



BELARUS AND RUSSIA

IFRC network mid-year report, January – June 2023

14 December 2023

IN SUPPORT OF THE BELARUS RED CROSS



158

National Society branches



418

National Society staff



15,325

National Society volunteers

PEOPLE REACHED

Ongoing emergency operations



2,000

IN SUPPORT OF THE RUSSIAN RED CROSS



600

National Society branches



840

National Society staff



50,000

National Society volunteers

PEOPLE REACHED

Ongoing emergency operations



41,000

Appeal number **MAA67004**

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

in Swiss francs (CHF)

Total		Funding requirements	5M
IFRC	Longer-term	Funding requirements	1.9M
		Income	31,000
Participating National Societies		Funding requirements	125,000
		Income	164,000
Host National Society other funding sources		Funding requirements	3M
		Income	2.8M

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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
British Red Cross	●						
Danish Red Cross	●						
Finnish Red Cross	●						
French Red Cross	●						
German Red Cross	●	●	●			●	
Icelandic Red Cross	●						
Italian Red Cross	●			●			●
Japanese Red Cross Society	●						
Netherlands Red Cross	●						
Norwegian Red Cross	●			●		●	●
Swedish Red Cross	●						
Swiss Red Cross	●				●	●	●
The Russian Red Cross Society					●	●	
Turkish Red Crescent Society						●	

● Planned

● Supported

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

in Swiss francs (CHF)

Total		Funding requirements	 11.4M
IFRC	Longer-term	Funding requirements	 11.3M
		Income	 2.5M
Participating National Societies		Funding requirements	 70,000
		Income	 1.3M

[Click here for more financial information](#)

IFRC NETWORK SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES

National Society	Multilateral Support	Bilateral Support				
		Migration and displacement	Values, power and inclusion	Enabling Functions	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing
American Red Cross	●					
Austrian Red Cross		●		●	●	
Belgian Red Cross	●					
British Red Cross	●					
Danish Red Cross	●					
Finnish Red Cross	●					
French Red Cross	●					
German Red Cross		●		●	●	
Italian Red Cross	●	●				
Japanese Red Cross Society	●					
Netherlands Red Cross	●					
New Zealand Red Cross	●					
Norwegian Red Cross	●		●	●	●	●
Red Cross Society of China		●			●	
Singapore Red Cross Society	●					
Spanish Red Cross				●	●	
Swedish Red Cross	●					
Swiss Red Cross	●				●	
Turkish Red Crescent Society				●	●	

Planned
 Supported

OVERALL PROGRESS

Context

The humanitarian consequences stemming from the escalated armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine in the first quarter of 2022 continue to dominate the operational landscape of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), as well as for the Russian Red Cross and Belarus Red Cross. Similar to the trends observed in the previous year, substantial progress towards realizing the operational plan has primarily occurred during the initial half of the year. Strides have been taken to bolster the capacities of the Russian Red Cross, particularly in the areas of strategic engagement and partnership. This involves pinpointing domestic resources for mobilization and cultivating interactions with both internal and external stakeholders, affiliated with the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement or otherwise. However, the hesitance among donors to contribute to endeavors in Russia and Belarus introduces an element of uncertainty into the consistent funding of regular programmes.

Key achievements

Russian Red Cross

- A notable achievement for the Russian Red Cross was the successful execution of two missions to Syria, extending assistance to the Syrian Arab Red Crescent in mitigating the aftermath of an earthquake.
- In January, a significant milestone was reached with the Russian Red Cross' inaugural diplomatic briefing. It centered on the preparedness and response efforts aimed at addressing the Ukraine crisis and other pertinent challenges within the Russian Federation and the broader East European region.
- Demonstrating their commitment to sustainable operations, the Russian Red Cross convened a partnership meeting with participating National Societies. This gathering served as a platform for the Russian Red Cross to delineate prevailing and prospective humanitarian needs, fostering an open exchange that identifies obstacles and solutions, thereby fortifying coordination and synergy.
- The Russian Red Cross is diligently advancing its humanitarian diplomacy trajectory. This encompasses the formulation of documents such as the humanitarian diplomacy policy, the operational checklist for humanitarian diplomacy, and comprehensive developmental humanitarian diplomacy plans spanning one, five, and ten years. Moreover, active efforts to propagate the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement via multimedia, lectures, and debates are underway.
- Preparations for the first International Mobilization and Preparedness for Action (IMPACT) course to be hosted by the Russian Red Cross are underway.

Belarus Red Cross

- Simultaneously, arrangements for the annual disaster response summer school, organized by the Belarus Red Cross are also in full swing.
- A successful visit to China facilitated robust connections between the Belarus Red Cross and the Red Cross Society of China. The two National Societies signed a Memorandum of Understanding. These ties are poised to bear fruit as the Red Cross Society of China is expected to participate in the Belarus Red Cross' disaster response summer school.
- A noteworthy achievement for the Belarus Red Cross was the start of a public relations campaign in collaboration with a food manufacturing entity for the first time in the history of the National Society.
- The Belarus Red Cross maintains stable ties with all the United Nations agencies present in the country. During the first half of the year, the Belarus Red Cross implemented a total of 16 humanitarian projects supported by IFRC, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Swiss Red Cross, UNICEF, IOM, UNDP, UNHCR, the Global Fund, the Embassy of Netherlands and with the use of private donations.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION

ONGOING EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Emergency Operation	UKRAINE AND IMPACTED COUNTRIES CRISIS EMERGENCY APPEAL
Appeal number	MGR65002
Duration	46 months (28 February 2022 to 31 December 2025)
Target areas	Ukraine and impacted countries
Funding requirement	800 million Swiss francs through the IFRC Emergency Appeal 2.7 billion Swiss francs Federation-wide
Link	Ukraine and impacted countries crisis - Emergency Appeal

During the reporting period, there were no additional Emergency Appeals launched in Russia and Belarus. IFRC continued support to both Russian Red Cross and Belarus Red Cross under the ongoing Emergency Appeal for both countries - The "Ukraine and impacted countries crisis" Emergency Appeal, launched by IFRC in 2022 to assist more than 3.6 million people affected by the conflict in Ukraine.

Due to the changing needs in the region and additional requests for support by other National Societies, the IFRC has been scaling-up its response within Ukraine as well as in neighbouring countries. A revised Emergency Appeal was published on 10 May 2023, extending the timeframe of the operation until 31 December 2025, with a planned transition to Unified Country Planning covering all operations of National Societies after that date. It presented a substantial increase in people targeted, in the funding ask as well as in geographical coverage, to support National Societies in assisting people in Ukraine and other impacted countries affected by the crisis.

The [revised Emergency Appeal](#) reflects the new needs and approaches identified in collaboration with Russian Red Cross and Belarus Red Cross. With the extension of the operation end date, the IFRC has shifted its response from an emergency phase during 2022 to a protracted crisis scenario from 2023 onwards. This while recognizing the need to remain agile and proactive in what continues to be a highly dynamic environment, to be able to quickly adapt its response to the changing needs.

The revised Emergency Appeal and [revised regional Operational Strategy](#) prioritize long-term programming, specifically focusing on integration activities for displaced people from Ukraine. Overall, in Belarus the response has reached a rather sustainable state. The target group and the quantity of the affected populations are clear, its geographical spread has been settled and the needs in general become long-term in nature (i.e., settling in Belarus and obtaining a residence permit, a refugee status/supplementary protection status or citizenship). In Russia, the situation fluctuates more with the displaced people still coming and moving between the regions of Russia, and with the internally displaced people being considered as another target group requiring support.

For the Russian Red Cross, the area of provision of services has expanded to 32 regions, ensuring that a similar approach is used everywhere, and that cash assistance is provided as the preferred mechanism. Support also includes mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), first aid, vocational trainings, provision of basic relief items, case management and health activities. To ensure that the services provided are of the best quality, the National Society's development and strengthening activities are continuously focused on staff development as well as headquarter and branch strengthening, with regard to systems and processes, including further development of the emergency response systems.

The Belarus Red Cross continues to support displaced people from Ukraine who are staying in Belarus temporarily or permanently. Belarus Red Cross response continues to focus on activities covering basic needs mainly through cash and voucher assistance, as well as health, information provision, livelihoods support and advocacy. To ensure that necessary support is provided and to be prepared for other possible scenarios, the National Society focuses on its development and strengthening activities at headquarters and local branch levels.

While the Emergency Appeal was focused on displaced people from Ukraine in Russia, there was a need to mobilize response using the same funding and the cash and voucher assistance strategy for internally displaced people from Belgorod region in Russia. Since end-May to early-June 2023, approximately 60,000 people had to flee the Shebekino, Grayvoron and a few other districts of the Belgorod region due to heavy intensified shelling of the area. A state of emergency was introduced in 15 border settlements of the region.

Russian Red Cross has regional and local branches in all regions affected by the movement of population from the border areas of the Belgorod region, which also receive technical support in emergency response from the headquarters in Moscow.

IFRC and ICRC have supported the National Society's response to the situation with the assistance of food and non-food items (hygiene items, bedclothes), psychosocial support, facilitating evacuations in some cases, as well as cash (5,000-15,000 Russian Roubles or 45-135 Swiss Francs) and clothing vouchers for vulnerable categories (families of pregnant women, pensioners, people with disabilities, children under three years old, single-parent families and families with more than three children). The cash assistance was organized with the support of the ICRC, supplemented by IFRC's support from Emergency Appeal funds with cash assistance to people registered outside of Belgorod Region.

Follow this link to the most recent Operation Update: [MGR65002_Operation Update 7](#).

SECTORS OF INTERVENTION



Shelter, Housing and Settlements

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

Belarus Red Cross

For displaced people from Ukraine, the Belarus Red Cross organized accommodation in hostels, crisis centers, and crisis rooms run by the National Society. It provided counselling on accommodation and referrals to social welfare centers for further assistance. Additionally, the National Society delivered a total of 685 sets of bed linen, 381 pieces of kitchenware, and 10,774 clothing items (weighing over 1,600 kilograms) to people staying in the centers.

The Brest branch of the Belarus Red Cross actively engaged in fundraising activities to support the costs of accommodation and meals provided to displaced people from Ukraine in the Brest region. The National Society successfully raised a total of 13,862.00 Belarusian Ruble (approximately 3,821 Swiss Francs) for this cause.



Livelihoods

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

Belarus Red Cross

The National Society assists in employment of displaced people from Ukraine by organizing training sessions on regular or self-employment and holding meetings with potential employers.

For this purpose, the National Society has established links with various organizations to explore potential employment opportunities for those affected by the ongoing international armed conflict in Ukraine. During the reporting period, 31 people have received support in finding employment.

Displaced people who reach out to regional units of the Belarus Red Cross receive support in the form of food or financial assistance for food. Throughout the reporting period, the National Society has distributed over 1,415 food packages and baby food, amounting to a total of more than 3,213 kilograms.

In collaboration with the UNDP, the Belarus Red Cross provided support to more than 200 displaced individuals from Ukraine in meeting their educational requirements. Additionally, 16 families received cash grants to establish their own businesses. Besides, 60 beneficiaries were trained in digital literacy, 30 people received payments for vocational courses, and more than 200 people received professional orientation and support.

Russian Red Cross

In March 2023, the Russian Red Cross conducted a survey on professional needs of displaced people to adjust its actions accordingly (i.e., sign contracts with service providers in the regions with affected population present to provide high-quality educational services that will allow the affected population to obtain a new, stable source of income and rebuild their lives). A total of 1,122 questionnaires were processed, and the results revealed that:

- More than 2/3 of those surveyed are not currently working (923 people).
- Only 294 people consider the Russian Red Cross to be a source of education.
- The jobs on demand are a hairdresser, a web-designer, a kindergarten tutor, and a driver.
- The main reason to change jobs is to increase income and improve the quality of life.
- People expressed interest in being trained as Social Worker, Nursing Assistant, Babysitter or a Caregiver.
- Only 311 of the respondents have higher education, 435 have graduated from college (primary vocational education or secondary vocational education) and 289 have basic and general secondary education.
- Only half of the respondents (525 people) have relevant diplomas.

As a result of the assessment, a list of professions in demand by migrants was formed. Following that, the Russian Red Cross began the process of searching for federal partners from the Russian Federation, who, based on the results of the assessment, will be ready to conclude an agreement with the Russian Red Cross to start training the affected population.



Multi-purpose Cash

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

Belarus Red Cross

Cash and voucher assistance is a central response modality used by the Belarus Red Cross in 2023. In March 2023, the National Society, with the support of IFRC, ICRC and UNICEF, launched financial support programme for displaced people from Ukraine who are living with disabilities, as well as families with children. Payments in this programme are made via postal transfers. To facilitate the dissemination of information, the National Society distributed 2,722 leaflets and booklets that provide guidance on the process of applying for cash assistance.

Since the start of the response, the IFRC, in collaboration with the ICRC, has provided financial support to the Belarus Red Cross' financial programme. The IFRC contributed 614,379.28 Belarusian Ruble (approximately 169,355 Swiss Francs), while the ICRC provided 297,912.30 Belarusian Ruble (approximately 82,120 Swiss Francs). Through this support, the National Society has been able to assist 1,646 households.

Additionally, UNICEF has provided financial assistance of 333,390 Belarusian Ruble (approximately 91,899 Swiss Francs), enabling the National Society to assist an additional 461 households. These collective efforts have been instrumental in providing crucial aid and support to those affected by the crisis.

Russian Red Cross

In 2023, IFRC has been supporting cash and voucher assistance programmes for displaced people from Ukraine in 32 regions of the Russian Federation. A total of 12,185 households in 32 regions received cash assistance of 75,958,000 Russian Rouble (686,431 Swiss Francs) in their bank accounts in Sberbank, while ICRC provided financial assistance to 14,675 households in five regions.

The cash assistance is unrestricted and unconditional, allowing people supported by the programme to prioritize their own needs. Four thousand Gloria Jeans clothing vouchers were purchased to be distributed to households with children.

In June, due to the changes in the local context, payments to internally displaced people from the Belgorod region began. As of 30 June 2023, the Russian Red Cross collected 10,272 applications from the internally displaced people of the Belgorod region. As per the agreement reached by the Movement components, ICRC supported 4,106 families with 26,985,000 Russian Roubles (Approximately 243,863 Swiss Francs). Another 466 families from the Belgorod region received cash payments from IFRC in other regional branches (outside the Belgorod region).



Health & Care

(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*

Belarus Red Cross

During a six month period, the Belarus Red Cross delivered 131 consultations to displaced people from Ukraine, addressing matters related to payment for medical services. In an effort to alleviate their financial burden, the National Society has disbursed a total of 10,762 Belarusian Ruble (approximately 2,966.57 Swiss Francs) to provide reimbursement for medical expenses incurred.

Overall, 239 trainings and 927 workshops were conducted by the Belarus Red Cross first aid instructors and trainers during the first half of the year. A total of 15,485 people were trained in first aid.

Russian Red Cross

Psychosocial Support

During the six months of 2023, the following types of psychosocial support were provided to displaced people:

- 13,827 people received psychosocial support in the Regional Branches of the Russian Red Cross.
- 16,887 consultations in the field of psychosocial support by phone.
- 10,560 people took part in group support measures.

Health & Care

In March 2023, the Russian Red Cross conducted a needs assessment of displaced people in 17 regions of Russia. One thousand, five hundred eighty-six responses were received and processed. Upon the processing of the survey data, it was concluded that most of the health services are covered by the state. Therefore, health-wise, the primary need of the displaced people consists in counselling services on how to process documents that will allow them to have free access to health services provided by the state.

First Aid Trainings

A total of 43 people were trained in first aid since the beginning of the year using the Emergency Appeal funds.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

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*

Belarus Red Cross

The National Society distributed water and hygiene kits to the affected population. In total, the National Society distributed 2,329 hygiene kits to over 1,500 people, along with disinfectants and water, amounting to a total weight of more than 2,221.4 kilograms. Additionally, the National Society collaborated with external partners (UNHCR and UNICEF) to deliver kits to displaced people from Ukraine.

Russian Red Cross

Throughout the first half of the year, the Russian Red Cross has reached 142 displaced people with water, sanitation and hygiene services.



Protection, Gender and Inclusion

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*

Belarus Red Cross

During the reporting period, more than 11,144 leaflets and booklets were distributed among migrants. More than 347 toys for children were distributed. In the orange room for women's counselling services in the Zheleznodorozhny district organization of the Belarus Red Cross in Gomel, 236 women received consultations on various issues, including violence prevention. In the children's rooms of the district organizations of the Gomel regional organization (Marinovich, Mozyr and Novobelitsky district of Gomel), 134 sessions were held for 383 children. During the first six months of the year, the 201 Infoline of the National Society received 75 calls from migrants from Ukraine about receiving humanitarian aid, accommodation/lodging/support.

Russian Red Cross

From the beginning of 2023, as part of the activities to restore family links:

- Applications received: 6,120
- Requests to restore family links: 419
- People found: 17



Community Engagement and Accountability

Objective: *Target people and communities with timely, accurate, trusted and accessible information regarding Red Cross Red Crescent services while engaging with the National Society to share feedback that is used to adapt and guide programmes and operations*

Belarus Red Cross

The Belarus Red Cross continues to involve local communities in the process of providing assistance to migrants. Humanitarian aid in the form of clothes, shoes, household items, food, etc. continues to be received from the population on a regular basis.

Several activities have been carried out at the national level:

- Training on volunteer management (March)

- Training on writing microeconomic initiatives' proposals (March)
- Training on project management (June)
- At the regional level:
 - Three focus group discussions with migrants from Ukraine were organized in Gomel region. Thirty people participated.
 - Working meetings with volunteers were held regularly to discuss making the assistance provided more effective, solving existing problems, identifying needs (six meetings, more than 50 volunteers).
 - Seven trainings on volunteer management were held.
 - Three trainings were conducted (Minsk, Vitebsk region, Mogilev region) with more than 90 migrants on writing business initiatives.
 - Eight trainings on PSS for volunteers were conducted with more than 100 people covered.
 - Three road maps were developed (in Minsk, Gomel and Grodno regions) for migrants.

In Vitebsk region, in June, a children's holiday was organized by the Vitebsk regional organization of the Belarus Red Cross for migrant children, including Ukrainian ones. The programme included performances by clowns and animators, games, contests, and sweet prizes. Participants of the party were 30 refugee children from Vitebsk and the region.



Migration

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

Belarus Red Cross

In collaboration with UNICEF, volunteers from the Belarus Red Cross Brest branch are providing humanitarian assistance, psychosocial support and Restoring Family Links (RFL) services at the local bus station and the border along the Warsaw highway. During the reporting period, a total of 68 phone calls and 341 device charging services were provided.

In these locations, the Belarus Red Cross organizes playtime for children, provides people on the move with hygiene kits, counselling and safe referrals services (106 provided during the reporting period) as well as information provision.

The Brest regional organization together with UNICEF organized the duty of volunteers at the bus station and border service (Varshavskoe highway), provided support in the form of humanitarian aid and psychosocial support and restoration of family ties. In total, 221 women, 218 men, 82 boys and 100 girls have been assisted for 6 months. Children are provided with games, hygiene kits and information materials, as well as counseling and referrals. In total, more than 226 referral services were provided. Under the family reconnection referral, provision of a phone call to contact loved ones and the ability to charge devices is organized. A total of 65 calls and 205 device charging services were provided during the reporting period.

Russian Red Cross

Humanitarian assistance

From the beginning of 2023 until the end of June, 34,000 humanitarian kits were distributed to displaced people.

Case Management

The last half a year were marked by IFRC and Russian Red Cross collaboration on elaborating criteria for aiding with people under a new initiative. A SOP was developed to cover the categories of people who can be assisted, as well as the criteria for such assistance. The following categories of people are eligible for support:

- people in need of rehabilitation services (people with disabilities and their caregiver, people who have long-term physical and mental impairments),

- people with serious medical condition requiring urgent medical assistance,
- people who need to get to their relatives from one Russian region to another,
- people in need of support with translation of documents or covering any legal fees when it comes to legalization in Russia,
- people with other needs based on social vulnerabilities.

Support services include:

- medical care (examinations, treatment),
- lifesaving medical transportation,
- medical equipment,
- medical supplies,
- technical means of rehabilitation (e.g., walking sticks, crutches etc.),
- medicines,
- tickets,
- payment of utility costs,
- short-term rental assistance for up to 3 months to help with the transition to a longer-term solution,
- school supplies for kids from kindergarten to secondary and high school ages (e.g., books and stationery),
- household items (e.g., iron, laundry supplies and machine, etc.)

In total, during the provision of individual assistance, 253 requests were received from displaced people. Of these, 162 cases were processed successfully. These cases included the following: help in buying lenses for a child; assistance in transporting a disabled child; assistance in buying a walker for an elderly person; reimbursement of expenses for food and accommodation during the period of treatment of the child in St. Petersburg (twice); buying a stroller for a 6-month-old baby; organization of funerals, etc.

Humanitarian service point

Russian Red Cross continues to operate a mobile humanitarian service point in Belgorod to meet the needs of the displaced people. The following work was carried out as part of the activities of the Russian Red Cross mobile point in Belgorod:

- 1,577 displaced people from Ukraine received cash payments, as well as 1,913 internally displaced people from the Belgorod region received such payments
- 746 people received humanitarian aid
- 1,892 people received assistance of a different nature (consultations on various issues: drawing up a pension, receiving a lump sum payment from the state, calling a taxi, finding a route to other cities, connecting mobile communications and setting up a phone, buying tickets, using banking applications, recharging phones, etc.)
- 380 people received MHPSS
- 100 people received SIM cards
- The Russian Red Cross provided tracing and family links support for 391 people, of these, 19 families were reunited through the search line

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Climate and environment

Both Russian Red Cross and Belarus Red Cross are involved in a technical reference group for climate action, with the Belarus Red Cross contributing to the online meetings and Russian Red Cross attending a meeting in Greece in June 2023. Communication channels of both National Societies and IFRC are used to raise awareness on climate change and to support people during heat waves and cold waves. The Russian Red Cross headquarters also encourages environmentally sustainable practices and welcomes waste sorting.



Disasters and crises

IFRC continues its support to the Russian Red Cross and Belarus Red Cross in developing capacities to respond to evolving crises and disasters. In both Russia and Belarus, the preparedness for emergency response process was underway.

An orientation session was conducted for the Russian Red Cross in June 2023. This collaborative workshop brought together individuals interested in fortifying the capacities of both National Societies within the cash and voucher assistance framework and digitalizing disaster responses. This initiative contributed to the development of both National Societies' capabilities for cash and voucher assistance, while fostering cross-country cooperation and sharing best practices.

Both National Societies provided rapid support to people affected by natural disasters - floods in Belarus and wildfires in Russia.

In Belarus, a disaster management technical working group meeting was conducted during the second quarter of the year. The meeting was attended by the disaster management focal points and chairpersons of the Belarus Red Cross regional branches, along with the department heads and the Secretary General from headquarters. The strengths and weaknesses of disaster management service were reviewed, based on the elements of the National Society disaster preparedness and response mechanism as the key areas of preparedness for emergency response. These included policy and standards, analysis and planning, operational capacity, coordination, and operational support.

During the first half of the year, the Belarus Red Cross made significant progress by drafting a disaster risk management policy and a disaster risk management strategy aligned with the National Society's strategic plan, along with existing policy documents and guidelines. Technical assistance from the IFRC country cluster delegation facilitated this development. Additionally, an orientation session on international quality and standards, including SPHERE and Inter-Agency Standing Committee standards, aimed to incorporate migration and protection concerns into the Belarus Red Cross' forthcoming policies and strategic documents.

IFRC supported Belarus Red Cross in developing emergency response procedures, including standard operating procedures for emergency response teams, incident management team, humanitarian service points, and the emergency operations centre. Support was also provided for the development of a multi-hazard contingency plan, business continuity plan, and the finalization of the disaster preparedness and response plan. The documents are in draft mode and are awaiting approval by the National Society leadership.

In the context of Russia, the findings of the lessons learned workshop on the "Ukraine and Impacted Countries Crisis" Emergency Appeal, conducted by the Russian Red Cross in December 2022, were analyzed and discussed with the National Society's regional branches and headquarters. Based on the findings and discussions with the Russian Red Cross emergency response team, a draft strategy for the emergency response department was prepared with the aim to provide overall direction and common approaches in strengthening the preparedness and response capacity of the Russian Red Cross. An emergency response team workshop was conducted in June and the draft strategy was discussed with key branches and headquarter staff.

The Russian Red Cross signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, confirming the readiness of the Russian Red Cross to provide support addressing the consequences of the earthquake. Two deployments of Russian Red Cross response teams were organized to Lattakia. As a result, assistance to over 4,500 people was provided. Around 500 people received medical assistance and psychosocial support was provided by a trained specialist from the Russian Red Cross. As a result of the two deployments, the Russian Red Cross distributed 18,000 kilograms of humanitarian aid, including over 3,000 kilograms of infant formula and baby food.

In collaboration with the Norwegian Red Cross, 80 seminars addressing injury prevention and emergency preparedness were conducted in Novgorod, Arkhangelsk, and Murmansk. This partnership, established since the 1990s, has improved regional awareness about first aid and non-violent communication while bolstering the institutional capacity of the Russian Red Cross' regional branches. Moreover, the Norwegian Red Cross has extended its support by offering cash and voucher assistance to families displaced from Ukraine in regions of Russia not covered by the Emergency Appeal.



Health and wellbeing

Medical and social activities of the Russian Red Cross and Belarus Red Cross continue addressing people with limited movement and self-care capacities.

Both National Societies continue their first aid activities and participate in the international expert group on first aid of the Eastern European and Central Asian countries. The Russian Red Cross is also in the process of updating its first aid training and approaches, as well as obtaining a first aid reference centre certification and a certificate for one more first aid trainer.

IFRC continues supporting both National Societies to ensure the use of international psychosocial support provision standards. During the first half of the year, IFRC helped the staff of these National Societies to participate in psychosocial support trainings in Budapest (two people from each National Society), as well as ensured remote support by the regional mental health and psychosocial support delegate.

Both National Societies actively continue to promote blood donorship and organized actions on World Blood Donation Day.

With changes in the structure of the country cluster delegation and absence of a health officer, less focus was put on health-related activities. This will be changed during the second half of the year, in alignment with the National Societies that have strong technical expertise in the health sector. If requested, health technical support will be provided through the Regional Office for Europe's Emergency Health Unit.

Belarus Red Cross

Belarus Red Cross continues implementation of the clown therapy project with the Italian Red Cross. Currently, four Belarus Red Cross volunteer groups are engaged in the rehabilitation and socialization of children in healthcare, education and social protection institutions using the methods of clown, art and play therapy.

The National Society has 178 nurses who provide home care for people who need it. A Belarus Red Cross nurse received a Florence Nightingale medal in May 2023, which makes the total number of nurses who received this award in Belarus 15.

Centers for children with disabilities in Grodno and for people with mental illnesses in Minsk continue their activities but require external funding support.

Russian Red Cross

Currently, the Russian Red Cross is running several health and care centers across different regions of the country. Continual medical and social assistance is being provided to 2,368 people. Some of the Russian Red Cross regional branches have exclusive projects aimed at social assistance to those in need. For example, the Novosibirsk regional branch has been implementing a "Colors of Life" project dedicated to stroke recovery. There are 15 people in this programme who have suffered a stroke or have age-related fine motor disorders.

As part of its' support to people who left Ukraine, IFRC and the Russian Red Cross use the ECHO project funds to provide HIV treatment support. Further support will be provided through the local authorities in the relevant regions.

In addition to the activities covering psychosocial support in the Emergency Appeal, the Russian Red Cross with Norwegian Red Cross and IFRC support will organize child centers in 10 regions. The project is targeted to support children from unprivileged families and those affected by the Ukraine and impacted countries crisis.



Migration and displacement

IFRC encourages both the Belarus Red Cross and the Russian Red Cross to participate in the networks on migration and in revision of the migration strategy of the IFRC. Both National Societies consider migration one of the key challenges and are actively involved in supporting migrants.

Belarus Red Cross

Belarus Red Cross negotiated renewal of the memorandum on cooperation in the provision of humanitarian support to migrants, for signing in July 2023 by the National Society, Ministries of Interior, Emergencies and Foreign Affairs, as well as the State Border Committee. This memorandum is for the provision of efficient coordination in response to the needs of migrants who are on the territory of Belarus (i.e., information exchange, joint activities on provision of urgent support planning, dissemination of humanitarian aid and restoring family links).

Belarus Red Cross launched an internet portal wehelp.by where migrants can find information about the support provided by the National Society and partner organizations. The portal targets people who come from Ukraine, but the information provided is relevant for migrants from any country.

Throughout the period from the last quarter of 2022 to the second quarter of 2023, humanitarian service points (crisis centres) opened in Grodno, Gomel, Brest and Vitebsk branches of the Belarus Red Cross. One more centre (in Mahilyow) is ready for opening before the end of 2023. Migrants can receive services in these centres and be accommodated there, if needed.

Russian Red Cross

During the reporting period, the migration centre of the Russian Red Cross provided continued support to the most vulnerable migrants in Moscow and the Moscow region, with support from the Italian Red Cross, IFRC and UNHCR. The migration centre combines the functions of a counselling centre, a centre for individual social support (Case management) and an educational centre. It provides consultations on legal, psychological, medical, and social issues personally during appointments, or through a hotline. The educational centre allows the children of migrants to access education (Math classes, Russian and some other school subjects) as well as be integrated into society.

From January to June 2023, the migration centre received 1,954 requests. The majority of these came from those affected by the Ukrainian crisis and concerned legal counselling. The centre is equipped with a sensory room that helps in reducing the psychological burden, developing senses through special lighting, music and touch. It is also used as a therapy for children with limited communication skills.

The centre continues to partner with non-governmental organizations such as the charity foundations for migrants, integration centres for refugees and migrant children, and migrants' support centres, among others. This provides an opportunity to exchange experiences and refer beneficiaries to partners, if necessary.

Two Russian Red Cross staff participated in a workshop on medium and long-term integration support to refugees in Budapest to jointly analyze the trends in the region and contribute from the National Society's perspective.

During the reporting period, with the support of IFRC and UNHCR, the Russian Red Cross prepared for the summer migration school event for students and young leaders in St. Petersburg in August 2023. This is a platform for education on legal base, rights and laws, as well as for an exchange of ideas and establishing contacts for young activists involved in migration response.



Values, power and inclusion

Representatives of the Belarus Red Cross participated in the Protection, Gender and Inclusion training in Budapest in April 2023, while representatives of the Russian Red Cross were able to join online meetings only. The knowledge obtained is used in the National Societies to adjust their ongoing activities. However, a wider training is needed, both in Belarus and Russia, which can be organized during the second half of 2023 or early 2024. Both National Societies are implementing needs assessment and feedback collection as part of their programmes. However, a training on Community Engagement and Accountability is required as well.

The Russian Red Cross is actively engaged in dissemination of knowledge about the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement using the new methods of reaching the public. A series of podcasts/talk shows is being filmed to explain the Fundamental Principles, the approaches used by the Movement components, the aspects of daily Movement activities, etc.

ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS



Strategic and operational coordination

Coordination with national and local actors

Both the Belarus Red Cross and Russian Red Cross duly work within their mandates on providing relief and regular services to vulnerable populations and serve in the role, auxiliary to that of the respective national governments. Both closely coordinate with their counterparts that include the national Ministries of Emergencies, Health, Interior and others.

In particular, the Belarus Red Cross works within the framework of the cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Emergency of Belarus that stipulates that the National Society's role of an auxiliary to the public authorities in disaster preparedness and relief. To cite an instance, in spring 2023, disaster response teams of Belarus Red Cross have been included in the flood response measures at district and regional levels. In the first half of 2023, the National Society also continued the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between itself, the State Border Committee and the Ministry of Interior of Belarus. According to this, the Belarus Red Cross coordinates the humanitarian assistance provided to migrants in the country, primarily in the context of the Ukraine crisis and in the aftermath of the situation with the migrants from the Middle Eastern countries. The National Society also signed and operationalized an agreement with Belpochta (Belarusian Post Office) and UNICEF to support families with children in crisis through cash vouchers and other modalities.

The Russian Red Cross and the Ministry of Emergency of Russia continued revising the existing framework cooperation agreement; this process runs in parallel with the renewal of agreements between the Russian Red Cross regional branches and regional governments. In practical terms, the Russian Red Cross plays a supporting role to the Ministries of Emergency and Health in helping people affected by the Ukrainian crisis to meet their material and humanitarian needs, providing them with psychosocial support, responding to individual requests and restoring family links.

Membership coordination

Membership coordination faced a fair share of challenges due to external factors, yet the Belarus Red Cross and Russian Red Cross worked with Participating National Societies throughout the first half of 2023. Belarus Red Cross signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Red Cross Society of China in April 2023. It also continued its cooperation with the Swiss Red Cross that maintains a presence in Belarus on healthy and active ageing, the home-based care programme (including community mobilization and psychosocial support), and National Society development in the areas of resource mobilization and fundraising.

Russian Red Cross concluded a project agreement with the Norwegian Red Cross on the development of emergency preparedness and response and fundraising capacities. Both the Belarus Red Cross and Russian Red Cross benefit from the cooperation with the Italian Red Cross, which supports a project on clown therapy with Belarus Red Cross and a project on individual case management for people affected by the Ukrainian crisis with Russian Red Cross.

The two National Societies took part in the response to the earthquake emergency in Syria and Türkiye in February 2023. Belarus Red Cross concentrated on the mobilization of funds for the National Societies in Syria and Türkiye, while the Russian Red Cross sent an emergency team to Syria.

Movement coordination and cooperation

Movement cooperation and coordination for both the National Societies manifests itself in close ties with IFRC and ICRC delegations present in both countries. Both National Societies benefit from National Society development activities through Branch Organizational Capacity Assessment (BOCA) and other exercises. Both receive regular technical support and consultations from IFRC on fundraising capacity strengthening. Russian Red Cross benefits from the National Society Investment Alliance and Capacity Building Fund support. IFRC, ICRC and both National Societies regularly coordinate on the issues of public relations and networking. In January 2023, the Russian Red Cross, IFRC and ICRC held a joint briefing for the diplomatic corps in Moscow to brief diplomats on the Russian Red Cross efforts in support of the people impacted by the crisis in Ukraine.

Resource mobilization

Fundraising efforts have been difficult due to sensitivity of the environment. That said, both National Societies have managed to obtain some funding from corporate partners, mostly domestic ones. Belarus Red Cross signed an agreement with "Molochny Mir", a major dairy producer in Belarus. Russian Red Cross continued building up its network of contacts among the big domestic corporations and foreign owned businesses, landing significant contributions along the way, including those of Pochtabank, Promsviazbank, Nestle and others.

Coordination and partnerships in ongoing emergency response

Tri-partite meetings have been held at the Russian Red Cross during the first quarter of 2023, specifically to follow-up on the international armed conflict in Ukraine and the strategic/operational impact, to discuss the implications of the Movement Coordination for Collective Impact Agreement or the Seville Agreement 2.0. The components of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement (ICRC, IFRC and National Societies) revisited the outcomes of the mini- summit that was held in 2022, following the escalation of the Ukraine Crisis. This was undertaken in view of the changes in the regulatory framework setting out the coordination responsibilities for the components of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement through the adoption of the Seville Agreement 2.0 by the 2022 Council of Delegates. It was agreed by the components of the Movement in Moscow to reaffirm the coordination roles for those international activities which the components are called upon to carry out in cooperation, on a bilateral or multilateral basis, as a consequence of the conflict.

Discussions have been underway to renew the Movement Coordination Agreement in Belarus during the third quarter of this year. In the case of Russia too, preliminary discussions on this have been initiated. Both the leaders of the two National Societies participated in the Movement induction course organized in Budapest in May 2023.



National Society development

During the first half of 2023, the National Society development focus areas for the Belarus Red Cross was branch, volunteering and youth development. With the support of IFRC's country cluster delegation, a consultant was hired to develop a volunteer management policy and its implementation plan. The Russian Red Cross has also created its youth council, consisting of activists aged from 18 to 35 years old, which will form the talent pool of the National Society, as well as develop the volunteer community.

The Belarus Red Cross was supported by the IFRC country cluster delegation in preparing to apply to the Capacity Building Fund for development of volunteering management, training and motivation. The National Society also continued its work on elaborating the terms of reference for the improvement of existing databases of beneficiaries and volunteers.

Besides volunteering, another National Society development priority for the Belarus Red Cross was BOCA. The two facilitators trained in December 2022, during the BOCA training of facilitators in Tajikistan, with support from IFRC's country cluster delegation, conducted nine BOCA workshops in regional and district branches. During the second half of the year, a BOCA training of facilitators for the Belarus Red Cross is planned to scale-up the process inside the National Society and conduct a minimum of 20 BOCA workshops in total before the end of 2023.

Within the National Society development framework, the Russian Red Cross continued its efforts to develop the strategy for the next five years, with the draft to be presented to its regional branches for further discussions and amendments in summer 2023.

Branch development was another priority for the Russian Red Cross, and the National Society is actively engaged in BOCA. After two pilot BOCA workshops in Saint Petersburg and Voronezh regional branches, the National Society leadership decided to invest in training of facilitators to significantly speed up the process. After the training of two facilitators to be BOCA trainers in Budapest in July, the Russian Red Cross is equipped to conduct both BOCA workshops as well as training of facilitators without any support of international trainers. The current goal is to conduct two BOCA training of facilitators to have enough facilitators to cover 30 out of 85 regional branches with workshops before the end of 2023.

In parallel, the efforts of National Society headquarters were directed at elaborating a new approach to membership and volunteer management. The volunteering policy was reviewed and updated. Preparation of terms of reference for a large-scale survey of volunteer motivation was launched.

The IFRC country cluster delegation supported the National Society's participation in trainings, international conferences (IFRC Global Innovation Summit 2023) and workshops, along with providing experience exchange and peer-to-peer support as well.



Humanitarian diplomacy

The IFRC's country cluster delegation and Regional Office for Europe advised the Russian Red Cross in conceptualising its approaches to humanitarian diplomacy. As a result, a humanitarian diplomacy policy is being developed by the thematic unit of the National Society. To further build on the Russian Red Cross humanitarian development capacity, its strategic direction and operational steps, support will be provided from the regional support unit during the third quarter of 2023.

Supported by the IFRC and ICRC, the communications specialists from the Russian Red Cross and Belarus Red Cross attended the Global Communications Forum in Jordan to learn best communications practices from colleagues around the world, share their experience and broaden their network among peers.

Alongside the IFRC, the Russian Red Cross conducted two communications training for communication focal points from 12 regional branches and the headquarters communications team to enhance the National Society's communication capacities across the country. Supported by the IFRC and ICRC, the Russian Red Cross' headquarters and regional branches purchased filming equipment to ensure the regular production of photographs and audio-visual material for communication purposes. The Belarus Red Cross, supported by the IFRC, conducted a training on mobile photography to develop the communication skills and capacities of its staff.

The communications team from IFRC's country cluster delegation is continuously working on expanding and engaging IFRC's Russian-speaking audience on social media platforms and showcasing the work of the National Societies on a regional and global level, with a focus on ongoing emergencies.



Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

Human resources

All National Society staff members and volunteers have access to mandatory and other courses for staff development on IFRC's e-Learning platform.

Finance

Both the Russian Red Cross and Belarus Red Cross support a transparent financial management and reporting system for all projects, including those funded by the IFRC. All financial reports from regional branches are collected at the National Society headquarters and submitted to IFRC's finance unit with all the necessary supporting documents and signatures. All original supporting documents are kept by the National Society in the local archive and can be accessed at any time for verifying. Internal audits of the regional branches and annual external audits are also conducted.

During the reporting period, the CRRRA process (formerly WWPP) was completed for both Belarus and Russia. Both National Societies are now reviewing the framework agreement template with a view to signing the agreement in quarter 3 this year, to move from a working advance modality to cash transfers.

Reporting

Ongoing support has been provided to both National Societies with key tasks related to planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER). With regard to reporting, support has been provided with collecting data, analyzing secondary data, collecting feedback, and making relevant reports, specifically those related to the emergency appeal.

Integrity

The Russian Red Cross has an ethics commission, which considers reports of violations of the provisions of the National Society's statutes and the Code of Conduct. Complaints from staff, members, volunteers of the National Society are considered confidentially by a group of people. The commission considers complaints, including those related to violation of the policy of prevention and control of fraud and corruption.

The IFRC's Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI) developed and made a presentation to the IFRC country cluster delegation on fraud/sexual exploitation and abuse awareness presentation, focusing on how and why such problems appear in emergency operations, and the costs incurred from the perspective of donor obligations. Additionally, a briefing was made to the country cluster delegation on Protection, Gender and Inclusion/safeguarding by the regional coordinator.

Digital transformation and innovation

The Russian Red Cross digital architecture was created by a digital management community "YaITy". This is the digital manifestation of the National Society for 5-7 years, with start of implementation from 2023. Document management with partners and unified corporate e-mail system have already been implemented. Electronic consolidated reporting for the National Society's regional branches is in the testing phase. A unified Russian Red Cross call center for communication with beneficiaries is at the implementation stage.

At the end of 2022, the Belarus Red Cross developed and implemented a customer relationship management (CRM) solution to register aid recipients and account for the aid received. The database allows National Society staff to enter, correct and register the assistance given to migrants in real time, as well as check whether a beneficiary has already been registered, see if and when assistance was previously issued to him/her, update and add data, analyze the amount of assistance already issued. The Belarus Red Cross has trained its staff on how to use this system throughout 2023. Currently, the system is being finalized to integrate the Kobo Toolbox service and Bitrix24 to register and disburse aid to beneficiaries in areas with poor Internet connection.

At the same time, an issue of data protection in databases and compliance with local legislation needs further finalization. Besides, an existing salesforce-based CRM solution has been optimized, and it is planned to develop and implement a new area of the programme for in-house fundraising.

Risk Management

Risk Management is a priority for IFRC's country cluster delegation. During the first quarter of the year, the Russian Red Cross was provided a briefing on risk management and the need of a risk register. Additionally, the country cluster

delegation closely monitors the sanctions regime in place for Russia and Belarus to ensure that IFRC complies toward global and regional sanctions.

Preparations are underway for an internal audit/agreed upon procedures for the country cluster delegation, which was approved as part of OIAI's internal audit plan for the Ukraine and Impacted Countries response. The country cluster delegation was last reviewed prior to the conflict, in 2018. The audit testing will include interviews with key staff, including National Society and Participating National Societies (where relevant); reviewing key documents; and analyzing data and reporting, including financial data, and supporting documents.



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

John Entwistle

Head of Delegation
IFRC Country Cluster Delegation
for Russian Federation and Belarus,
based in Moscow

T +7910 0010236

john.entwistle@ifrc.org

Andrej Naricyn

Head of Strategic Engagement
& Partnerships
IFRC Regional Office for Europe,
Budapest

T +36 70 4306528

andrej.naricyn@ifrc.org

Belarus Red Cross

W redcross.by

Russian Red Cross

W redcross.ru