



# MONTENEGRO

IFRC network mid-year report, January – June 2023

24 November 2023

## IN SUPPORT OF THE MONTENEGRO RED CROSS SOCIETY



23

National Society branches



189

National Society staff



910

National Society volunteers

## PEOPLE REACHED

Climate and environment



36,744

Values, power and inclusion



12,900






Migration and displacement



4,000

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW







in Swiss francs (CHF)

<b>Total</b>		Funding requirements	 4M
<b>IFRC</b>	Longer-term	Funding requirements	 2.9M
<b>Participating National Societies</b>		Funding requirements	 428,000
		Income	 116,000
<b>Host National Society other funding sources</b>		Funding requirements	 740,000

[Click here for more financial information](#)

Appeal number **70003**

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

<b>Climate</b>	People reached with heatwave risk reduction, preparedness or response	 37,000
	People reached with activities to address rising climate risks	 1,000
<b>Migration and displacement</b>	Migrants and displaced persons reached with services for assistance and protection	 4,000
	Number of Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs) that provided assistance and/or protection to people on the move along land based migration routes	 10
<b>Values, power and inclusion</b>	People reached by protection, gender and inclusion programming	 13,000
	Community Engagement and Accountability is integrated and institutionalized in the National Society policies, operations, and procedures (with clear benchmarks)	 Yes

## ENABLING FUNCTIONS

<b>Strategic and operational coordination</b>	Number of government led coordination platforms the National Society is part of	5
<b>National Society Development</b>	All volunteers are covered by health, accident and death compensation	Yes
	One National Society Development plan is in place	Yes
<b>Humanitarian diplomacy</b>	Youth engagement strategy is developed or in place	Yes
	National Society is participating in IFRC-led communication campaigns	Yes
<b>Accountability and agility</b>	National Society has strengthened integrity and reputational risk mechanisms	Yes

# IFRC NETWORK SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES

National Society	Multilateral Support	Bilateral Support					
		Climate	Migration and displacement	Values, power and inclusion	Enabling Functions	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing
Australian Red Cross	●						
Austrian Red Cross	●	●			●	●	
British Red Cross	●						
Danish Red Cross	●						
French Red Cross	●						
Irish Red Cross Society	●						
Italian Red Cross	●		●	●	●		●
Swiss Red Cross			●				●

■ Planned

■ Supported

# OVERALL PROGRESS

## Context

Montenegro, located in Southeast Europe, has an exit to the Adriatic Sea and shares borders with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia. The country serves as a meeting point for various cultural and religious influences on the border of Orthodox East and Catholic West. Today's Montenegro is a multi-confessional and multi-ethnic environment. Montenegro's population is 72 per cent Orthodox, 16 per cent Islamic, three per cent Catholic and nine per cent other.

Possessing an upper-middle-income economy, Montenegro maintains a small yet open economic structure. The country aspires to join the European Union by 2025. It is also an economy vulnerable to external shocks, as it relies heavily on capital inflows from abroad to stimulate its growth and has an active tourism sector. As the country transitions to a market economy, state-owned enterprises are being restructured and public spending analyzed to reduce costs to the state. Current large-scale public infrastructure investments and spending for social programmes have put a strain on the economy. Efforts by the government to raise the minimum wage are encountering obstacles amidst a global recession. The lingering repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to pose a substantial threat to the Montenegrin economy.

Montenegro is a member of the United Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the World Trade Organization, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Council of Europe, and the Central European Free Trade Agreement. The country is also a founding member of the Union for the Mediterranean.

According to the Bureau for Employment of Montenegro, in 2022, the total number of unemployed persons was 46,159. The rate of registered unemployment was 20 per cent. Between 2010 and 2019, Montenegro's Human Development Index value increased from 0.802 to 0.829, marking a 34 per cent increase. This advancement places the country in the very high human development category, ranking 48th among 189 countries and territories.

Between 1990 and 2019, Montenegro's life expectancy at birth increased by 2.3 years, mean years of schooling increased by one year, and expected years of schooling increased by 1.8 years. Montenegro's gross national income per capita increased by almost 30 per cent between 2010 and 2019.

## Key achievements

During the reporting period, **the Red Cross of Montenegro** successfully

- delivered home care services to 774 people from 15 municipalities
- organized license renewals for 258 existing personnel and facilitated four training courses for 134 newcomers across the country as the sole organization in Montenegro recognized for training and certifying lifeguards
- organized first aid trainings for 600 employees of different companies
- held a first aid competition in June 2023, with the participation of over 200 young people from all over the country
- engaged 842 volunteers who devoted 5,177 volunteer hours to implementing Red Cross activities
- enhanced its resource mobilization capacities following a fundraising market assessment at the end of 2022; a corporate fundraiser was conducted, and a resource mobilization strategy was developed to establish sustainable funding sources

In response to the devastating earthquake that struck Syria and Türkiye in February 2023, the National Society initiated a national fundraising appeal, successfully amassing 340,000 euros, which was allocated between supporting the Turkish Red Crescent Society and contributing to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) appeal for aiding Syria.

Since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, the Red Cross of Montenegro has provided continuous support to displaced persons. The National Society provides essential humanitarian aid, especially basic goods, seasonal assistance for winters, healthcare, and protection, gender and inclusion. Significant investment has been made in offering mental health and psychosocial support. The focus is on women with children, pregnant women, single parents, and older people, particularly those with health problems or travelling alone. In addition, services have been provided to migrants through humanitarian service points and child-friendly spaces, including Montenegrin language courses for people who intend to stay in Montenegro.

The Red Cross of Montenegro established mobile teams consisting of two field workers, an interpreter and a psychologist. This has been achieved through the support of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) as a long-term partner of the National Society. The teams support local branches in coastal municipalities overwhelmed by the number of migrants they receive. They provide psychosocial, psychological and medical assistance, assist in scheduling medical examinations, support with translation and interpretation during medical examinations, and provide information about how to enrol children in school. They provide individualized support, accompaniment and follow-up in order to ensure full access to the rights of this target group. Red Cross branches and the team coordinate closely to respond adequately and minimize gaps and challenges.

At the same time, the Red Cross of Montenegro, with support from the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), organizes workshops for children to educate about mental health and give educational support. They also raise awareness about preventing discrimination and non-violent communication among peers.

**Changes and amendments:** There were no changes or amendments to the plan during the reporting period.

## IFRC NETWORK ACTION

### ONGOING EMERGENCY RESPONSE

<b>Emergency Operation</b>	Ukraine and impacted countries crisis Emergency Appeal
<b>Appeal number</b>	MGR65002
<b>Duration</b>	46 months (28 February 2022 to 31 December 2025)
<b>target areas</b>	Ukraine and impacted countries
<b>Funding requirement</b>	Total through IFRC Emergency Appeal: 800 million Swiss francs Total 2.7 billion Swiss francs Federation-wide Funding requirement for Montenegro: 6 million Swiss francs
<b>Link to Emergency Appeal</b>	<a href="#">Ukraine and impacted countries crisis - Emergency Appeal</a>
<b>Link to operational strategy</b>	<a href="#">MGR65002 Montenegro National Society Response Plan</a>

Since the beginning of the armed conflict in Ukraine, the Red Cross of Montenegro has been supported by the IFRC to respond adequately to the needs of Ukrainian citizens entering Montenegro. The National Society’s investment in enhancing its crisis management capabilities significantly strengthened its capacities at national and local levels. This enhancement was crucial for its branches, as many face challenges due to limited human and financial resources.

The operation enabled the engagement of qualified and dedicated professionals to support branches in strengthening multiple capacities, such as procuring vehicles and IT equipment, improving workspaces, and establishing child-friendly spaces. This helped local branches efficiently respond to the needs of the displaced population.

These investments and learnings will be key factors for adequate response in future crises, including possible assistance to refugees along other migratory routes.

The Red Cross of Montenegro produced a [video](#) to highlight the achieved results.

## SECTORS OF INTERVENTION

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### Shelter, Housing and Settlements

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**Objective:** *Communities in disaster and crisis affected areas restore and strengthen their safety, wellbeing and longer-term recovery through shelter and settlement solutions*

As part of the continued Ukraine operation, the Red Cross Society of Montenegro procured 625 foldable beds, 500 sleeping bags, 6 accommodation containers, 2 sanitary containers, 740 heaters, 890 water heaters and 1 office. In total, nine tonnes of non-food items were distributed.



### Livelihoods

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**Objective:** *Communities, especially in disaster and crisis affected areas, restore and strengthen their livelihoods*

The Red Cross of Montenegro distributed 1,420 food parcels and 520 baby care parcels to migrants.

As an aid for the general population of Montenegro, 2,043 food parcels and 283 baby care parcels were distributed.



### Multi-purpose Cash

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**Objective:** *Households are provided with unconditional/multipurpose cash grants to address their basic needs*

The Red Cross of Montenegro provided cash and voucher assistance reaching 686 people.



### Health & Care

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*(Mental Health and psychosocial support / Community Health / Medical Services)*

**Objective:** *Strengthening holistic individual and community health of the population impacted through community level interventions and health system strengthening*

As part of the continued Ukraine and surrounding countries crisis operation, the Red Cross of Montenegro conducted a total of 126 group workshops and individual sessions for mental health, psychosocial support and physiological support for children and adults. These activities were carried out in collective centres and National Society's premises. A total of 3,059 people were reached.



### Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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**Objective:** *Ensure safe drinking water, proper sanitation, and adequate hygiene awareness of the communities during relief and recovery phases of the Emergency Operation, through community and organizational interventions*

As part of the operation, the National Society distributed 1,420 hygiene kits to the affected population.

The National Society further supported the broader Montenegrin population by distributing an additional 1,628 hygiene kits.



## Protection, Gender and Inclusion

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**Objective:** *Communities identify the needs of the most at risk and particularly disadvantaged and marginalized groups, due to inequality, discrimination and other non-respect of their human rights and address their distinct needs*

Through the emergency appeal, the Red Cross of Montenegro engaged professionals for six branches to support Red Cross staff and volunteers in implementing education and language classes for adults and children. One-hundred and seventy school materials kits were distributed, and 991 children were cared for in child-friendly spaces. In addition, the National Society provided socialization trips for Ukrainians so that they might better understand Montenegrin culture and geography. In total, 1,034 people were reached through protection, gender and inclusion activities.



## Community Engagement and Accountability

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**Objective:** *The diverse needs, priorities, and preferences of the affected communities guide the response through a people-centred approach and meaningful community participation.*

The National Society activated a free call centre for Ukrainians in Montenegro, which provides information about rights, temporary protection, education, the health system, and activities and services of the Red Cross. It also provides information for potential victims of trafficking. There is the option to speak with an operator to ask questions or pose complaints. Information is available in three languages: Ukrainian, English and Montenegrin. This is the first call centre of its kind in Montenegro.

The call centre is promoted through promotional materials that are distributed at border crossings as well as at registration desks in the Government ministries, and through relevant partners who serve migrants. Traditional media venues and social media are also used to promote it.

The Red Cross of Montenegro always includes communities in its activities and decision-making processes, striving for transparency, and trying to have the vulnerable populations and the wider community contribute to programme planning with their suggestions. Accordingly, all branches have suggestion boxes for submitting anonymous complaints/suggestions on the work of the Red Cross of Montenegro.



## Migration

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**Objective:** *Communities support the needs of migrants and their families and those assisting migrants at all stages of migration (origin, transit and destination)*

The Red Cross of Montenegro actively supports displaced Ukrainians, offering counselling, legal guidance, and various other migration services. By employing interpreters, the National Society has enhanced its ability to assist with translating essential documents and referrals. Meanwhile, the continuous influx of individuals from the Middle East and Africa intensifies the country's humanitarian demands, highlighting the urgent need for substantial resources in the immediate future.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



## Disasters and crises

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The Red Cross of Montenegro is part of the Emergency Appeal in response to the Ukraine and surrounding countries crisis. For further details, [click here](#) for the latest revisions and operation updates.

Intending to strengthen the capacities of the local communities that are most affected during disasters and crises, the Red Cross of Montenegro carried out activities with the Flood Resilience Alliance, raising awareness about floods, providing first aid training for children, distributing promotional materials and providing disaster risk reduction information.

The National Society participated in regional and national trainings in partnership with the X-STOCK project. This helps enhance cross-border preparedness through shared management of emergency stocks in South Eastern Europe.



## Health and wellbeing

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The Red Cross of Montenegro solidified its position as the country's sole authorized entity for lifeguard training by renewing licenses for 258 lifeguards and conducting four training courses for 134 newcomers. In a widespread effort to bolster community health, the organization also organized first aid training for 600 company employees. It held a competition involving over 200 young individuals while also running 245 first aid workshops that reached 2,045 participants.

In a dedicated drive to support vital healthcare services, the National Society facilitated 40 blood donation events, which saw active participation from 559 individuals, contributing significantly to local medical needs.



## Migration and displacement

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The Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Republic of North Macedonia National Societies are part of the [IFRC three-year Global Route-Based Migration Programme](#), which aims to improve the safety and dignity of people on the move along deadly and dangerous land and sea-based migration routes. The programme aims to support people on the move and people in host communities annually through three operational pillars: (1) improving access to assistance and protection, including through humanitarian service points; (2) strengthening National Society capacities; and (3) local to global humanitarian diplomacy.

The Red Cross of Montenegro serves migrants seeking international protection as they arrive at reception centres. They receive psychosocial support, are given newcomer information, are put in contact with social services and receive translation services. In the first half of 2023, 415 people were served.

For migrants seeking international protection who arrive and are housed in private residences, Red Cross volunteers provide regular visits, assistance communication with public institutions, tutoring for children, linkages to health services, and information about educational and employment opportunities. In the first half of 2023, 104 people from private residences were served. The same services were provided for 78 migrants who already have secured international protection.

Assistance for urgent health care needs was offered to 54 people, including transportation to appointments, translation services and advocacy to see specialists. One hundred and thirty people received medicines. In the Bozaj reception centre, 813 interventions were provided, 586 physical exams and 2,241 translation services.



## Values, power and inclusion

The National Society has been working towards improving the position and inclusion of the population of Roma and Egyptians, people living with disabilities, and older people.

As part of general operations to protect older adults from loneliness and isolation, four professional home help aids visited 40 elderly persons twice weekly, and 40 volunteers visited 60 older people twice weekly. There were 215 preventative home visits in the first half of 2023. Additionally, 90 volunteers visited 30 older people with dementia, and the National Society conducted seven healthy ageing workshops and 16 self-help groups.

In a separate outreach, 1,017 households from Roma and Egyptian communities received necessary assistance to improve their living conditions.

Additionally, the National Society facilitated personal assistance for 180 individuals with disabilities, ensuring they received help with personal hygiene and daily household tasks, thereby supporting their independent living.

Furthermore, the National Society conducted 33 distinct workshops on humanitarian values and international humanitarian law, with 536 participants gaining insights and knowledge from these sessions.

## ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS



### Strategic and operational coordination

The Red Cross of Montenegro is an independent, non-profit, voluntary, and humanitarian organization, which carries out activities in the public interest and receives special protection and assistance from the State of Montenegro. The National Society executes public services as detailed by law and has an auxiliary role to state bodies in the humanitarian sphere. Through its network of volunteers, the Red Cross of Montenegro provides assistance to vulnerable people in disasters and crises, but also during peaceful times. Besides having an auxiliary role to the government, the National Society has a role in civil protection and emergency response with solid partnerships with emergency management/social welfare authorities. It has a nationwide presence through its branches and volunteers. The Red Cross of Montenegro is a credible partner to the state and civil society organizations, participating in different national platforms, initiatives, working groups, etc.

In line with its mission, the Red Cross of Montenegro intensively develops and expands its cooperation within the International Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and other international humanitarian and other organizations. As part of the Movement, the National Society enjoys excellent cooperation with the IFRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). It is a member of the network of National Societies from small European countries, together with the National Societies of Andorra, Cyprus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta and Monaco. Additionally, it is a member of the Neighbours Help First network that includes Southeast European National Societies, the IFRC and ICRC. The region shares a common background and faces similar challenges, leading to strong regional cooperation in many areas, especially during various emergencies.

The Red Cross of Montenegro is involved in several European associations with the aim of following the latest updates and developments. These include the European Red Cross and Red Crescent Network on HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis, the European Red Cross and Red Crescent network for psychosocial support and the Platform for European Red Cross and Red Crescent Cooperation on Refugees, Asylum seekers and migrants. The National Society is also an active member of the Centre for Cooperation in the Mediterranean. As of 2008, the Red Cross of Montenegro is a full member of the International Life Saving Federation and the only organization in the country that is licenced to conduct courses for lifeguards on water.

Since 2015, the Italian Red Cross has hosted its regional delegation in Montenegro, from where it leads humanitarian and international cooperation activities in Europe, particularly in the Balkans. Its office is in Podgorica, within the Red

Cross of Montenegro headquarters. Across the region, the Italian Red Cross provides technical and advocacy support and coordinates and monitors programmes and activities. The Italian Red Cross mainly supports the Red Cross of Montenegro in health, social services and migration sectors. It is also committed to supporting the National Society's organizational development, resource mobilization and stock pre-positioning for disaster preparedness.

Through bilateral cooperation and regional, European Union-funded projects, the Austrian Red Cross provides support in disaster preparedness and response, health and social services for older people in their homes and resource mobilization development for the National Society. The home care project ended in April 2023, and the resource mobilization project began in July 2023.

A partnership framework agreement signed with the regional ICRC delegation in Belgrade defines cooperation related to capacity building and joint operations in Montenegro. The cooperation is mainly related to promoting International Humanitarian Law by training staff and volunteers and organizing round tables with relevant stakeholders. Cooperation also includes support in implementing the Safer Access Framework and restoring family links activities.

The Red Cross of Montenegro engages in bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies from the region and with Montenegro's diplomatic and consular sector. The National Society partners with many international organizations as needed, including the European Union delegation, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID, WHO and IOM.



## National Society development

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The National Society Development process is central for the Red Cross of Montenegro to respond effectively to disasters and humanitarian crises as well as to other situations of violence in coordination with Movement partners and country authorities. The National Society, as auxiliary to public authorities, is always aware, prepared, and able to perform at scale to the challenges and needs that local communities and migrants face. Investing in strengthening the Red Cross of Montenegro is crucial to displaying strong Red Cross performance in the country.

National Society Development has been put high on the agenda of National Society leadership. This leadership has been crucial in strengthening the capacities of branches, volunteers and staff, and local communities. Developing the National Society helps all to gain knowledge and expertise around delivering relevant humanitarian assistance to affected people. Local branches of the Red Cross of Montenegro are first responders. They deliver services to vulnerable communities and contribute to stability at the local level. Additionally, the Movement and its support contribute to strengthening global capacity to manage risks and the impact of disasters, emergencies and crises.

During the first half of 2023, intense efforts have been put into making human and financial resources available for the National Society's development to ensure its mission's successful implementation. A corporate fundraiser was engaged and is working on developing a resource mobilization strategy and preparing the application for the IFRC Capacity Building Fund.

According to the Law of the Red Cross of Montenegro and the Law on Rescue and Protection, the National Society is recognized on a state level as a very important partner with its auxiliary role. This auxiliary role is defined by the law and specifically through Affairs of Public Interest. One of the most important roles is participation in the reception and accommodation of evacuated citizens, refugees and internally displaced people. The National Society provides support and takes measures that can contribute to caring for the affected population, refugees and internally displaced people.

In order to enhance preparedness, strengthen capacities, and therefore be able to provide adequate response to current and future crises, the National Society has completed procurement procedures for key items. These include containers, beds, blankets, bed sheets, clothes, heaters and water heaters.



## Humanitarian diplomacy

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During the first half of 2023, the Red Cross of Montenegro invested in strengthening resource mobilization capacities through individual fundraising and social corporate responsibility programmes. This is an ongoing process that should strengthen the position of the National Society and lead to increased resources for programme implementation.

Simultaneously, the National Society is maintaining its strong relationship with governmental and non-governmental actors in the country, contributing to the creation and revision of different laws, strategies and policies at local and national levels.

The Red Cross of Montenegro is advocating for improving the status of the National Society, especially at the local level, to improve the local branches' position.



## Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

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As of January 2023, the Red Cross of Montenegro is implementing the revised procurement manual, whose primary goal is to ensure regularity, transparency and equal treatment across procedures. Furthermore, the National Society worked on revising its Statutes, which were submitted to the [Joint ICRC/IFRC Commission for National Society Statutes](#) for review.

The Red Cross of Montenegro has been preparing to develop a customer relationship management platform that should strengthen relations with existing donors and establish relations with new ones.

Representatives of the Red Cross of Montenegro have completed two levels of the [sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment investigator certification course](#) online through the Core Humanitarian Standards Alliance platform. One of the representatives joined the roster of international investigators. The Red Cross of Montenegro's Code of Ethics was updated with sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment prevention and response measures.

The Red Cross of Montenegro participates in the X-STOCK project to enhance cross-border emergency management in Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. Through this project, the National Society has developed and tested its regional stock management strategy and a software application for joint regional stock records and management.



## The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

is the world's largest humanitarian network, with 191 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and around 15 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.

### DATA SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

- **Timeframe and alignment:** The reporting timeframe for this overview is covering the period from 1 January to 30 June 2023. However, due to the diversity of the IFRC and differences in fiscal years, this coverage may not fully align for some National Societies. Mid-year reporting data may have been based on estimations, with plans to submit more robust numbers at the annual reporting stage.
- **Missing data and breakdowns:** National Societies have diverse data collection systems and processes that may not align with the standardized indicators. Data may not be available for some indicators, for some National Societies. This may lead to inconsistencies across different reporting tools as well as potential under or over-estimation of the efforts led by all.
- **Reporting bias:** The data informing this Federation-wide overview is self-reported by each National Society (or its designated support entity) and which is the owner and gatekeeper, and responsible for accuracy and updating. IFRC tries to triangulate the data provided by the National Societies with previous data and other data in the public domain.

### 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](#)
- [Evaluations database](#)

### Contact Information

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#### Red Cross of Montenegro

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