



COSTA RICA

2023 IFRC network country plan

Funding Requirement **CHF 10M**

Appeal number **MAACR002**

In support of the Costa Rica Red Cross



111

National Society branches



1,102

National Society staff



4,889

National Society volunteers

People to be reached



20,000

Ongoing emergency operations



5,000

Climate and environment



500

Disasters and crises



25,000

Health and wellbeing



6,000

Migration and displacement



380

Values, power and inclusion

IFRC network multiyear focus

Emergency response

- population movement

Longer term needs

- disaster risk management
- climate change adaptation
- violence prevention and protection
- epidemic preparedness and response

Capacity development

- humanitarian diplomacy and advocacy
- partnerships and resource mobilization
- quality and upgraded management systems

Key country data

Population **5.1M**

INFORM Severity rating **Medium**

Long-term Climate Risk Index **89**

Human Development Index rank **58**

Population below poverty level **30%**

Hazards



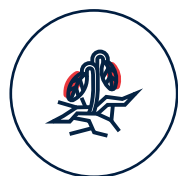
Population movement



Hurricanes and cyclones



Floods



Drought



Disease outbreaks



Poverty

Funding requirements

Total 10M CHF

Through the IFRC



→ **2.15M** CHF

Through Participating National Societies



→ **540,000** CHF

Host National Society



7.3M CHF

IFRC Breakdown

1.3M CHF

Ongoing emergency operations

Longer term needs

20,000 CHF

Climate and environment

83,000 CHF

Disasters and crises

26,000 CHF

Health and wellbeing

288,000 CHF

Migration and displacement

75,000 CHF

Values, power and inclusion

358,000 CHF

Enabling local actors

Ongoing emergencies

MDR43008

Mexico and Central America
Migration Crisis

Population movement

Participating National Societies

American Red Cross*

British Red Cross*

Canadian Red Cross Society*

German Red Cross

Italian Red Cross*

Japanese Red Cross Society*

Netherlands Red Cross*

Swedish Red Cross*

Swiss Red Cross*



NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

The **Costa Rican Red Cross** is a humanitarian institution that has been operating in Costa Rica for more than 130 years. It was founded in 1885 and admitted to the International Federation of Red Cross Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1922. It serves as an auxiliary to public authorities in the humanitarian field, assisting them impartially and independently, and serving the most vulnerable people.

Through its 111 branches, 13 office stations and nine regional branches, it achieves nationwide coverage. With its extensive network of staff and volunteers, the Costa Rican Red Cross carries out activities in the domains of pre-hospital care; emergency assistance in case of disasters; land, water, mountain, and collapsed structures rescue, and risk reduction through community health, climate change, and community resilience programmes. It also collaborates with partners to establish temporary shelters, and engages in re-establishment of family links due to emergency or displacement and migration situations. The National Society implements community engagement and accountability across its action. It has a special focus on youth, training of boys, girls and young people between the ages of eight and 30, for voluntary service with its youth programme.

According to its [Strategic Plan 2021–2030](#), the National Society has three strategic axes: humanitarian, inclusive, and open and transparent. The Humanitarian Red Cross axis exists to save lives and provide recovery support after disasters and crises. It aims to build safe and resilient environments through risk management, emergency care, and attention to the most vulnerable populations, sectors and communities. The Inclusive Red Cross axis seeks to promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace, through intersectoral and voluntary action in all regions, with respect for the human rights of all people. The Open and Transparent Red Cross axis works to contribute to an open and transparent governance model with strategies aimed at favouring internal and external projection, and preserving the National Society's strategic links for the fulfilment of its objectives and sustainability of operations.

The Strategic Plan also incorporates strategic enablers focusing on quality management, transparency and accountability, results-based management for development, institutional risk management, and internal control.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION IN 2023

Joint situational analysis

Costa Rica is located in Central America, sharing land borders with Nicaragua to the north, the Caribbean Sea to the east, Panama to the southeast and the Pacific Ocean to the west. In terms of maritime borders, it is adjacent to Nicaragua, Colombia, Panama and Ecuador.

Costa Rica has a mixed economy, which has undergone a strong evolution from an agricultural to a service economy. According to the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index, in 2018, Costa Rica ranked fourth among the best economies in Latin America and the Caribbean. Tourism is the fastest growing industry, and since the early 2000s, generates more foreign exchange than any of the main agricultural export products.

Also of great importance are the traditional agricultural exports of bananas, sugar, cocoa and pineapple, as well as flowers and mini-vegetables in recent years.

The production of high-quality Costa Rican coffee and its export to the U.S. market, where it is highly appreciated, stand out. Costa Rica also produces medical and surgical supplies, high technology and electronic components, and has robust software development, financial and care services and outsourcing operations.

During 2015, the country experienced deflation; more recently, in 2020, the country suffered losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its economy declined by 4.1 per cent. Due to progress in vaccination, the country reopened and the economy recovered, growing by 7.6 per cent in 2021, according to the Central Bank of Costa Rica. In 2022, Costa Rica had the thirteenth highest inflation rate in Latin America, at 5.8 per cent.

In terms of migration, Costa Rica has the highest percentage of immigrants of any Latin American country. According to the International Organization for Migration, by 2017, there were over 400,000 foreigners living in Costa Rican territory, which is close to 9 per cent of the

total population. This figure increased to over 12 per cent, according to a study conducted by the University of Costa Rica in mid-2017.

Economic immigrants and political refugees predominate in the country. Currently, the largest foreign communities are from Nicaragua (70.9 per cent), Colombia (5 per cent), El Salvador (3.3 per cent) and the United States (3 per cent). More than 150 other nationalities make up the other 17.8 per cent of immigrants, including Cuba, Honduras, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela. For several years, there has been a remarkable migratory movement of Canadians, Europeans (especially Spanish, British, Germans, Swiss, Swedes and Italians) and Asians (Chinese, Taiwanese and Japanese), who settle in the country, attracted by the general stability. In addition, Costa Rica has the lowest emigration rate in Central

America, with 143,465 Costa Ricans living abroad, representing 2.8 per cent of the population.

Costa Rica's Human Development Index value is 0.81, which places the country in the very high human development category. In terms of poverty, according to the [National Household Survey](#) conducted in July 2020, the poverty level reached 26.2 per cent, equivalent to almost 420,000 poor households, about 84,000 more than the previous year, which corresponds to an increase of 5.2 percentage points. The previous highest value was observed 28 years ago, in 1992, when the incidence of poverty reached 29.4 per cent. Extreme poverty is 7.0 per cent, almost 113,000 households in 2020.

Costa Rica is highly susceptible to disasters such as extreme weather events, flooding, landslides, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

Ongoing emergency response

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

- Appeal number: [MDR43008](#) Mexico and Central America migration crisis
- Appeal launch date: 15 July 2022
- Appeal end date: 31 July 2023
- People affected: 500,000 people
- People to be assisted: 210,000 people

The increase of people on the move across Central America since early 2022 has been significant, including a steady increase in the number of migrants identified on the southern border of Costa Rica. There was a 269 per cent increase between December 2021 and April 2022. According to data from the General Directorate of Migration and Foreigners, between May 2021 and May 2022, 5,509 rejections were reported in the border city of Paso Canoas. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), most of the migrants entering Costa Rica in May 2022 came from Venezuela, Haiti, and Senegal, and headed to the United States.

Migrants, refugees and refugee returnees mostly move through irregular channels. Along the routes, many of them face administrative barriers, suffer accidents and injuries, face extortion and sexual violence, and are separated from their families. Tragically, others die from disease or harsh environmental conditions and weather. The situation is especially serious for the most vulnerable groups such as children, young people and women;

indigenous communities; people living with disabilities; the LGBTI+ community and the elderly population.

The main reasons for migrating include better economic opportunities, escaping violence, reuniting with family members, and recovering from the impact of recurring disasters and extreme weather events. The devastating socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and continuing political crises are also factors, and will continue to increase population movements and exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.

People on the move require significant assistance, in particular those with health problems. This high demand for assistance can be hampered by the exhaustion of personnel or the limited availability of food, water, facilities and first aid supplies. The impact of migration on children is of increasing concern as they face the threat of drowning, physical violence, sexual violence, human trafficking, exploitation and health risks, including mental health. Sixteen of every 100 migrants crossing the Darin Gap in 2022 are minors.

The Costa Rican Red Cross is able to identify the needs of people on the move due to its network of humanitarian service points and community engagement and accountability approach, combined with several years of working on migration flows. These needs range from protection and health care to accessing specific information that allows them to make informed decisions along the route and at their destination. The most vulnerable migrants need access to medical care, mental health support, basic humanitarian assistance, connectivity and legal information.

Short description of emergency operational strategy

In July 2022, the IFRC launched a CHF18 million Emergency Appeal aiming to increase the reach of the National Societies of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama, and to scale up assistance and protection for 210,000 people along migratory routes throughout Central America, through more effective preparedness and response, and strengthened capacities and risk reduction. Out of the 210,000 people expected to be reached, 175,000 were migrants in transit, 25,000 returnees and 10,000 people in host and origin communities.

The Emergency Appeal focuses on:

- Integrated assistance: shelter, livelihoods and multi-purpose cash
- Health and care: including water, sanitation and hygiene, mental health and psychosocial support, primary and pre-hospital health care, and community health
- Protection and prevention: protection, gender and inclusion; community engagement and accountability; migration; environmental sustainability; risk reduction; and climate adaptation and recovery

Humanitarian service points are the cornerstone of this operation, to provide comprehensive and integrated assistance and protection services to migrants based on need. Humanitarian service points sit along migratory routes to provide a neutral, welcoming and safe environment for migrants to access essential services that might otherwise be inaccessible. Services include psychological first aid, drinking water and hygiene supplies, and primary health care, first aid, food and non-food distribution, support to restore family links,

accurate information on service points along the route and, in some cases, legal advice. At time of the Appeal launch, with the support of donors, the National Societies of Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Panama were operating 20 humanitarian service points. With this Emergency Appeal, regional response capacity is increasing, with 30 more humanitarian service points in different locations, to achieve a total of 50.

The Costa Rican Red Cross recognizes and values all members of communities that access humanitarian service points by incorporating community engagement and accountability, and protection, gender and inclusion approaches into operations. This creates opportunities to adapt services to accommodate diverse and evolving migration needs, and support efforts to improve the quality of services based on feedback from service users.

The Mexico and Central American Migration Crisis Emergency Appeal was launched to urgently address the growing humanitarian needs of migrants, refugee returnees and host communities in the region. This Emergency Appeal complements the Americas pillar of the IFRC Global Route-Based Migration Programme, a multi-year programme that addresses the ongoing assistance and protection needs of people on the move, irrespective of their status.

Once the Emergency Appeal is completed, the operation and response activities of the National Societies of Central America and Mexico will continue in accordance with their three-year programmes and strategic plans. These plans include responding to the migration situation through a medium- and long-term approach, and facing a prolonged crisis.

Strategic priorities

Climate and environment

Climate change and extreme weather-related events in Central America have become a significant threat to health conditions, food security, access to safe water and environmental security of people, especially for the most vulnerable and remote communities with low response, coping and recovery capacities.

These events are increasingly recurrent, some of them becoming chronic, and have transboundary effects such as the drought of the Central American Dry Corridor. The intense hurricane season placed the region among

the most challenged by extreme hydro-meteorological events, as highlighted in 2020 by the death and devastation caused by Hurricanes Eta and Iota in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. These unprecedented hurricanes affected more than eight million people in Central America.

The year 2020 was also among the warmest in the last 40 years, while intense rainfall events brought landslides, floods and flash floods to rural and urban areas. The intensification of these extreme climate events is

having a severe impact on Costa Rica, including water shortages, agricultural losses, displacement and compromised health and safety. Above all, climate change is affecting the livelihoods of the most vulnerable people, reducing crop yields and food production, leading to worsening food insecurity in many areas, and exacerbating the effects of economic shocks, COVID-19 restrictions, violence and political instability.

Greenhouse gas emissions in Costa Rica are on the rise. It has been estimated that, if no action is taken, Costa Rica's emissions will increase by 2.4 per cent per year, growing 60 per cent between 2015 and 2030, and up to 132 per cent by 2050. Costa Rica released its National Decarbonisation Plan on 24 February 2019 with the commitment to become a modern, green and emission-free economy. The long-term goal is to have net zero emissions by 2050 based on 10 key axes and cross-cutting strategies.

Main actions and areas of support

The Costa Rican 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 leads locally owned actions to support communities and authorities in their efforts to adapt to climate change and build resilience to extreme weather events. Adaptation requires a collective effort to improve knowledge of climate trends and their impacts, preparation techniques, and adaptation strategies to fight the risk to food production and livelihoods.

The IFRC network will support the Costa Rican Red Cross to:

- Develop environmental policies and climate change adaptation strategies, based on evidence, and through mapping and risk scenarios
- Conduct climate-related capacity building to enable better planning and forecast-based financing

- Define operational guidelines and internal procedures to reduce the environmental impact of IFRC operations, and improve dissemination within the organization to staff and volunteers, with emphasis on Red Cross Youth
- Develop information and dissemination actions on climate change and its impacts, oriented within the organization involving staff and volunteers, with emphasis on Red Cross youth
- Develop communication, education and information strategies on climate change and its impacts, targeting community behavioural transformation and aimed at informing local policy-making
- Promote community-led climate-smart solutions and plans that address challenges, improve behaviours and promote mitigation and adaptation strategies for climate change
- Access technical support for climate-smart livelihoods, especially those based on food production and agriculture

Disasters and crises

Costa Rica is a country with high seismic activity, and is generally affected by the downpours associated with tropical storms, which cause total and partial damage to homes, flooding, landslides, overflowing rivers, blocked roads and the need to set up temporary shelters in communities.

Between 2017 and mid-2022, Costa Rica was affected by at least 19 [emergencies](#), including two related to population movements. However, the capacities for improving preparedness, response, recovery, coping and resilience are not sufficiently developed at community, local and national levels. Regional coordination mechanisms have not reached an adequate level of operational capacity to address these high levels of vulnerability.

Main actions and areas of support

The Costa Rican Red Cross, in its auxiliary role, aims to intervene effectively in the face of a wide variety of evolving crises and disasters, working closely with communities to adopt measures to increase resilience. In the past ten years, it has been responding to multiple [emergencies](#), including with support of the IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) and Emergency Appeals.

Based on lessons learned from the IFRC's long-term presence in the region, supporting the capacity building of the National Societies in Central America, community

and national civil protection systems and the regional Coordination Centre for Disaster Preparedness, and based on the most recent regional response in the aftermath of the impact of Hurricanes Eta and Iota, the IFRC network focuses on two common challenges in Central America. The first of these is high risk and multiple hazard scenarios, in particular, recurrent climatic threats including storms and floods, but also combined with man-made risks such as displacement and violence. The second challenge is low resilience and response capacities at community level, with weak links to disaster management systems and hindered access to humanitarian assistance.

The IFRC network will work to build the National Society's capacities to adapt to increasingly complex humanitarian environments, and to develop preparedness and readiness to respond to shocks by strengthening community resilience. This includes early warning, early action, and anticipation to mitigate risks from multiple hazards that affect the livelihoods, homes and living conditions of vulnerable communities and the most disadvantaged people. Supporting the National Society ensures appropriate targeting that places affected people and communities at the centre of preparedness and response activities. The IFRC will promote ethical and people-led approaches such as cash and livelihood transfer programmes, and support the shift to response models that promote localized and regional action.

The IFRC network will support the Costa Rican Red Cross to:

- Share knowledge and develop assessment and needs analysis tools, including digitalization efforts, to produce evidence-based preparedness and response planning
- Use preparedness for effective response to better prepare for the increasing frequency of disasters and crises
- Access technical support in cash and voucher assistance preparedness, and promote the integration of organizational tools, systems, procedures and learning opportunities
- Provide training and learning opportunities to set up community engagement and accountability strategies mainstreamed in all actions
- Improve anticipatory and early action planning and implementation, so it can react in a timely manner to the possible impact of catastrophic events

- Strengthen local preparedness and response capacities, and promote proper coordination with local civil protection structures and with national systems
- Integrate an early recovery and community resilience approach from the start of emergency response actions, which will in turn promote linkage with longer-term actions
- Develop content and media coverage that will catalyse social conversations about the IFRC's role in responding to, and enabling recovery from, hurricanes in Central America
- Collaborate with state agencies in order to coordinate their responses to disasters and crises
- Implement strategies to advocate for international disaster response laws

Health and wellbeing

The Ministry of Health has been a fundamental pillar of the economic and social development of the country. Decade after decade, actions have been implemented to build the health system that characterizes Costa Rica today. Rural and Community Health Programmes have been developed in order to reach populations in the most remote areas, providing primary health care services such as vaccinating and deworming children and the elderly and providing prenatal care, among other activities. Costa Rica's Human Development Index value of 0.81 is, to a great extent, a product of the Rural and Community Health Programmes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had diverse and compounded negative impacts on people in Central America. The crisis contributed to a deterioration in people's health conditions, including those not related to COVID-19, as public systems were overwhelmed by the pandemic. The pandemic hindered access to basic services, including education, as school classes were suspended for a whole year as part of the government's containment measures. It has also had a major impact on family income and has even affected the situation of rights protection. These combined impacts resulted in a deterioration of mental health, especially in children, adolescents and women, and in an increase in gender-based violence risks, with victims of violence being forced to stay in confinement with their aggressors.

Main actions and areas of support

The Costa Rican Red Cross is one of the largest providers of pre-hospital emergency care services in the country. This includes responding to traffic and workplace accidents, social violence and medical issues.

The main focus of the IFRC network is aimed at improving, promoting and increasing access to health services and disease prevention at community level, with comprehensive community health programmes directed towards the most vulnerable and remote populations. Efforts have been channelled into increasing capacity for health services, and the improvement of coordination with public health systems.

The IFRC network will support the Costa Rican Red Cross to:

- Develop its capacities, in terms of knowledge and health information management for evidence-based strategies, staff and volunteer training, and organizational development
- Develop its position on relevant health policy-making spaces, and its role as an auxiliary to the Ministry of Health
- Improve the social, institutional and financial viability and sustainability of its health programmes and departments, including blood donor recruitment plans, and improve dissemination of service information
- Strengthen community-based health programmes to improve access to affordable, quality, needs-appropriate and comprehensive health services, including improved referral pathways
- Strengthen community-based health programmes to promote disease prevention and care, through information, education and risk communication strategies and through the provision of care services including water, sanitation and hygiene, maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health, food and nutrition, mental health and psychosocial support services, and protection, gender and inclusion
- Develop emergency health preparedness, response and recovery actions to ensure timely access to health care services during emergencies
- Increase its capacities to prepare and respond to epidemics, including the setting up of community-based epidemiological surveillance systems, in coordination with health systems, and the development of standard operating procedures
- Support the development and standardization of its mental health and psychosocial support services

Migration and displacement

Costa Rica experiences large-scale mixed-migration due to its open-door migration policy. It is predominantly a destination country for nationals from Latin American countries, but also a transit country for those arriving from the Caribbean, Africa and Asia (IOM 2019). Costa Rica hosts a large refugee and asylum seeker population who have fled armed conflict and socio-political crises in their home countries. In 2021, it hosted 162,731 refugees and asylum seekers mainly from Nicaragua and Venezuela (UNHCR 2022). They reside in alternative forms of housing (e.g., apartments and shelters) situated in shanty towns of San Jose, such as La Carpio. In 2019, Amnesty International reported that Nicaraguan refugees live in crowded and unhygienic conditions, lack basic services such as education and healthcare, and are unable to work due to delays in getting appropriate documentation (2019).¹

In 2022, the Costa Rican government introduced entry visa requirements for Venezuelan citizens (Executive Decree Bo. 36626-G) (R4V, 2022). Costa Rica's refugees and asylum seekers face subtle barriers to integration that prevent them from attending higher levels of education and being employed in lucrative professions (Chavez-Gonzalez and Mora 2021). The number of migrants passing through Costa Rica's southern border continues to rise. From December 2021 to April 2022, there was a 269 per cent increase.

In terms of disaster-related internal displacement, in 2021, there were 290 new displacements associated with two floods. In July 2021, flooding affected Limon, Cartago, San Jose, Puntarenas, Heredia and Alajuela cantons, forcing people to move in with families and into temporary collective centres (IFRC 2022). In 2020, there were over 4,200 new displacements associated with disasters (IDMC, 2022a). In 2020, Hurricane Eta impacted Guanacaste and Puntarenas canton, leading to evacuations (IFRC 2021).

¹ Analysis supported by the Red Cross Red Crescent Global Migration Lab: <https://www.redcross.org.au/globalmigrationlab/>

Costa Rica has signed up to regional instruments on the protection of refugees, identifying durable solutions for refugees, addressing statelessness and human trafficking, and facilitating labour mobility. Costa Rica supported the 2018 Global Compact on Refugees, and was a co-convenor of the 2019 Global Refugee Forum. During the Forum, the Costa Rican government made several pledges, specifically on providing refugees access to education; including statelessness regulations in domestic migration laws to allow stateless persons to request identification and travel documents; improving birth registrations; creating a special category within its existing migration instruments to allow some refugees to obtain a regular status; periodically visiting areas and consulting with stateless persons; generating mechanisms for durable solutions that ensure the integration of stateless persons; reducing time to determine the status of stateless persons. Alongside the other convenors, Costa Rica concluded the event by highlighting that more must be done to address the gap between needs and resources, to protect refugees, find durable solutions, and support host communities through international cooperation as well as equitable burden sharing (UNHCR 2019).

Costa Rica has mechanisms for managing immigration, combatting human trafficking, integrating migrants and refugees into the community, addressing mixed movements, facilitating return migration and addressing environment-induced human mobility.

The National Migration Council is responsible for formulating immigration policies, which are implemented by the General Directorate of Migration and Foreigners. The General Directorate monitors the entry and exit of foreigners and status of irregular migrants. The National Emergency Council, Municipal Emergency Committee and Cantonal Emergency Committees are responsible for disaster preparedness and response and recovery, including facilitating evacuations and managing internal displacements. The Refugee Unit processes refugee claims and grants protection visas. The Judicial Investigation Policy and the General Directorate's Professional Migration Police investigate human trafficking cases, and the National Coalition against the Smuggling of Migrants and Human Trafficking coordinates assistance for trafficked persons. The Costa Rican Social Security Fund provides health services and education to all foreigners irrespective of status (Chavez-Gonzalez and Mora, 2021).

Main actions and areas of support

The National Society is part of the IFRC's 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. The programme aims to support 4.7 million people annually across the world who are either on the move or living in host communities. It will do so 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 network will support the Costa Rican Red Cross to:

- Roll out its migration strategy, fostering regional coordination to address the cross-border migration phenomena in Central America
- Build its capacities by developing tools and training, and providing technical support, including the development and proper maintenance of national and regional information management systems for migratory flows
- Establish and expand the range of services available at humanitarian services points in key locations along migratory routes, to support migrants' access to comprehensive needs-appropriate assistance
- Ensure that assistance and protection services are provided and promoted through engagement with local and national authorities, host communities and affected people, as well as with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), other organizations and donors
- Use of discrimination-free culturally appropriate information that builds on the National Society's assistance and protection services, promotes voluntary access to comprehensive services, and ensures migrants receive proper information on their legal rights
- Access global, regional and local analysis on current and emerging trends, anticipating population movement when possible, in order to support the National Society's information-based programming
- Conduct humanitarian diplomacy with national and international actors regarding migration and host community interventions, based on evidence



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Values, power and inclusion

In Costa Rica, Decree no. 40955 of 2018 establishes inclusion and accessibility in the education system for all, including people with disabilities, without any type of discrimination. This requires a profound transformation of the education system to implement educational policies and programmes that guarantee access and permanence at all levels and modalities, including non-formal ones. Decree no. 37801 of 2019 establishes that education is a priority for the integrated development of the human being and the well-being of the collective, as well as the main instrument to address poverty, inequality and social exclusion.

The Ministry of Public Education together with the Migrant Social Fund carry out initiatives to favour the integration of migrants in Costa Rican educational centres and improve their academic performance. In 2018, a guideline was approved that promotes measures to integrate migrants and refugees, and calls for combating xenophobia in the classroom. The Compendium of Standards on the Right to Education of the Migrant and Refugee Population prepared by the Ministry of Public Education together with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) notes that the Ministry of Public Education is addressing the integration of foreign students, including a public policy on education and a curricular and extracurricular approach to migration and migration management in educational centres. It is estimated that around four per cent of the students in the country are foreign-born, most of them coming from Nicaragua.

Main actions and areas of support

The IFRC network will support the Costa Rican Red Cross to:

- Develop information, education and communication strategies to raise awareness on rights, protection, gender and inclusion values
- Fight against social barriers to equal access to information, assistance and protection services
- Increase institutional capacities for social inclusion and gender, supporting the development of protection, gender and inclusion policies and operational protocols, monitoring and reporting tools, and training for staff and volunteers
- Improve decision-making processes aimed at promoting inclusion, diversity and equal participation both within the National Society, among their volunteers and in the communities in which they serve
- Develop operational and referral protocols addressing the specific inclusion, protection and assistance needs of women, children, the LGBTI+ community and people living with disabilities
- Develop community engagement and accountability policies and plans that use performance indicators to monitor community satisfaction within protection, gender and inclusion activities and programmes

Enabling local action

The Costa Rican Red Cross is committed to pursue its institutional strengthening, and has carried out the self-assessment part of the IFRC's Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) process in 2012, 2013 and 2015. The self-assessment part of the OCAC process is intended to capture the strengths and weaknesses of National Societies as a whole in relation to a wide range of organizational capacities. The National Society is also committed to the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) process, and is at the action and accountability phase. The PER Approach is a continuous and flexible process that enables National Societies to assess, measure and analyse the strengths and gaps of its preparedness and response mechanism, and ultimately take necessary action to improve it.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenge at the institutional level, not only in accompanying people in the most critical situations, but also in seeking ways to reinvent itself to continue to maintain a close, reliable, safe, professional service to the community and at the same time provide security to all its staff. Some of the impacts of the pandemic on the National Society have been:

- a reduction in external demand for Costa Rican goods and services
- effects of the containment measures adopted in the country
- an economic recession and strong deterioration of market indicators
- low availability of volunteers
- decrease in income from public funds and own funds

The Costa Rican Red Cross recognizes that technological changes, digitalization and automation of processes necessitate the reinvention of institutional management. Competitive services are required to optimize the current capacity under the principles of rationality, efficiency and effectiveness. The National Society must move towards information systems that allow the integration of processes and procedures, and facilitate access to information and offer services that adapt to the needs of citizens, and contribute to the national welfare.

The IFRC network is committed to support the National Society in its development, according to its priorities.

Engaged

- Prepare, maintain and update advocacy strategies that promote the humanitarian diplomacy capacities of the National Society, and enable it to maximize its privileged position as an auxiliary to the authorities
- Support the generation and consolidation of alliances, partnerships and inter-institutional coordination outside the IFRC network, with government institutions, humanitarian-relevant actors and civil society organizations, academia, social influencers, media and alternative distribution platforms
- Promote the innovation of structures, processes and competencies to develop and implement a communications incubator and accelerator for the National Society to create, test and run innovative formats and strategies that increase its impact and build public trust and understanding of its role
- Provide technical support in the development of business continuity plans to respond efficiently when services and functions are affected by crises and disasters
- Strengthen institutional capacities on information management, with a focus on improving anticipation to high-impact events, not only climate and non-weather-related, but also including large population movements
- Support the National Society to increase technological capabilities and digitalization for services at headquarters and branch offices including data collection, information management and planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Accountable

- Develop a resource mobilization strategy for Central America based on peer-to-peer learning and good practices exchange, that builds on improved capacities through technical assistance and training on financial sustainability, proposal development, outreach and donor relations
- Support the National Society in the identification and generation of new funding sources through innovative sustainability initiatives
- Support the implementation of quality management systems, incorporating a service user approach

Trusted

- Provide technical support for the development of monitoring systems for programmes and projects, including information management in emergency operations through the development of information tools, training and technical support
- Review and update the accounting and administrative systems, to be extended within the branch network to improve financial controls and reporting to authorities
- Develop and implement a strategy on proactive and reactive communication to mitigate the risk of fraud and corruption
- Standardize and apply accountability mechanisms internally and externally to the National Society, through the community engagement and accountability methodology
- Strengthen volunteer programmes by promoting peer learning, setting up motivational and benefit plans for volunteers, and implementing institutional training curricula to ensure meaningful, timely and relevant participation of volunteers
- Promote volunteer recruitment programmes, mainstreaming a gender and inclusion approach to ensure the incorporation of diverse profiles, paying special attention to the management of youth volunteers
- Develop and implement the operational internal security strategy, reviewing communication mechanisms and flows related to security incidents, and the capacity of the security liaison network in terms of recruitment, awareness raising, equipment and training
- Ensure all of the IFRC network present in the country adheres to the framework for joint planning and priority setting, using the common action strategy as the basis for unified country planning

THE IFRC NETWORK

The IFRC

The IFRC is represented by its Country Cluster Delegation for Central America in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and operates with an extended team of specialists in different areas in all Central American countries. This enables close support, coordination and constant communication with the National Societies of Central America and the participating National Societies that support them. The IFRC support centres on strategic and operational coordination, National Society development, and humanitarian diplomacy. It also supports accountability as a cross-cutting theme.

In recent years, the IFRC has supported the National Society through a number of Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) and Emergency Appeal operations in relation to floods, volcanic eruptions and ash, population movement, and hurricanes. 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

The IFRC coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situations and needs; agreeing on 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 monitoring progress. This also means ensuring that strategies and programmes in support of people in need incorporate clarity of humanitarian action, development assistance, and efforts to reinforce the auxiliary role of National Societies in their respective countries.

The Costa Rican Red Cross leads its partnerships with sister National Societies. The combined experience, technical capacities and field knowledge within the IFRC network constitute a solid basis for achieving the expected outcomes in the country, in terms of disasters and crises (both man-made and caused by natural hazards), primary health care, the prevention and response to epidemics (COVID-19 and others), longer-term resilience building programmes including livelihoods and protection, and responding to unmet humanitarian and protection needs of migrants and displaced people.

The **German Red Cross** also partners with the National Society and provides bilateral support.

Participating National Society Support - Bilateral

Name of Partner NS	Funding Requirements	Engaged
German Red Cross	CHF 0.54M	
		Total
		0.54M

Movement coordination

The IFRC leads regular coordination meetings between the different International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement actors, including participating National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), through established national and regional mechanisms. It also coordinates humanitarian assistance during emergency responses. 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 contributes the National Society's work in protection, including minimum standards, restoring family links, self-care messages for migrants, health and first aid, and support in humanitarian diplomacy.

Coordination with other actors

The Costa Rican Red Cross works in close collaboration with local and national authorities and other humanitarian organizations for a coordinated response. Permanent coordination with Costa Rican national authorities is carried out through the Emergency Operations Centre and the National Emergency Commission Board of Directors. Through the National Directorate for Risk and Disaster Management and coordination with the Auxiliary Committees, actions are prioritized in order to assist the most affected communities.

The National Society plays a key role as auxiliary to the public health systems in the areas of primary health, outreach to vulnerable communities and pre-hospital care. During operations to prevent and respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Society coordinated with the Ministry of Health to implement and follow up on prevention measures against the virus. The National Society held regular technical coordination meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Health, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), World Health

Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) at the national level, with support of the IFRC.

The situation of migrants and displaced people in the region has become an increasingly challenging priority for government authorities and the organizations that make up the Humanitarian Country Teams. The cross-border phenomenon of migration and displacement requires coordination both within and between countries to maintain the humanitarian chain of assistance that delivers urgent protection services to migrants, people in transit, returnees and displaced persons. To ensure good coordination, the Costa Rican Red Cross meets with actors involved in the migration response to ensure good coordination, including IOM, UNHCR, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other humanitarian organizations such as Médecins Sans Frontières, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Doctors of the World and Save the Children. The IOM in Costa Rica is currently implementing human security projects for

migrants, labour migration, linkages with the diaspora, migration and development, and protection and assistance to vulnerable migrants. UNHCR's operations in Costa Rica focus on displacement caused by conditions in northern Central America, Nicaragua and Venezuela. The IOM, UNICEF and UNHCR also help strengthen the Government's capacity to determine refugee status, through technical cooperation and dedicated staff at

the refugee unit, in addition to supporting government child protection and sexual and gender violence prevention and response initiatives.

The IFRC participates in national and regional coordination spaces with external partners, to stay informed about the humanitarian context and contribute to the IFRC network's perspective and work.

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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