disaster management processes.

**Tree planting and care:** The National Society will participate in national events focused on climate change and environmental preservation, such as national tree planting days. It will support advocacy for tree planting and establishing plant nurseries at the district, provincial and national levels. As part of the National Society Youth Strategy on Climate Crisis, the National Society will engage young people in advocacy and community service work, such as tree planting and raising awareness about the climate crisis. This is part of the IFRC Pan-African Tree Planting and Care initiative.

The IFRC will support the National Society with building its capacity for helping communities to anticipate the impacts of climate and environmental crises, while building the knowledge and capacity of volunteers and staff to serve as agents of change. The IFRC will also support the National Society with developing new sustainable environmental practices, and devising new ways of reducing any adverse environmental effects of its emergency response and long-term programmes.

The Danish Red Cross and Finnish Red Cross support the National Society in the areas of climate-smart resilience.

## Disasters and crises

The 2023 INFORM Risk Country Profile classifies Zimbabwe as a medium risk country (4.5). It scores 3.0 for hazard and exposure, 5.4 for vulnerability, and 5.8 for a lack of coping capacity.

In addition to changes in rainfall patterns caused by climate change, Zimbabwe has experienced tropical storms and cyclones over the last three years. There is a high risk of increased rainfall related hazards – in terms of magnitude and frequency.

Tropical cyclone Eloise made landfall in Zimbabwe on 23 January 2021, with wind speeds of 160 kilometres per hour. The cyclone brought heavy rains in the provinces of Masvingo, Manicaland and Matabeleland in the southern part of the country, damaging infrastructures that were already weakened by tropical storm Chalane and cyclone Idai. Bridges and roads were destroyed, and a section of the Skyline-Chimanimani Road in Manicaland province collapsed because of the heavy rains. The cyclone greatly affected many people

and damaged houses, sanitation facilities, field crops and livestock. Some urban dwellers in Beitbridge and Mutare experienced flash flooding, which caused perimeter walls to collapse and sewage systems to overflow, creating a serious health threat. Urban areas such as Harare and Chitungwiza also felt the impact of the weather system as flash flooding occurred. Heavy rainfall created a backflow of water in the Togwe Mukosi dam, which led to the displacement of communities in Masvingo and Chivi.

Later, on 24 January 2022, tropical storm Ana made landfall in Mozambique, and by 25 January it had reached Zimbabwe as an overland depression. Moderate to heavy rains of up to 80mm per day, accompanied by strong winds of up to 80km/hour, affected several communities in the northern and northeastern parts of Zimbabwe. Tropical storm Ana caused destruction and damage in at least six provinces, with Manicaland Province the hardest hit. More than 3,000 people were affected by the heavy rains and flooding, and essential infrastructures such as classrooms, roads, electricity lines and bridges were damaged.

Food security is a major concern in Zimbabwe. In 2022, the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) estimated that during the peak hunger period, 38 per cent of households would be food insecure due to a poor 2021–2022 rainfall season. According to the Zimbabwe Food Security and Markets Monitoring Report, rain fell across the whole country in October 2022, there was more rainfall than normal in southern and western parts, while the central and northern regions had below normal rainfall. This is in line with the predictions of the national seasonal outlook for the October to December period.

The FEWS NET Food Security Outlook update for Zimbabwe from August 2022, which included a projected outlook to January 2023, reported that some areas of Zimbabwe were at Crisis level (IPC Phase 3). This outcome was expected to increase as the country's home-grown food stocks depleted unusually early. It was projected that, in typical deficit-producing areas across southern, eastern, western and northeastern Zimbabwe, most households would completely exhaust their food stock reserves, marking an early start to the lean season and having a negative impact on dietary diversity and food consumption. Opportunities for work in the agricultural sector are expected to pick up in the rainy season, with above-average rainfall resulting in a greater demand for labour compared with last year, but demand is still expected to remain below average. There is also a risk that excess moisture and flooding

caused by above-average rainfall could affect cropping activities. As a result, the crisis (IPC Phase 3) outcomes are likely to prevail in most deficit-producing areas at least until January 2023 and the peak of the lean season.

Households are increasingly relying on buying food, while market prices soar and household incomes remain low. Most poor households are expected to engage in consumption coping strategies, such as reducing and skipping meals. They are also likely to adopt livelihood coping strategies, such as atypical labour migration, selling more livestock, and getting more household members (including children) involved in casual labour, petty trade or informal mining.

Harmonized elections are due to take place in 2023. Based on the outcome of the last harmonized elections, where post-election violence broke out and resulted in some deaths, there is the potential for further civil unrest and violence. Spontaneous violence has already been recorded in some election campaigns, for example in Kwekwe in the Midlands, where one death and several injuries have been recorded.

Zimbabwe's [National Development Strategy](#) seeks to improve the country's disaster risk management. It outlines how it will prioritize increasing investment in improving disaster risk management, including early warning systems and contingency planning, to enhance Zimbabwe's preparedness. In order to achieve this, the following strategies are being implemented:

- Creating capacity in the Civil Protection Department
- Promoting linkages between the Meteorological Services Department and the University of Zimbabwe, to enable the use of the high-performance computer
- Establishing and implementing a citizen feedback mechanism
- Strengthening the provision of psychosocial support mechanisms in the aftermath of disasters for affected communities, to reduce post-disaster trauma

### **Main actions and areas of support**

The Zimbabwe Red Cross, in line with its auxiliary role, responds to the many disasters and crises affecting Zimbabwe. It is responding to the current food crisis through the IFRC Africa Hunger Crisis Emergency Appeal, aligning its response plan with the IFRC Pan-African

Zero Hunger strategy, which aims to combat famine. In 2021 and 2022 it responded to tropical storms [Eloise](#) and [Ana](#), with the support of the IFRC DREF.

In preparation for the numerous hazards affecting the country, the National Society has developed a national contingency plan guided by weather forecasts. It prioritizes extreme meteorological events, including the droughts and floods most likely to affect the country. The contingency plan was updated in October 2021, and analysis has shown that it has led to increased engagement in the ongoing drought-related food insecurity. In line with its preparatory work, the National Society has trained its staff and volunteers to be part of a national disaster response team. Team members are trained in basic first aid, psychological first aid, temporary shelter construction, cash and voucher in emergencies, food security and other important topics.

The National Society intends to contribute to the government [National Development Strategy](#) by ensuring that at-risk communities receive actionable early warning risk information. They will be supported to take active steps including early actions to reduce their vulnerability and exposure to hazards. This is aligned with the IFRC Pan-African Red Ready initiative.

In 2023, with IFRC network support, the National Society will ensure that:

- At-risk communities receive actionable early warning and risk information, and are supported to take active steps including early actions to reduce their vulnerability and exposure to hazards (early warning early action systems for the identified and forecasted disasters will be developed)
- Social assistance is extended to the most vulnerable households in both urban and rural communities, through cash transfers and in-kind food and non-food items to meet their needs
- A financial service provider on an IFRC compliant framework is sought, and a contract agreement signed for a minimum of two years
- Shelter and water, sanitation and hygiene materials are pre-positioned in the provinces most prone to the effects of flooding, and Cash in Early Action is considered
- Standard operating procedures and tools for disaster management are reviewed and rolled out

- Pre-disaster agreements for resourcing responses are established
- Emergency operations centres in all provinces (starting with the headquarters) are established, resourced and equipped, so they can coordinate emergency responses
- There is continuous engagement and coordination with relevant government departments, UN agencies and development partners

The IFRC will support the National Society by coordinating engagements with global stakeholders in early warning and early action systems. It will support the National Society with DREF allocations and Emergency Appeals, to ensure timely and effective responses to disasters and crises. The IFRC will provide financial and technical support for the emergency operation centres, and the restocking and repositioning of response items. The IFRC will also resource the uptake of opportunities that contribute to the achievement of Zero Hunger, and provide technical support with developing the National Society's knowledge of the IFRC Pan-African Zero Hunger Initiative.

The Danish Red Cross will support the National Society's early warning, early action disaster preparedness activities. The British Red Cross has shown an interest in collaborating on a cash and voucher assistance project.

## Health and wellbeing

Whilst COVID-19 cases are on the decline, Zimbabwe has seen resurgence of other diseases like measles, with a cumulative total of 6,551 cases. Of these, 5,633 had recovered and 704 people had died (mid-2022). Manicaland province was the most affected, with 3,084 cases and 347 deaths. This has been attributed to vaccination disruptions at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is an ongoing threat of an increase in measles, and other vaccine-preventable diseases, and there is also a potential threat of monkeypox (although no confirmed cases have been reported so far). The Ministry of Health and Child Care has initiated a mass vaccination campaign targeting all children under 15 years of age, regardless of their vaccination status.

Cases of maternal deaths remain high with 231 recorded by July 2022. It is likely that food insecurity will increase the risk of malnutrition, especially among children, which will compromise people's immune systems and increase the risk of them contracting diseases.

Data shows that there were many cases of diarrhoea (193,935 cases and 68 deaths), malaria (80,288 cases and 125 deaths), dysentery (8,325 cases), typhoid (51 cases) and cholera (one case) in Zimbabwe by August 2022. Therefore, work on water, sanitation and hygiene is a key priority in the country. Access to safe drinking water remains a challenge in some high-density suburbs and rural areas, and this increases the risk of water-borne diseases.

Water and sanitation facilities in rural Zimbabwe are still poor, and the wide sanitation gap between different areas needs to be addressed. For example, according to a Zimbabwe Red Cross assessment in 2022, people who are desperate for water had to walk very long distances to the Hopley borehole. At the water source, the lift pump was inadequate for the estimated 200 households (with an average of seven family members) who rely upon it. Residents had to spend the whole night queuing for their turn to get water from this one inadequate borehole, which was often overwhelmed and depleted, with a low level of water in the winter season between June and November. Furthermore, the pump was breaking down on a regular basis.

## Main actions and areas of support

In line with its auxiliary role, the Zimbabwe Red Cross supports the public authorities in responding to the various disease outbreaks affecting the country. Most recently, it has partnered with the American Red Cross to help with the social mobilization for measles vaccinations, and subsequently expanded its work through an IFRC DREF [operation](#) to support mass vaccination campaigns in Manicaland and Midlands.

In terms of its COVID-19 response, the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society has been implementing a project in partnership with UNICEF that focuses on water, sanitation and hygiene, infection prevention and control, risk communication and community engagement. The overall objective of the project was to contribute to the prevention of COVID-19 morbidity and mortality by improving access to safe, clean water, soap and hand-washing facilities, while disseminating key hygiene messages to the communities most at risk of COVID-19. The project specifically targeted the eight districts of Muzarabani, Binga, Kwekwe Rural, Mangwe, Gwanda Urban, Harare South (Hopley), Marondera Urban and Kariba Rural. One initiative involved developing a piped water scheme for Samende Secondary School, and this has contributed greatly to the provision of clean water to communities living near the school.



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The Zimbabwe Red Cross also relieved the congestion at the Hopley borehole by reducing the number of people who rely upon one single water source. It upgraded six other functional and previously dysfunctional boreholes into solar-powered water schemes, with pipelines and 40 taps or other water outlets, bringing water closer and more readily available to residents. This eliminated the long queues at the former main borehole. The community showed its commitment to the project, and a sense of ownership, by providing labour during the preliminary work, while the National Society funded the repairs and technical know-how through a contractor, Western Solar. The project has successfully alleviated the water shortages in the Hopley community, because residents now have access to the right quantity and quality of water, in the right location. The water is purified and has recently passed its quality tests. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, there is a water meter installed. The scheme will soon be handed over to a water point committee, which will have responsibility for its rehabilitation and future maintenance, and ensuring that water is paid for in line with consumption. This National Society intervention has ensured easier community access to quality water, reduced the risk of danger while fetching water at night, and lowered the risk of contracting water-borne diseases.

In 2023, the Zimbabwe Red Cross, with technical support from the IFRC, will focus on:

- Being an active member of national and local coordination platforms for advocacy, public health, water, sanitation and hygiene, with relevant policies and mechanisms in place
- Delivering effective, appropriate, evidence-based and impact-driven health promotion, disease prevention and community-based care activities – focusing on vulnerable people in all contexts
- Maintaining and improving access to health services during emergencies
- Building and maintaining community-level capacity in the effective prevention and detection of, and response to, infectious disease outbreaks
- Building capacity in community health clubs, by training people in diseases trends and modern disease prevention methods
- Measuring and reporting on patient safety in all health services, while improving quality of care
- Reducing the prevalence of diseases following National Society interventions, through clinical records
- Effectively responding to mental health and psychosocial needs during emergencies, through early, sustained and integrated service provision
- Providing sustainable access to safe water through drilling and rehabilitating boreholes, upgrading them to piped water schemes, training water point committees and village pump minders, and providing a spare parts bank

The American Red Cross is supporting the measles vaccination programme in Zimbabwe. The Danish Red Cross is supporting the National Society with activities that provide access to safe water to at-risk communities.

## Migration and displacement

Zimbabwe is extremely vulnerable to a wide range of crises, including exposure to natural hazards, man-made disasters and socio-economic and political crises, affecting the most vulnerable rural regions and taking a toll on people living in urban areas too. As a result, the population's resilience has deteriorated. Zimbabwe is experiencing mass migration, characterized by extremely high border mobility. There is significant brain drain occurring, with highly skilled and semi-skilled Zimbabweans emigrating to countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Canada, South Africa and Botswana, in search of better opportunities.

People who migrate often do not have proper travel documents or clearly defined destinations. The routes they take are dangerous, leading to increased vulnerabilities and even the loss of lives. Unfortunately, recently, the South African Government announced the cancellation of the Zimbabwe Exemption Permit (ZEP) and, according to the Department of Home Affairs in South Africa, more than 170,000 Zimbabwean nationals will be affected. It is expected that there will be voluntary repatriations and mass deportations as a result, and this is likely to exacerbate the already strained economy and social services in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabwe experiences inflows of refugees and asylum seekers fleeing conflict in their home countries. Political and civil unrest in countries such as Mozambique, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Burundi continuously have an impact on Zimbabwe, which is seen not only as a country of destination but also as a corridor for refugees and asylum seekers on their way to South Africa and Botswana. Zimbabwe hosts over 20,000 refugees and asylum seekers – just over 15,000 of them reside at Tongogara refugee camp, and the rest are in residential centres.

High levels of population movement in Zimbabwe require a multi-layered response, to address the diverse needs arising from both protracted displacement and new emergencies that cause continuous waves of migration out-flows and returns. It is important that the approach incorporates increasing resilience, fostering social cohesion, implementing dynamic responses that provide life-saving and sustainable assistance, and the improvement of basic services.

## Main actions and areas of support

In 2023, the Zimbabwe Red Cross, with support from the IFRC, plans to:

- Develop the capacity of staff and volunteers to offer humanitarian services to people who are displaced – including psychosocial support and restoring family links
- Offer humanitarian assistance and protection services to migrants, in line with protection, gender and inclusion guidelines and the minimum protection approach – including legal assistance, safe referrals, restoring family links, child protection and anti-trafficking initiatives
- Advocate for, and be part of, the development of a national migration and displacement strategy
- Establish a mechanism for collecting, analysing and acting on specific community perceptions and concerns around the issues and needs of migrants, displaced persons and host communities
- Establish and consolidate a strong referral pathway with other organizations to better assist affected populations
- Develop tools to analyse and take on community perceptions from migrants, displaced persons and host communities in order to adapt programming and public advocacy

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will offer support with restoring family links to the Zimbabwe Red Cross.

## Values, power and inclusion

The Government prioritizes the promotion of gender equality. This is reflected in Zimbabwe's constitution, which provides a strong framework for the protection and promotion of the rights of all women, men, girls and boys of all abilities. The Government – through the Ministry of Women Affairs, Community, Small and Medium Enterprises Development – supports the promotion of gender equality across all governmental programmes, in line with the National Gender Policy. However, while women and girls constitute 52 per cent of Zimbabwe's population, they still get left behind across key sectors. Despite the country's progressive laws and treaties in support of gender equality, there are still significant challenges in terms of implementing formal rights and translating them into tangible gains for women and girls.

The current food insecurity in Zimbabwe has resulted in heightened protection risks for women and children, including sexual violence and exploitation, child labour and child marriage. While the COVID-19 pandemic was originally a health emergency, its impact on food security has led to a protection crisis in Zimbabwe, which disproportionately affects the most at-risk people, especially women and girls.

There are gendered patterns in violence against children – boys are more likely to experience physical punishment, while for girls, sexual and gender-based violence is a major concern at home and school. Furthermore, in the area of water, sanitation and hygiene, women and girls carry the burden of fetching water for household use (84 per cent of water carrying is done by women and young girls). Menstrual health and hygiene poverty remain major challenges in Zimbabwe, particularly for adolescent girls, and one of the negative impacts of this is the inability to effectively attend school.

### Main actions and areas of support

The Zimbabwe Red Cross seeks to integrate protection, gender and inclusion in all its processes, as it works to eliminate harmful practices. It will focus on the most vulnerable groups – who are still often left out of key activities and face high protection-related risks – and work in the areas of dignity, access, participation and safety. This will also enhance the National Society's ability to provide timely, effective humanitarian assistance to those who need it, and ensure that vulnerable groups are empowered and protected from abuse, violence and exploitation. In its food security interventions, the National Society will support the most vulnerable people to meet their food consumption and basic needs, while working to ensure that women, children, girls, care-givers and communities recognize, prevent and respond to any risk of gender-based violence.

The National Society has approved policies on community engagement and accountability and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and its child safeguarding policy is being drafted.

It will also continue to promote humanitarian values and principles, and focus on the youth as agents of change. Access to education for children affected by crises and disasters will also remain an area of focus.

In 2023, the Zimbabwe Red Cross, with IFRC network support, plans to:

- Support and scale up youth-led education and activities outlined in the Youth Engagement Strategy and other youth-led initiatives – for example Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change
- Address education-related humanitarian needs, including through assessment, programmatic integration, research and data collection and analysis
- Support the reconstruction of classrooms in disaster situations
- Establish or strengthen safety procedures and contingency plans, including child protection and safeguarding systems and measures in educational institutions
- Support the development of educational materials to enable children to learn
- Provide educational support to vulnerable learners through the National Society's school
- Conduct a child risk assessment and develop an action plan
- Mainstream protection, gender and inclusion in all programmes, by training staff on minimum standards and undertaking programme assessments
- Ensure that the protection, gender and inclusion code of conduct is signed by all staff and volunteers
- Conduct a continuous review (of protection, gender and inclusion and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse), using planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting tools
- Deliver sexual exploitation and abuse awareness sessions to communities
- Train women's groups on disaster risk reduction
- Deliver emergency response training for women and people living with disabilities
- Include women in leading positions in emergency response teams and committees
- Promote the participation of women in disaster and emergency response teams, and engage community members, in particular women, in making decisions about disaster risk management

- Ensure that all feedback mechanisms are incorporated into regular programmes and linked to clear referral systems, within prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation standard operating procedures
- Ensure that all feedback data collected is disaggregated according to age, sex and disability

The IFRC will support the National Society with providing protection, gender and inclusion guidelines; a minimum protection approach; technical support (in the areas of protection, gender and inclusion and the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation); establishing a mechanism for collecting, analysing and acting on

specific community perceptions and concerns; building capacity for the youth engagement strategy; and linking the National Society with other success stories on education-related humanitarian needs, to support peer-to-peer learning.

The British Red Cross, Danish Red Cross and Finnish Red Cross will be supporting the Zimbabwe Red Cross's work on safeguarding and inclusion. This includes key components of community engagement and accountability, protection, gender and inclusion, child safeguarding, and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

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## Enabling local actors

The Zimbabwe Red Cross is committed to improving its ways of operating, resulting in the effective and efficient use of public funds from all sources, including donor-funded programmes and income-generating activities. The main focus and mandate of the National Society's 2021–2025 Strategic Plan is to ensure that it undergoes a visible, tangible and measurable renewal, resulting in sustained growth. Its target is to raise 50 per cent of its income through domestic financing. It needs to change its management approaches, with closely monitored oversight mechanisms installed at the organizational, departmental and individual level.

The National Society has, over the years, committed to regenerating its operations through various internally drafted documents. The 2021–2025 Strategic Plan demonstrates its growing commitment – among its leadership, governance structures, departments, volunteers, funding partners and external stakeholders – to renew the way it is managed and accounted for. Over the five-year period of the plan, the National Society will accelerate its efforts to adjust its performance and instill a culture and work ethic that yields tangible and measurable results, responding to set performance indicators.

The Zimbabwe Red Cross's organizational norms, values and ways of working will be improved and closely monitored at an individual level. It will report on the findings through its human resource policies, procedures and performance indicators. To achieve the above objectives, the National Society commits to improving how it operates by:

- Accelerating an evidence-based organizational renewal with clear performance indicators aligned to funding mechanisms
- Funding partners' gradual and systematic removal of conditions precedence and safeguard measures over time, based on satisfactory well documented transformational efforts by the National Society
- Ensuring the National Society adds value as a strategic and technically sound partner of choice among humanitarian actors in Zimbabwe
- Facilitating accountability and ownership at the individual, departmental, office, branch and national levels, while developing rapid response mechanisms to deal with issues and risks identified
- Turning the National Society into a data and evidence-based organization, with clear and transparent supporting documentation, that is aligned with (and clearly contributes to) national, regional and global development goals

The IFRC network is committed to supporting the National Society in its development, in line with the priorities it has set for itself. With this support, the National Society plans to:

### Engaged

- Strengthen its existing relationships with major government departments, such as the Metrological Department, Department of Civil Protection, Social Services Department and Agricultural Service Department, at the national and ward levels

- Strengthen its communications department and ensure that it profiles the National Society and its activities
- Effectively implement its communications strategy
- Ensure that all programming and communications aimed at public behaviour change (for example in public health, resilience and inclusion) is informed by science and data-informed approaches, and aligns with community engagement and accountability initiatives
- Build data and digital literacy through the use of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system across all the key departments
- Seek purposeful partnerships with a wide range of actors in free open-source sectors

### Accountable

- Develop a risk management framework for the National Society
- Enforce strong internal controls through the implementation of the risk management framework
- Adhere to policies and procedures as stipulated by the accounting policies and procedures manual
- Ensure that annual audits are done and disclosed to relevant stakeholders for transparency
- Strengthen the internal audit department to carry out its duties and recommended actions

### Trusted

- Align all external support for National Society development with its strategic priorities and development plans, in line with the principles of the [IFRC National Society development compact](#)
- Ensure adherence to guidelines, tools and mechanisms (including the fraud and corruption policy, prevention and response to sexual exploitation policy, non-discrimination, harassment and child safeguarding policy) to prevent, manage and address integrity and reputational risks
- Ensure that young people and volunteers are involved in community engagement and accountability systems and decision-making, while improving the youth structures at the community level
- Ensure that young people assist in project implementation as agents of change in communities
- Build capacity in life skills and project management, by training youth volunteers and members across the National Society
- Continue training young people in governance leadership skills, to strengthen their participation in decision making; youth leaders will also participate in various scheduled statutory meetings
- Engage young people on advocacy and community service work, such as tree planting and raising awareness on climate change, as part of the National Society's Youth Strategy on the Climate Crisis

## THE IFRC NETWORK

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### The IFRC

**The IFRC** provides support to the Zimbabwe Red Cross through its country cluster delegation covering Zimbabwe, Malawi and Zambia, based in Harare. The IFRC's support for the National Society centres on strategic and operational coordination, National Society development and humanitarian diplomacy, including strengthening its auxiliary role. It also supports accountability as a cross-cutting theme. The IFRC also provides the National Society with technical support in many areas of work.

In recent years the IFRC has supported the Zimbabwe Red Cross through a number of [DREF operations](#) in relation to tropical storms and cyclones, food insecurity and

disease outbreaks. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IFRC, through its [Global Emergency Appeal](#), has supported the National Society in its COVID-19 response.

### IFRC membership coordination

IFRC coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situation and needs; agreeing common priorities; co-developing common strategies to address issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian access, acceptance and space; mobilizing funding and other resources; clarifying consistent public messaging; and

## 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
British Red Cross						●	●	●	●
Danish Red Cross	CHF 0.20M	●	●			●		●	
Finnish Red Cross	CHF 1.00M	●	●	●		●		●	●

**Total**

**1.20M**

monitoring progress. This also means ensuring that strategies and programmes in support of people in need incorporate clarity of humanitarian action, of links with development assistance, and of the auxiliary role and efforts to reinforce the role of National Societies in their respective countries.

The Zimbabwe 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 under the relevant sections of this plan.

The Zimbabwe Red Cross has long-term partnerships with the following in-country participating National Societies, which contribute to the priorities of this country plan and to emergencies as they arise:

The **British Red Cross** supports the Zimbabwe Red Cross with National Society development, safeguarding and inclusion, and cash and voucher assistance

The **Danish Red Cross** works in the area of developing forecast-based financing capacities, and strengthening the role of youth participation

The **Finnish Red Cross** supports the National Society in school capacity development, education in emergencies, promoting climate change mitigation and adaptation, and forecast-based financing.

Other National Societies, such as the **American Red Cross**, provide support remotely as well as through the IFRC.

## Movement coordination

The Zimbabwe Red Cross engages in regular meetings with the IFRC, the ICRC and participating National Societies, to align support and action between Movement partners. This is carried out in line with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) principles, and the newly adopted [Seville Agreement 2.0](#).

The ICRC's office in Harare monitors the humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe, promotes international humanitarian law, restores contact between family members separated by conflict, and works in partnership with

the Zimbabwe Red Cross to enhance its emergency response capabilities. The ICRC supports the National Society with restoring family links, including the tracing, registration and follow-up of unaccompanied and separated children. It also supports connectivity services (such as phone charging, free calls and internet connections), the transmission of Red Cross messages, and the RedSafe digital humanitarian platform. The ICRC also supports the National Society with cooperation activities like communications and National Society development.

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## Coordination with other actors

Due to its unique mandate in Zimbabwe and ongoing humanitarian interventions, the Zimbabwe Red Cross sustains unmatched institutional relationships with the authorities at all levels. This facilitates the rapid initiation of activities, and promotes the continuous involvement of relevant agencies in the monitoring and coordination of its work. The National Society continuously coordinates with relevant technical agencies, such as the Department of Civil Protection, the Drought Relief Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health and Child Care, the Ministry of Public Service and Social Welfare, the Meteorological Services Department, and the District Development Fund under the Offices of the President and Cabinet.

In times of emergency, the Department of Civil Protection coordinates the response at all levels. The National Society typically supports rapid joint assessments and the development of selection criteria for targeting, in coordination with communities and civil protection groups.

UN OCHA organizes emergency meetings of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Inter-Cluster Coordination Group, of which the IFRC is a member. The Zimbabwe Red Cross is an active participant in the food security and water, sanitation and hygiene working groups, which are activated at cluster level when needed. With regards to the current food security crisis, the World Food Programme is the lead organization, and the National Society has been a co-lead since the preparedness phase of responses. There are monthly meetings with all other humanitarian partners in the country, coordinated by the Government. The National Society also actively participates in the Food Security and Livelihoods Cluster, along with other partners and UN agencies.

The National Society also collaborates with other international actors, including UN agencies such as UNICEF, for humanitarian interventions and other projects.

### 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.

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