



# ECUADOR

IFRC network mid-year report, January – June 2023

12 December 2023

## IN SUPPORT OF THE ECUADORIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY



107

National Society branches



208

National Society staff



8,856

National Society volunteers

## PEOPLE REACHED

Climate and environment



405

Disasters and crises



5,000

Health and wellbeing



81,000

Migration and displacement



24,000

Values, power and inclusion



36,000

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

in Swiss francs (CHF)

<b>Total</b>	Funding requirements	9.4M
	Income	1.7M
<b>IFRC</b>	Longer-term Funding requirements	3.6M
	Income	3.5M
<b>Participating National Societies</b>	Funding requirements	1.7M
	Income	1.3M
<b>Host National Society other funding sources</b>	Funding requirements	3.9M

[Click here for more financial information](#)

Appeal numbers **MAAEC003**

Cruz Roja Ecuatoriana

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

<b>Climate</b>	People reached with activities to address environmental problems	405
	People reached with disaster risk reduction	5,000
<b>Disasters and crises</b>	People reached per year with support services, in-kind, cash and voucher assistance for emergency response and recovery	2,000
	Percentage of humanitarian assistance delivered using cash and vouchers	1%
<b>Health and wellbeing</b>	People reached with immunization services	81,000
	People reached with contextually appropriate water, sanitation and hygiene services	28,000
	People reached with contextually appropriate health services	13,000
	People reached with psychosocial and mental health services	6,000
	People trained in first aid	30
	People donating blood	Applicable data not available
	People reached with services for assistance and protection	24,000
<b>Migration and displacement</b>	Number of Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs) that provided assistance and/or protection to people on the move along land based migration routes	17
	Advocacy, dialogues, educational or communication initiatives to change the legal, policy, or operational environment to better assist and protect people on the move?	1
	Data collection, research, analysis or other information management initiatives to better assist and protect people on the move are available	Yes
	People reached by protection, gender and inclusion programming	36,000
<b>Values, power and inclusion</b>	Percentage of people surveyed who report receiving useful and actionable information	1%
	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 formal interagency/international coordination platforms the IFRC network is part of	1
	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
	Strategy for strengthening the auxiliary role developed or implemented	Yes
	Youth engagement strategy is developed or in place	Applicable data not available
<b>Humanitarian diplomacy</b>	Domestic advocacy strategies are developed, aligning, at least in part, with global IFRC advocacy strategies	Yes
	National Society is participating in IFRC-led communication campaigns	Yes
<b>Accountability and agility</b>	National Society has demonstrated progress in digital transformation according to the digital maturity model outlined in the IFRC Digital Transformation Strategy	Yes
	National Society has functioning data management systems that inform decision making and support monitoring and reporting on the impact and evidence of the IFRC network's contributions	Applicable data not available
	National Society has strengthened integrity and reputational risk mechanisms	Yes
	PSEA Action Plan is in place to enforce prevention and support survivors	Applicable data not available

# 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
Argentine Red Cross	●						
British Red Cross	●						
German Red Cross		●			●	●	
Italian Red Cross		●			●	●	
Netherlands Red Cross	●						
Spanish Red Cross		●	●	●	●	●	●

Planned
  Supported

# OVERALL PROGRESS

Ecuador is a country that faces multiple natural hazards, including floods, earthquakes, landslides, forest fires, droughts, and volcanic eruptions, as well as anthropogenic risks like migration, social disturbances, and a recent increase in criminal violence. These factors have had an impact on the rise in poverty rates, inequality, unemployment, and economic recession.

One of the most significant challenges during this period has been the migratory flow in the country. This has led the **Ecuadorian Red Cross** to carry out actions to address the needs of people in situations of human mobility. These actions include humanitarian assistance, medical care, psychosocial support, restoring family links (RFL), and the distribution of informational material, that aim to inform the migrant population about their rights and available support services, with a focus on protection, to reduce their vulnerability.

With regards to environmental risks, the country is preparing to face the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon, which could affect 17 provinces according to the analysis of Ecuadorian technical and scientific institutions. In response to this, the National Society is developing the ENSO Contingency Plan, which outlines risk scenarios as the basis for planning the actions that will be implemented to address the potential emergency impact.

The systematic increase in criminal violence generated by organized criminal groups is also a determining factor in the country's context. According to figures from the Ministry of Interior, in the first half of 2023, there have been 3,599 violent deaths in the country, reflecting a 69% increase compared to the same period in 2022. According to the trend analysis, it is possible that the country could end the year with a rate of 40 violent deaths per 100,000 inhabitants.

In the current context of insecurity, the National Society prioritizes the well-being of humanitarian personnel. The National Coordination of Operational Security has issued guidelines and developed protocols to mitigate incidents. The goal is to ensure that humanitarian personnel adapt and respond efficiently to the challenges identified in both normal and emergent situations, while safeguarding the integrity and security of everyone within the organization.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross recognizes that volunteers are the backbone of the institution, as it is thanks to them that assistance is provided to millions of vulnerable people of different socioeconomic, ethnic, gender, religious, or disability factors. This enables the successful delivery of humanitarian actions by the National Society. Furthermore, it encourages humanitarian personnel to carry out actions that contribute to fulfilling the National Society's vision *"... of being a national benchmark for neutral and impartial humanitarian actions through committed volunteers and staff, providing quality services to communities, contributing to their sustainable development, based on innovative, transparent and efficient management"*.

In response to these challenges, the National Society implements projects and plans through its mission areas at the national level, with the support of strategic programs that address the identified community needs in a timely manner. As a result, and in compliance with the humanitarian mandate, a total of 10 projects are currently being implemented with a total budget of CHF 1,733,864. These projects are anchored in the mission lines related to disaster risk management, health and community development, climate change adaptation, protection, gender and inclusion (PGI), youth, restoring family links, innovation, livelihoods, and volunteer strengthening, among others.

With the aim of strengthening the strategic management of the National Society, efforts were combined to enhance operational planning, shifting the focus to optimize resources and promote results-oriented work. Consequently, work is underway to create a management model that connects strategy with operations, streamlining processes efficiently based on the institution's needs and priorities.

As a result of the work carried out during the first semester, the three most significant milestones are detailed below.

- Building capacity and knowledge transfer in epidemiological surveillance in the Territorial Network.
- Delivery of humanitarian action in response to a landslide in the Alausí canton, involving 5 provincial branches and over 100 volunteers who intervened according to the priorities of the community, applying the community engagement and accountability (CEA) approach.
- Acquisition of equipment and knowledge transfer to volunteers for the application of virtual reality in humanitarian operations through innovation projects.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross is also implementing the [Pilot Programmatic Partnership \(PPP\)](#) funded by the Directorate-General for Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations of the European Union (ECHO). The ECHO PPP is implemented in consortium with the Spanish Red Cross, as the leading EU National Society, the German Red Cross and the Italian Red Cross. Through the project, the Ecuadorian Red Cross aims to provide assistance to people on the move, foster knowledge and skills for the development of Community Based Surveillance (CBS), contribute to climate change adaptation, and strengthen the National Society to respond to humanitarian crises. In this period, the Ecuadorian Red Cross has conducted disaster simulations in coordination with the national authorities, has improved access to safe water in schools and health centres benefitting 41,130 people, trained staff and volunteers in 24 branches on CBS, accompanied the Ministry of Health on community campaigns for vaccination, health promotion and psychosocial support, and has worked with migrant and host populations to improve social cohesion.

## IFRC NETWORK ACTION

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



#### Climate and environment

The Ecuadorian Red Cross has prioritized addressing climate and environmental-related crises. In alignment with the 2030 Strategy, it has included Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) in its institutional strategic plan. The objective is to carry out activities focused on support and prevention measures, mitigation efforts, and enhancing institutional policies to adapt to climate change. These efforts aim to reduce the negative impacts on human health and livelihoods while also strengthening the focus on climate risk management, research activities, and technology transfer.

Extreme climate events, such as those caused by the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO), rising sea levels, glacier retreat, deforestation, increased transmission of dengue and other tropical diseases, land degradation, the expansion of invasive species populations in the Galápagos and other sensitive ecosystems in the country, are some of the emergencies that endanger biodiversity and cause irreversible damage.

In response to ENSO, the Ecuadorian Red Cross has formed a team of focal points at the national level to implement the CCA component through environmental management activities aimed at addressing risk exposure, reducing the ecological footprint and people's vulnerability. The National Society's Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation is also being developed to promote preparedness for hazardous events.

There has been coordination on CCA with the government's governing bodies at the strategic and operational level to carry out actions on environmental protection, supported by the ECHO PPP. A consultancy is being carried out in the provinces of Imbabura and Manabí that seeks the "generation of a climate risk analysis for the food sovereignty, agriculture, livestock, aquaculture and fisheries sector, through the application of agroecological zone modeling and the design of climate change adaptation measures for climate-smart production". The objectives of this consultancy include simulating impacts based on the suitability of maize and potato production systems at the national level using the agroecological zone modeling methodology, conducting a climate risk analysis at the national level, and designing climate change adaptation measures for climate-smart production.

The consultancy will provide accurate information in support of the Ministry of Environment, Water, and Ecological Transition (MATTE) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG), leading authorities on this matter in the country. The consultancy is being used to pilot actions for climate-smart production that provide communities with knowledge and resources to address this phenomenon. This initiative aligns with the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan led by MATTE. It also helps to identify priorities and necessary improvements to achieve sustainable production that contributes to people's livelihoods and food sovereignty.



## Disasters and crises

Ecuador is located at the convergence of the Nazca and South American plates and is part of the so-called “Pacific Ring of Fire”, which entails a permanent seismic and volcanic risk. In the continental and insular territory there are 84 identified volcanic centers, of which 27 are potentially active and 7 are part of the ranking of high and very high threat, according to the [National Geophysical Institute](#): Tungurahua, Cotopaxi, Chiles Cerro Negro, Guagua Pichincha, Sangay, Cayambe, and Reventador.

The indirect effects of eruptions, such as volcanic ash, affect millions of people who are at risk of health problems, loss of crops and animals, and contamination of air and water sources. In recent years, the Sangay, Reventador, Cotopaxi, Chiles, and Cerro Negro volcanoes have registered a significant increase in their level of eruptive activity, directly affecting the population. Therefore, in coordination with technical-scientific institutions such as the National Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology, the Secretariat of Risk Management (SNGRE) and the Armed Forces, a road map and work schedule was coordinated to establish the scope of support to deploy a contingent in the event of a possible volcanic eruption, according to the competence of each institution and the regulations in force in the country.

Within the framework of the ECHO PPP, the Ecuadorian Red Cross is improving its capacity to conduct joint mitigation and preparedness actions in the event of a possible eruption of the Cotopaxi volcano. From 8 to 10 January 2023, together with the Armed Forces and the Secretariat of Risk Management, the National Society participated in an interinstitutional workshop on temporary shelter management and a simulation exercise on crisis management with State institutions and the Armed Forces in the event of a probable eruption of the Cotopaxi volcano. The events served to verify the effectiveness of decision-making by the institutions of the Decentralized National Risk Management System (SNDGR) within the scope of their competencies.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross participated as a member in Technical Working Group 3, which involves temporary shelter and humanitarian assistance as a support to the responsible institutions, such as the Risk Management Secretariat and Decentralized Autonomous Governments. The exercise brought together 210 people from 50 state institutions, 14 military units and other agencies that are part of the National Emergency Operations Committee, which is responsible for promoting, planning and coordination of joint operations in emergencies or disasters with different actors throughout the country.

There are other types of events such as floods, water shortages, mass movements, waves, thunderstorms, frost, among others. Therefore, as part of the intervention strategy, the Ecuadorian Red Cross has a team qualified in different specialties to implement actions with a focus on preparedness for an effective response and has working equipment in the 24 provinces of the country. Also, the National Society incorporates in all operations and activities the use of new technologies and methodologies to facilitate the response and support recovery processes and community resilience.

During the last few years, there have been changes in emergency management structures, including the creation of the Decentralized National System of Risk Management, the Integral Security System ECU 911, and the Pre-Hospital Care System of the Ministry of Public Health. The Ecuadorian Red Cross is recognized for its humanitarian role throughout the national territory. The National Society has influence in technical-operational aspects and in public policy through its participation in spaces, such as Emergency Operations Committees, technical working groups and the Humanitarian Country Team, being a reference in the implementation of processes within each system, such as:

- Information gathering, damage and needs assessment, and the distribution of humanitarian assistance using technological tools such as MEGA V and KOBOTOOLBOX.
- Standardization of humanitarian assistance processes.
- Pre-hospital care and telecommunications procedures.
- Anticipatory action plans.

In terms of emergency operations, with the support of IFRC, the Ecuadorian Red Cross has carried out the following actions through the execution of the two following IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) funded operations:

<b>Name</b>	Ecuador floods and earthquake
<b>MDR-Code</b>	MDREC021
<b>Duration</b>	6 months (6 April 2023 to 31 October 2023)
<b>Funding allocation</b>	CHF 441,810
<b>People targeted</b>	8,850
<b>Last operation update</b>	<a href="#">Ecuador Floods and Earthquake Operations Update</a>

This intervention made it possible to develop a report on the damage and needs caused by the floods in 15 provinces of the country and the seismic movement of 18 March in Guayas. It also proposed a response plan to assist the affected population and support the recovery of their livelihoods. Both documents were shared with the sectional governments and the governing body.

The methodology used in the assessment was exploratory and descriptive, making use of selected information gathering methods to obtain qualitative and quantitative data to characterize the affected population, taking into account the current context of insecurity in the country. As a result of the assessment, 8 of the 15 provinces were identified where an action plan is being implemented in the areas of shelter, multi-purpose cash transfers, health, WASH, restoring of family links, community participation and PGI.

<b>Name</b>	Ecuador Landslides 2023 – Alausi
<b>MDR-Code</b>	MDREC022
<b>Duration</b>	3 months (14 April 2023 to 31 July 2023)
<b>Funding allocation</b>	CHF 151,132
<b>People targeted</b>	1,550
<b>Link to DREF operation</b>	<a href="#">Ecuador Landslides 2023</a>

The Ecuadorian Red Cross, through the Provincial Branch of Chimborazo and with the support of staff from zone 3, provided assistance to the population affected by the landslide that occurred in March in the Alausí canton, through the deployment of personnel specialized in damage and needs assessment, information gathering, rescue, pre-hospital care, psychosocial support, restoring of family contact, evacuation support and cash transfer.

During the operation, approximately 200 technicians were deployed, including volunteers and hired personnel from the provinces of Pichincha, Cotopaxi, Guayas, Tungurahua, Bolivar, Azuay, Chimborazo, Cayambe, Cañar and Imbabura, together with personnel from headquarters. As a result of this intervention, the National Society implemented a Response Action Plan to support 410 affected families in zone zero, which was permanently coordinated and aligned with the community, complying with the CEA approach in coordination with key local and national stakeholders.



## Health and wellbeing

The National Society's efforts aim to build healthy, safe and sustainable communities through capacity building. The humanitarian personnel promote organizational progress and prepare the population to act in times of normality or emergency through the promotion of physical and mental health, the prevention of communicable and non-communicable diseases, and attention to the most frequent health problems in vulnerable populations.

One of the most important crises suffered by the Ecuadorian National Health System between 2020 and 2023 was the COVID-19 pandemic, which generated a reorganization and interruption in access to essential health services and vaccination processes. It also had a severe impact on mental health, so there is an important need to cover primary care with health professionals to work in the community. Through the ECHO PPP, the National Society responded by deploying a contingent to support the Ministry of Public Health, as auxiliary to the public authorities, in vaccination, health promotion and disease prevention among vulnerable populations.

This service aimed to provide a comprehensive approach to the actions already developed by the governing body in charge of public health in its National Vaccination Plan. This included support at vaccination points, edu-communication (adapting communication strategies to the particularities and specific cultural contexts), and mental health and psychosocial support. Particularly in vaccination, the support of the Ecuadorian Red Cross during the first half of 2023 has focused on providing teams of vaccinators to encourage and extend the application of the regular vaccination schedule that seeks to cover immune-preventable diseases, such as influenza, varicella, measles, polio, among others.

The coordination with the Ministry of Public Health allowed for the identification and outreach to the most vulnerable communities, focusing on children under two years of age and pregnant women. Complementing these actions, the National Society ensured the promotion and awareness of the COVID-19 vaccination and also of the regular vaccination scheme with a particular focus on poliomyelitis, measles and rubella in 18 provinces. These actions took place within the framework of the global project "Building Trust" financed by the USAID Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA). Vaccination actions are being coordinated with the Ministry of Public Health at the central and provincial levels, establishing clear roles. While the Ecuadorian Red Cross focused on raising public awareness of the vaccines mentioned above, the Ministry of Public Health followed up on community vaccinations.

In relation to the generation of trust in the community, the CEA team conducted a case study, that resulted in the production of a video showcasing a good practice of the project and the approach of community participation and accountability. The audiovisual material presents how the Provincial Branch of Napo managed to approach and gain the trust of the Huaorani indigenous community, listening to their perceptions about vaccination and recognizing the importance of the ancestral medicine applied in their territory. Through this exchange of knowledge, the vaccination of the community was achieved, recognizing that trust is key in community work.

One of the most critical challenges in Ecuador is related to chronic child malnutrition, as 4 out of 10 indigenous children under the age of five are chronically malnourished. The prevalence of chronic child malnutrition is significantly higher in rural areas (28.7%) compared to urban areas (20.1%) (INEC, 2020). This issue has become one of the most significant social inequalities in the country, as childhood malnutrition has negative impacts on the rest of a child's life, including stunted growth and insufficient development of the immune system.

Given this situation, within the framework of the health promotion and disease prevention program, work has been carried out with humanitarian personnel who have received prior training in health-related topics to motivate and raise awareness in the communities regarding the importance of improving and maintaining good eating habits, physical activity, mental health and sexual and reproductive health. A series of key messages have been delivered accompanied by representative images that generate retention in the population and are presented with a focus on CEA and PGI. The schedule of these message campaigns has been carefully planned for publication on institutional social media and other media channels accessible to a significant portion of the target audience. These health promotion actions have been conducted in 20 provinces within the framework of the global USAID project "Building Trust".

The IFRC network has a Community Based Surveillance (CBS) strategy, which allows for direct engagement with the communities. CBS is a simple, efficient public health tool managed by the community itself that is established following an assessment of their needs and a feasibility analysis of the National Society's implementing actions in the Territorial Network. Through the ECHO PPP and Elderly Phase II projects implemented in the provinces of Carchi, El Oro and Pichincha, there are health personnel, including physicians, psychologists, physiotherapists and nurses, with a focus on primary health care and resolution of more than 80% of the common pathologies affecting the population.

During the first semester of 2023, the Health and Community Development program has worked on a strategy to address the different health determinants through health brigades with a focus on CBS and volunteers trained as community watchmen. The objective is constituting them as key elements in the preparation, anticipation and response to events that represent a public health risk. In addition, health actions have been developed through the creation of practical tools that allow humanitarian personnel to act directly in the environment where they develop, live and work.

Through the CBS approach, several training workshops have been carried out since October 2022 for staff and volunteers of the 24 Provincial Branches. The workshops include:

- CBS with an emphasis on chronic child malnutrition, with the participation of the provincial branches of Pichincha, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, and Santa Elena. The first eight volunteers were trained in October 2022.
- Field Epidemiology Training Program (Frontline level) with a One Health focus, involving theoretical and practical activities, and the training of two healthcare professionals from the National Society. The program lasted for three months from December 2022 to February 2023.
- Workshop on Epidemic Preparedness, Anticipation and Early Response in Panama in December 2022.
- Epidemiological Surveillance of events of public health importance in Ecuador, with a focus on SIVE – Alert in April 2023. Volunteers and staff participated from the National Headquarters and the Provincial Branches of Chimborazo, Guayas, Pichincha, Santa Elena, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, and Tungurahua, involving a total of 24 participants.
- Workshop on Epidemic Preparedness, Anticipation, and Early Response – Ecuador version, with the participation of 22 Provincial Branches, staff from the National Headquarters and 18 participants from the Ministry of Public Health of Ecuador, held in May 2023.

The objective of these workshops has been to strengthen the competencies of the National Society's personnel to:

- Maintain respectful and assertive communication with individuals and the community at large
- Recognize and apply adult education methodology as appropriate.
- Explain and apply community-based surveillance with other volunteers and community brigades
- Recognize and explain to the community diseases, such as respiratory infections, waterborne diseases, non-access to vaccination, among others
- Recognize and explain how pregnancy and breastfeeding is a crucial psychological and nutritional process in the life of the mother and child.
- Recognize and prepare the community for risk and emergency situations that endanger the community.

In addition, over the past six months, priority has been given to strengthening the knowledge of volunteers and staff in safe water, sanitation and hygiene. Considering that the WASH component is essential to maintaining the health of the population in emergency situations and daily life, WASH courses have been implemented at the basic, intermediate and Training of Trainers (ToT) levels. The objective is to strengthen knowledge and impart methodological tools to staff through the implementation of the pedagogical mediation course.

The ECHO PPP has supported actions in WASH to promote the initial diagnosis of water quality in educational and health centers. Sinks have been acquired to improve the water systems in the centres in coordination with the Ministry of Education (MINEDUC) and the Water Regulation and Control Agency (ARCA) as governing bodies, directly benefiting a total of 41,130 people and indirectly benefiting 203,584 people. In addition, the Ecuadorian Red Cross' WASH Training Center will be strengthened through the procurement and maintenance of equipment.

In the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) component, an updated training curriculum has been developed. Technical support, training and guidance have been provided to the provincial branches in psychosocial support and psychological first aid.

Thanks to the coordination between the Youth, Health and Community Development program, the National Suicide Prevention Team is in the process of being formed. The program has also promoted a satisfaction assessment applying a CEA approach. Finally, there is significant coordination and participation in the process of validating the diagnosis, problem tree and mental health policy in Ecuador in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health.



## Migration and displacement

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Currently, the situation of the mobile population, mainly Venezuelan, constitutes a humanitarian crisis that is reflected in the population in a differentiated manner, according to their migratory situation and status – in transit or with the intention of staying with or without migratory status. According to data from the Ministry of Government and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, between January 2016 and June 2022, approximately 550,000 people of Venezuelan nationality have stayed to live in Ecuador, of which 130,000 people have visas of various categories obtained between 2016 and 2017, while 105,071 people obtained visas through the registration and regularization process of the Ecuadorian state. In total, 235,071 people are regularized, meaning that there is still 53% of the Venezuelan population in the country without regularization.

Another relevant trend pertains to the migration of the Ecuadorian population. Ecuadorians have become one of the nationalities with the greatest numbers transiting through Panama's Darien. Thus, Ecuador has become a receiving country of migrant populations, while at the same time experiencing one of the highest migrations flows out of the country and within the region.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross, being present throughout the national territory and thanks to the trust of local communities, carries out response actions considering its principle of humanity, without discriminating against any person. This makes it possible to implement processes or activities with all population groups existing in the community, alleviating the humanitarian needs of people, but also promoting meeting spaces between diverse people, motivating interactions that allow them to meet as equal human beings, in order to reduce discrimination and xenophobia. It also contributes to the development of more resilient communities facing the migratory situation with better skills to reach agreements on positive coexistence.

Through the ECHO PPP and with the support of the Spanish Red Cross, community processes were carried out to bring together the migrant and host communities in the provincial branches of Carchi, Sucumbíos, Esmeraldas, Manabí, El Oro, Cotopaxi, Guayas, Azuay, Imbabura, Tungurahua, and Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas. Initiatives were carried out that allow the populations to meet for dialogue and action. This includes recreational activities (arts, sports), training with a productive approach (cooking classes with fairs of products or dishes from various countries), spaces for dialogue to deepen common needs, especially in the field of protection of rights, access to sexual and reproductive health or the right to education for girls and boys.

In this context, actions have been implemented that have directly benefited more than 3,000 people directly and 12,000 indirectly, allowing the strengthening of the inter-institutional coordination of the Ecuadorian Red Cross with 15 public and non-governmental entities to achieve shared goals for the benefit of the population in human mobility.



## Values, power and inclusion

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Under the cross-cutting approach of PGI, several achievements have been made, both internally and externally. In the first instance, knowledge transfer and capacity building of humanitarian staff is one of the main priorities. In the first half of 2023, 239 members of the National Society were trained, including staff and volunteers from 22 provinces of the country, with the support of the ECHO PPP and the IFRC-DREF emergency projects.

From the perspective of internal strengthening, two courses with a PGI approach have been digitalized with the aim of increasing awareness of the issues of protection against human trafficking and the migration approach adopted by the Movement.

A set of playful tools is being developed for conducting community activities that address issues like gender-based violence and xenophobia through informal workshops and using "games" as a methodology for interacting with the community. The tools will be applied throughout the national territory in the second half of the year, under the leadership of the national Human Mobility team, which is made up of 19 people from 18 provinces, who will receive comprehensive training to strengthen their skills so that they can respond as leaders in each of their provinces.

The National Society seeks to strengthen the transversal axis of CEA, as it is a priority for the institution to work on actions that enable the timely, efficient and effective implementation of projects based on the community's needs in each context in normal and emerging conditions. The Building Trust project, which was initiated in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, paved the way for the integration of CEA within the National Society, from the project activities that have an institutional scope. For example, for the implementation of the project, a CEA team was formed at the headquarters level and there are 24 focal points, one in each Provincial Branch, strengthening the local capacities of humanitarian personnel.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross is committed to the institutionalization of CEA, in line with the commitments of the entire Movement adopted in the Council of Delegates of 2019. Internally, the National Society conducted training sessions for all technical and operational areas of the headquarters with IFRC support. The CEA team identified steps towards creating a feedback strategy for the National Society, which will be developed in the second half of the year.

At the programmatic level, the CEA team provides support to projects to ensure the integration of CEA, such as within the ECHO PPP that integrates CEA within the other four project pillars. Likewise, CEA integration can be evidenced during emergency responses in this period across multiple provinces in the country. The CEA team accompanied the responders in the integration of CEA actions. For example, in the response to the landslide in Alausí (DREF), training was provided to humanitarian staff involved in the response, through the Chimborazo Provincial Branch, to raise awareness about the importance of CEA.

During the mission, there was close coordination with the community in the design and implementation of actions. Consultations and coordination with local leaders were conducted. Likewise, interviews were conducted with community members regarding Ecuadorian Red Cross' activities, and with this material a program was prepared for the IFRC Red Hearts podcast with the voices of the community (it will be available on Spotify). In addition, banners were made with visibility material to explain the role of the Ecuadorian Red Cross as an auxiliary of the State in the humanitarian field.

In response to the floods caused by the winter storm in Esmeraldas (IFRC-DREF), key messages were developed and tested with the community regarding the auxiliary role of the Ecuadorian Red Cross during floods. In addition, a video was created to emphasize the importance of applying CEA during emergencies. This video was shared with the staff and volunteers of the National Society. Furthermore, a radio spot is being developed about the auxiliary role with key messages to be broadcast in the provinces of Esmeraldas, Guayas, Santa Elena, Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas, Los Ríos, El Oro, Manabí and Loja.

This broader vision and institutionalization of CEA within the National Society, reflected in various projects and anchored in internal processes, will lay the foundation for its sustainability.

## ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS



### Strategic and operational coordination

The National Society, in compliance with its auxiliary role to the public authorities, coordinates at the highest level with state institutions responsible for public policy in the country, non-governmental organizations, and civil society. As a part of the Decentralized National Risk Management System, the National Society maintains close coordination with the Comprehensive Security System ECU 911, the Ministry of Public Health, the Secretariat for Risk Management, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Economic and Social Inclusion, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of the Interior, the National Assembly, Ministry of Environment, Water, and Ecological Transition, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, the Water Regulation and Control Agency, the Technical Secretariat for Ecuador Free of Child Malnutrition, and the National Service of Integral Attention to Adults Deprived of Liberty and Juvenile Offenders.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross is recognized for its humanitarian work across the entire territory and has a significant impact on the development of public policy through its participation in decision-making spaces. It serves as a reference point for the implementation of processes within each system. Within the current Emergency Operations Center (EOC) manual, the Ecuadorian Red Cross participates in three technical working groups (TWG) and one additional working group:

- TWG-1: Safe Water, Sanitation, and Waste Management (Invited and supports)
- TWG-2: Health and Pre-Hospital Care (Main member)
- TWG-4: Temporary Shelter and Humanitarian Assistance (Support members)
- WG-3: Search, Rescue, and Recovery.

The National Society is part of the Humanitarian Country Team within several clusters, primarily in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), Livelihoods Recovery, Food Security, Health, and Temporary Shelter. Furthermore, during emergency operations, various meetings have been held with the participants in the TWG on Human Mobility to strengthen the role of the Ecuadorian Red Cross in situations of migration and displacement. This coordination includes government agencies and non-governmental organizations that work directly or indirectly in support of people in situations of human mobility, including UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, IOM, HIAS Alas de Colibrí, Care, Plan International, among others.

The actions of the ECHO PPP have been coordinated with these organizations to avoid duplication and combine diverse efforts through the Refugee and Migration Working Group (GTRM). Consequently, many of the activities outlined in the ECHO PPP have been discussed in this working group with the aim of maintaining good inter-institutional relationships. The ECHO PPP also facilitates greater Movement coordination. It is implemented in consortium with the Spanish Red Cross, German Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, and the IFRC Delegation in Ecuador. Regular meetings are held with the Movement partners every two weeks to review progress and address any challenges.

As part of the work carried out with the Academy, through a Cooperation Agreement supported by the International Committee of the Red Cross, an action plan is being developed in collaboration with universities. Currently, academic sessions on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and the IHL MMB competition are being conducted with the support of the Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ), in collaboration with the National Commission for the Implementation of International Humanitarian Law in Ecuador (CONADIHE). Furthermore, this year, USFQ is assisting the institution with a Compatibility Study of IHL in Ecuador. Another university that collaborates with the National Society is the Universidad Central de Ecuador, which organizes and participates in annual academic sessions on IHL.



## National Society development

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For the Ecuadorian Red Cross, it is a priority to work for and with its volunteers. Therefore, efforts have been made to strengthen the mechanisms that facilitate their development. In this regard, spaces have been created for the exchange of ideas and learning. In April, the “National Meeting of Provincial Volunteer Coordinators” was held, representing an important forum for reflection and collaboration on the continuous improvement of volunteer management processes and the promotion of safer access for all involved. In this context, there were discussions on the need for innovative strategies to update technological tools, as well as functionalities and regulatory instruments in the field of volunteerism.

Additionally, the “IV Meeting of the Provincial Branches of Zone 4 of the Ecuadorian Red Cross” was carried out to strengthen coordination at the government and operational levels. The purpose was to decentralize information, understand the needs of the zone, and provide timely and efficient information regarding the processes carried out at the HQ and applied in the field. Commitments were made to maintain and strengthen institutional and mission work in compliance with the current Statute.

Furthermore, it's important to mention that spaces for training and learning have been implemented, such as the Volunteer School. This school represents the first step in the training and capacity building process for those who wish to become volunteer members of the Ecuadorian Red Cross. The objective of this program is to level and standardize the knowledge of volunteer candidates, generate greater institutional commitment, and connect new volunteers to the Movement. Once the training process in the Volunteer School is completed, the next step is the High Training and

Leadership School. This school applies a cross-cutting training model specifically designed for the governing bodies of the institution and aims to strengthen both technical and behavioral skills of participants to improve the competencies needed for effective decision-making.

The National Society prioritizes working on the Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC), a tool introduced by IFRC. In March 2023, the 85 attributes were analyzed with the institution's management team with the aim of defining a roadmap to fulfill the processes and procedures that will allow us to improve the quality of services and programs provided by the Ecuadorian Red Cross to the community. The General Secretariat of the National Society is leading the national certification process, and a protocol and general viewer are in place to measure progress in implementation from each of the competent areas.

The ECHO PPP is also enhancing the National Society's capacity to deliver cash and voucher assistance. A feasibility study was carried out with local businesses and financial providers to assess needs, market dynamics, and presence of providers. A financial risk assessment was carried out to analyze the capacity and service costs of financial service providers who could support the cash transfer programme. Volunteers have been trained in the tools and processes of cash transfer.



## Humanitarian diplomacy

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With the support of IFRC and ICRC to fulfill the auxiliary role of the State's public authorities, the Ecuadorian Red Cross, through its various departments, has undertaken advocacy activities with public authorities that have had a significant impact. These activities fall within the framework of humanitarian diplomacy and specifically in terms of legislative advocacy. Through the Principles and Values program, we participated alongside the Ombudsman's Office of Ecuador and other civil society institutions in the reform of the Organic Law on Human Mobility. This process included appearances before the relevant committee of the National Assembly and resulted in its publication in official register No. 247 on 9 February 2023, as part of the reform to this law. Additionally, in April of this year, two workshops were held on "Legal preparedness to address pandemics, epidemics, and endemics" and "Disaster law with emphasis on early warning systems and financing". These workshops involved public institutions and emergency response organizations, as well as representatives of the National Assembly, with the aim of promoting the debate on the Disaster Risk Management Law.



## Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

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One of the most significant achievements of the National Society was overcoming the state of integrity in which the institution found itself since 2019. As a result, faithful compliance was given to the roadmap established by the Mediation and Compliance Committee (CMC) in a record time during the current administration, successfully addressing the most relevant points, as detailed below:

- Termination of the trusts
- Development of the policy for the prevention and resolution of sexual and/or workplace harassment
- Approval of the Code of Ethics, Good Institutional Practices, and Anti-Corruption Policy.
- Development of administrative, financial and accounting policies
- Elaboration of the national volunteer policy
- Development of the normative of the legal commission
- Implementation of International Financial Reporting Standards
- Revaluation of assets of the Ecuadorian Red Cross - HQ
- Implementation of Information Technology and Cybersecurity processes
- Work meetings with the Higher Technological Institute of the Ecuadorian Red Cross

- Application of recommendations from external audits since 2014
- Asset assessment and revaluation
- Development of national policies
- Ongoing training for the national, provincial and cantonal governing bodies
- Creation of job profiles
- Development of the Institutional Strategic Plan
- Management and coordination with the National Blood Center
- Update of the National Discipline Committee
- Amendments to the Statute of the National Society, which entered into force on May 5, 2023, with the relevant Ministerial Agreement granted by the Ministry of Public Health
- Development of the document on representation expenses, responsibilities, residence, and allowances for the national governing body.

With this background, the activities detailed are of great value and highlight several actions and resolutions adopted by the National Presidency and the National Board of Directors, in order to strengthen the National Society in all areas within the Territorial Network. This will continue to facilitate the establishment of stronger internal controls, the implementation of mandatory institutional processes, the strengthening of existing ones and generating innovative actions.

In the financial area, work has been done on the preparation of financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards, centralizing accountability to funders, and establishing a team at the National Internal Control Headquarters that works in the Territorial Network and promotes the consolidation of financial statements through their transformation to International Financial Reporting Standards in the 24 Provincial Branches for audit purposes. In addition, the Budget and Costs team has been strengthened, and they also provide support and advice on the proper management of funds to each Provincial Branch. It is important to mention that, within the framework of transparency and integrity, the 2022 External Audit concluded with zero observations for the National Society.

On the other hand, the Organic Law on Personal Data Protection came into force in 2021 in the country. However, its disciplinary regime began in May 2023. In order to comply with the provisions of the national law and to be aligned with the Movement's data protection policies, the National Society is promoting its implementation in the institution with the aim of safeguarding and guaranteeing the personal information of beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, suppliers and other users. To achieve this, the Ecuadorian Red Cross has developed a Strengthening Plan for its implementation, which includes guidelines, formats and nationally applicable instructions, as well as a training plan for humanitarian personnel in data protection.

The Ecuadorian Red Cross ensures the integrity of its humanitarian personnel and those who participate in the projects implemented by the institution. During the first half of this year, the National Coordination of Operational Security (NCOS) has worked on the socialization of protocols and guidelines to protect the physical and emotional integrity of humanitarian personnel throughout the country. The NCOS reports directly to the General Secretariat, which makes it possible to generate transversality and apply the protocols at the levels of government, management and operations.

With the support of the ICRC, awareness and training processes have been carried out in Safer Access and Operational Security, as well as an intermediate Operational Security virtual course for implementation on the e-learning platform. Furthermore, a coordinator conducts ongoing risk context analysis for security and security mitigation measures during missions within the country.

The National Society is applying an innovation approach in humanitarian management through the creation of capacities using virtual reality technology. The innovation is part of the project "Identification and primary care of negative feelings and emotions in young people aged 15 to 30 in the city of Quito through immersive technologies", funded with resources from the Empress Shôken Fund. As part of this project, eight virtual reality devices, including viewers and wireless controllers, were acquired.

Under this project, a program was developed through which the user can self-assess their emotional situation in order to have a pre-assessment that could lead to recognize the need for further assistance in the field of mental health. In addition to this program, the Ecuadorian Red Cross has a team of more than 20 volunteers and staff who are knowledgeable about the use and potential of this technology in humanitarian management. This opens the door to the development of new programs in other mission areas that can be applied with the same equipment already acquired.

Within the framework of digital transformation, the e-learning platform of the National Society was developed, which is active through an asynchronous learning modality. The e-platform hosts 64 courses that respond to the lines of action of the Ecuadorian Red Cross. The platform provides volunteers and humanitarian workers in the 24 provinces the opportunity to receive training at any time and place, even from abroad, offering an interactive and playful approach with games and activities that reinforce their learning.

Under the digital transformation focus, the “Activados App” was created with the aim of establishing a direct communication channel with all volunteers in the Territorial Network. This app serves as an informational platform about the humanitarian activities of the Ecuadorian Red Cross. It also features a document repository for the dissemination and sharing of the current Legal and Statutory Regulations of the Ecuadorian Red Cross, in compliance with the rights of volunteers. This tool is designed for all active volunteers of the National Society, and as of June 2023, it has garnered more than 3,000 downloads on iOS and Android devices.



## 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](#)

### Contact Information

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#### Ruben Romero

Head of Delegation  
IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for  
Andean Countries, Lima  
**T** : +51 963 764 977  
[ruben.romero@ifrc.org](mailto:ruben.romero@ifrc.org)

#### Monica Portilla

Head of Strategic Engagement &  
Partnerships  
IFRC Regional Office for Americas,  
Panama  
**T** +502 586 57619  
[monica.portilla@ifrc.org](mailto:monica.portilla@ifrc.org)

#### Ecuadorian Red Cross

**W** [www.cruzroja.org.ec](http://www.cruzroja.org.ec)