



# EL SALVADOR

2024 IFRC network country plan

12 January 2024

Funding Requirement **CHF 6.3M**

## In support of the Salvadorean Red Cross



**58**

National Society branches



**297**

National Society staff



**1,675**

National Society volunteers

## People to be reached



**100**

Climate and environment



**45,000**

Disasters and crises



**5,000**

Health and wellbeing



**1,000**

Migration and displacement



**4,000**

Values, power and inclusion

## IFRC network multi-year focus

### Longer term needs

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

### Capacity development

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

## Key country data

**Population** **6.3M**

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

**INFORM Climate Risk Index** **4.3**

**Human Development Index rank** **125**

**Population below poverty level** **26.6%**

## Hazards



Population movement



Hurricanes and cyclones



Floods



Drought



Disease outbreaks



Poverty

## Funding requirements

**Total 6.3M** CHF

Through the IFRC



→ **1.1M** CHF

Through Participating National Societies



→ **1.4M** CHF

Host National Society



**3.8M** CHF

### IFRC Breakdown

#### Longer term needs

**50,000** CHF

Climate and environment

**182,000** CHF

Disasters and crises

**34,000** CHF

Health and wellbeing

**270,000** CHF

Migration and displacement

**90,000** CHF

Values, power and inclusion

**454,000** CHF

Enabling local actors

## Participating National Societies

American Red Cross

British Red Cross\*

German Red Cross

Italian Red Cross

Japanese Red Cross Society\*

Netherlands Red Cross\*

Norwegian Red Cross

Spanish Red Cross

Swedish Red Cross\*

Swiss Red Cross

*\* National Societies which have contributed only multilaterally through the IFRC in the first half of 2023.*

## IFRC Appeal codes

Longer-term needs:

**MAASV003**

# NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

The **Salvadorean Red Cross**, established by executive decree in 1885 and admitted to the International Federation of Red Cross Red and Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1925, has an auxiliary role to the national authorities in humanitarian contexts. The National Society boasts a nationwide reach with 58 branches, staff, and volunteers. In the past year, the Salvadorean Red Cross has responded to various emergencies with an integral approach, providing humanitarian assistance to people on the move, communities affected by disasters caused by natural hazards, and public health emergencies.

The National Society's [Strategic Plan 2022-2026](#) is aligned to IFRC's 2030 Strategy. The Salvadorean Red Cross prioritizes three mission areas: crises and disasters, health, and social inclusion. In the area of disasters and crises, it has developed an integrated risk and disaster management system that is community-based, with an emphasis on preparedness, response, and recovery, to include livelihoods. Within the health programme, the National Society has built the foundation for expanding and diversifying emergency medical services that

meet quality and safety standards, and continues to provide significant, quality sustainable pre-hospital care. The priority area of social inclusion has grown steadily in importance, with increased resource allocation in recent years. This area works to increase assistance and protection for victims of violence and forced displacement in the areas of health, psychosocial support, and livelihoods. Community engagement and accountability is a cross-cutting priority. In terms of institutional development, the Salvadorean Red Cross focusses strongly on modernization and sustainability of volunteer management.

To enhance its auxiliary role, in 2020, the National Society conducted a mapping of the legal decrees giving humanitarian access to the Red Cross in El Salvador, to review the inclusion of the National Society in the government's COVID-19 response measures. Since 2021, the auxiliary role of the National Society in laws and policies has been examined against the IFRC benchmark tool "Strengthening the auxiliary role through laws and policies," with the objective of identifying gaps and proposing recommendations.

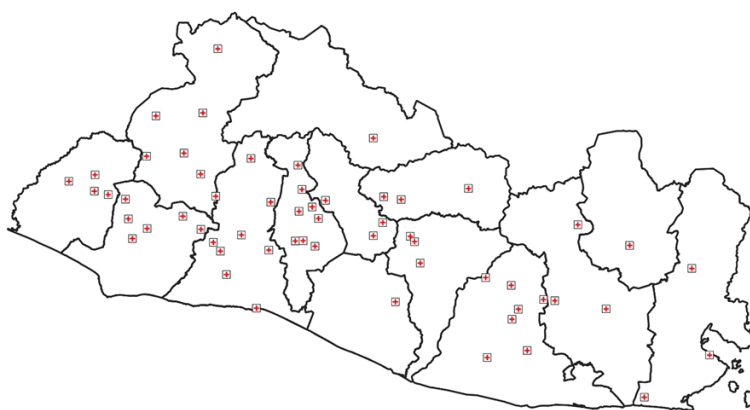


Figure 1. Distribution of Salvadorean Red Cross branches

## IFRC NETWORK ACTION

### JOINT SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Since the onset of 2020, El Salvador has faced a multitude of challenges stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic and the repercussions of four extreme weather events, including two tropical storms and two hurricanes. These natural hazards have exacerbated the nation's vulnerabilities, leaving about 1.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, as per the

[Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023](#) report.

El Salvador, the smallest country in Central America, faces considerable challenges. The nation's vulnerability to global economic fluctuations is significant. In an analysis by the Economist Intelligence Unit, El Salvador was identified as the Latin American country most vulnerable to the Ukraine conflict, scoring 4.14 out of 5 in terms of susceptibility to external economic shocks.

El Salvador's economy, after facing a significant downturn with an 8 per cent GDP decline in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, has shown remarkable resilience with a rebound to 11.2 per cent growth in 2021, though it moderated to 2.6 per cent in 2022. The recovery is expected to continue with an estimated growth of around 2.8 per cent in 2023, driven by private consumption, public investment, and tourism. However, the economic revival contrasts with the persisting issue of extreme poverty. Despite improvements in the overall poverty rate, which returned to lower than pre-pandemic levels in 2021, the rate of extreme poverty remains a significant challenge. It has increased in 2022, remaining 4.1 percentage points above the 2019 rate, reflecting ongoing economic disparities, and underscoring the need for focused efforts to aid the most disadvantaged in the population. The country has faced many social problems, especially an historically high rate of violence. Violence rates have diminished due to more stringent security measures enforced by the national government, which has resulted in a significantly reduced number of violent deaths. Migration in El Salvador, driven by a stagnant economy, high crime rates, and natural hazards, has led about one-third of the Salvadorean population to live abroad, predominantly in the United States, profoundly transforming family structures

and gender relations back home. In many cases, the departure of men, or both parents, shifts familial responsibilities to women or extended family members, altering traditional roles. The journey itself is fraught with risks, including exposure to adverse weather, unsanitary conditions leading to diseases, and violence, posing severe physical and mental health threats to migrants and causing psychological trauma that also affects host communities. These complexities highlight the need for state efforts to reduce migration rates, which must be supported by comprehensive humanitarian assistance to address the root causes and provide effective responses to the challenges faced by both migrants and those affected by this significant demographic shift.

In terms of development indices, El Salvador has a medium-low Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.68, ranking 116th out of 187 countries, and 16th out of 20 in Latin America. However, when adjusted for inequality, the HDI drops to 0.485. The country has shown progress in reducing income inequality, with the Gini index at 0.38 in 2019, the lowest in the region. Politically, the country has undergone significant changes in recent years, including ongoing adjustments in its constitutional and legislative frameworks.



*El Salvador annually faces earthquakes, floods, and storms. The Salvadorean Red Cross is carrying out assessments, response plans and training for those impacted. (Photo: IFRC)*



## Climate and environment

The [fifth evaluation report](#) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (AR5) identifies the Central American region as the tropical region most sensitive to climate change. For its vulnerability to climatic, geological, and volcanic events, as well as high degree of human settlement and ecosystem fragility due to socio-economic conditions, El Salvador is considered one of the most at-risk countries in the region to the impacts of climate change.

According to the [National Plan for adaptation to climate change-2019](#), El Salvador suffers the impacts of climatic events due to both extreme rains and droughts, with losses and damages that compromise the economic and social development of the country. In this century, these extreme events have increased, resulting in enormous economic and human losses. These include storms Amanda and Cristobal and Hurricanes Eta and Iota in 2020, and floods and Tropical Storm Julia in 2022, all with devastating effects on water resources, ecosystems, populations, and the basic infrastructure of the country.

Subsequent events confirmed that climate variability is a growing threat for El Salvador, with the highest accumulated rainfall in 46 years of historical record between 2010 and 2011. Three continuous years of extreme and enduring rains, with severe impacts from flooding, were followed by five years of drought, resulting in intense socioeconomic implications, especially for the most vulnerable communities.

Regarding future projections of the impacts of climate change in El Salvador, within the First National Communication on Climate Change, the average annual temperature could increase by three degrees Celsius by 2100. Mean annual rainfall projections were more uncertain.

### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Salvadorean Red Cross is part of the IFRC Global Climate Resilience Programme, which aims to foster an unprecedented scale-up in locally led climate-smart disaster risk reduction and adaptation efforts to prevent and reduce climate-related disaster impacts, and build community-level climate resilience. The programme aims to support 500 million people in 100 of the most climate-vulnerable countries, focusing on the least

supported and marginalized communities. This holistic, multi-year programmatic approach consists of four operational pillars: (1) scaling up climate-smart disaster risk reduction, anticipatory action, and preparedness; (2) reducing the public health impacts of climate change; (3) addressing climate displacement; and (4) enabling climate-resilient livelihoods and ecosystem services.

The National Society leads locally owned actions to support communities and authorities in their efforts to adapt to climate change and build resilience to extreme weather events. Adaptation requires a collective effort to improve knowledge of climate trends and their impacts, preparation techniques, and adaptation strategies to fight the risk to food production and livelihoods. The Salvadorean Red Cross is an active member of the regional IFRC-led network of climate and environmental practitioners, which aims at promoting peer-to-peer knowledge and best practice exchanges, as well as empowering local stakeholders to address urgent climate and environmental crises.

The Salvadorean Red Cross high-level objectives include to:

- Develop communication, education and information strategies on climate change and its impacts, targeting community behavioural transformation and aimed at informing local policymaking
- Promote community-led climate-smart solutions and plans that address challenges, improve behaviours and promote mitigation and adaptation strategies for climate change
- Access technical support for climate-smart livelihoods, especially those based on food production and agriculture
- Develop environmental policies and climate change adaptation strategies, based on evidence, and through mapping and risk scenarios
- Conduct climate-related capacity building to enable better planning and forecast-based financing
- Develop information and dissemination actions on climate change and its impacts, oriented within the organization involving staff and volunteers, with emphasis on Red Cross youth
- Define operational guidelines and internal procedures to reduce the environmental impact of operations, and improve dissemination within the organization to staff and volunteers, with emphasis on Red Cross Youth



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## Planned activities in 2024

- Develop capacities in Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (VCA) and [Road Map to Community Resilience](#) with a focus on climate and nature
  - Adapt and share risk-related information in local languages, promoting community participation and feedback on disaster risk reduction (DRR)
  - Conduct workshops to update emergency operation processes, integrating nature-based solutions and Eco-DRR
  - Develop broader proposals for hydrometeorological climate financing and Eco-DRR
  - Provide comprehensive training to staff and volunteers on climate change, environment, and community resilience, focusing on community participation and behaviour change strategies for effective climate adaptation
  - Provide practical training on climate-smart and environmentally sustainable production, with a focus on nutrition
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## Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will extend its support to the Salvadorean Red Cross in refining the National Society's tools for capturing and systematizing best practices and lessons learned from environmental initiatives involving community participation. Training efforts will be directed at empowering the staff and volunteers with skills in community participation and behaviour change techniques essential for climate adaptation.

Additionally, the IFRC's support in implementing the climate-smart operations and programmes guide will include organizing technical visits, workshops, and advanced courses. Participating National Societies such as **American Red Cross, German Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, and Swiss Red Cross** will further provide crucial technical and financial assistance for the socialization and implementation of environmental policies.

Under the global [Programmatic Partnership](#) between the IFRC and the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), and with implementation support from EU National Societies, efforts will be made to make the National Society's programmes climate-smart and identify opportunities to support climate-smart livelihoods strategies at community and household levels.



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## Disasters and crises

For real-time information on emergencies, see the [IFRC GO page, El Salvador](#).

People in El Salvador are highly exposed to multiple hazards that combine to produce high levels of vulnerability. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), almost 90 per cent of the territory in El Salvador is susceptible to severe impacts of natural hazards and threats such as drought, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and tsunamis. With a low 5.7 institutional coping capacity, El Salvador stands at a 'Medium' risk class on the [INFORM Risk Index](#).

In El Salvador, crises and disasters have severe consequences on the food production of sustenance farmers, resulting in increased malnutrition among children under five. Man-made hazards include widespread violence perpetrated by non-state armed groups, social unrest, and political and economic crises.

Capacities for improving emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and community resilience are not sufficiently developed at community, local and national levels. Most of the institutional and community planning does not consider

present and future potential climate and environmental risks. Regional coordination mechanisms have also not reached an adequate level of operational capacity to address current and future high levels of vulnerability. Based on the accumulated reports of the IFRC Network in El Salvador, the communities' main concerns are the lack of multi-hazards risk reduction measures, the absence of risk information, and insufficient anticipatory action and rapid response protocols.

Actors of the National Civil Protection System, including the Salvadorean Red Cross, are undergoing improvement processes in the areas of risk-informed and people-centred contingency and early action planning, effective support to communities in taking anticipatory action and rapid response, cash transfer preparedness, environmental sustainability of operations, and post-crisis displacement and violence preparedness.

## Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

Since 2016, Disaster Risk Management has been a strategic priority for the Salvadorean Red Cross, with actions focused on increasing preparedness and response capacities of the National Society as part of the National Civil Protection System, increasing capacities of vulnerable communities to cope with emergencies and disasters, and increasing preparedness, response, and recovery capacities of schools in vulnerable areas.

The Salvadorean Red Cross is engaged in the IFRC Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) process, has an Emergency Operations Centre and equipment for responding to emergencies, and invests in capacity building and establishing protocols and procedures. The National Society continues to strengthen its cash preparedness and has implemented cash and voucher assistance programmes using bank services in emergency operations, including during COVID-19. The National Society monitors its preparedness and response mechanisms through a dashboard, which facilitates tracking of progress in priority areas of information management, geographic information systems (GIS), early warning systems, multi-purpose cash support, contingency and disaster plans, standard operating procedures, health in emergencies, and epidemics and pandemics preparedness and response.

The Salvadorean Red Cross high-level objectives include to:

- Expand anticipatory action approaches beyond hydrometeorological hazards, including epidemics, food insecurity, and population movement
- Integrate an early recovery and community resilience approach from the start of emergency response actions, which will, in turn, promote linkage with longer-term actions
- Share knowledge and develop assessment and needs analysis tools, including digitalization efforts, to produce evidence-based preparedness and response planning
- Use Preparedness for Effective Response to better prepare for the increasing frequency of disasters and crises
- Access technical support in cash and voucher assistance preparedness and promote the integration of organizational tools, systems, procedures and learning opportunities
- Strengthen local preparedness and response capacities and promote proper coordination with local civil protection structures and with national systems
- Collaborate with state agencies in order to coordinate their responses to disasters and crises

- Implement strategies to advocate for international disaster response laws

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### Planned activities in 2024

- Respond to emergencies as they arise
- Improve compliance with requirements for effective response to the needs of the population affected by crises and disasters
- Carry out emergency, crisis, and disaster planning system in tandem with contingency and emergency response plans
- Build capacity in response areas such as the national intervention teams, damage assessment, and vulnerability and capacity Analysis
- Strengthen communication innovation and emergency operations center
- Implement the National Society crisis and disaster programme

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

Under the global [Pilot Programmatic Partnership](#) between the IFRC and (DG ECHO, the National Society will consolidate its lines of action, increasing the coverage and capacity to link community levels with the National Civil Protection System. This will be done with implementation support from EU National Societies and the IFRC. Work will be done with communities for effective communication and implementation of risk-informed and multi-risk contingency plans and response mechanisms, development and testing of Early Warning Systems/Early Action triggers and standard protocols. This will be through a bottom-up strategy, linking community, local and national level. In addition, agreement with cash transfer companies such as remittance companies and banking entities will be updated, and standard operating procedures for cash and voucher assistance adapted.

The **IFRC** will support the Salvadorean Red Cross on key components of the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) mechanism, facilitating the exchange of multi-risk/multisectoral preparedness experiences. This support extends to compiling evidence and developing case studies to showcase the impact of preparedness efforts. Key areas of focus include improving planning processes for effective response, training in information management, and developing tools for emergency operations and disaster risk reduction.

The Salvadorean Red Cross will also receive crucial support from the **American Red Cross, German Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, and Swiss Red Cross** in enhancing its emergency response capabilities. Part of this support

involves establishing a mobile emergency operations centre and developing a comprehensive computerized system for emergency information management. In addition to technological infrastructure support, these National Societies will offer technical assistance for activities aimed at mobilizing strengthened response capacities, including conducting drills

and simulations. The goal is to equip the Salvadorean Red Cross with a comprehensive and coordinated strategy for managing a range of emergency situations effectively.



## Health and wellbeing

El Salvador's health system has revealed structural vulnerabilities in epidemiological surveillance, particularly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic and past epidemics like Zika, dengue, and other waterborne diseases. These issues highlight the weaknesses in early warning and response systems. In response, the El Salvador National Strategy (2021-2025) aims to enhance epidemiological surveillance at the national level. This enhancement includes identifying diseases linked to climate change, integrating a pilot system for predictive analysis, and establishing a situation room for informed decision-making. This approach necessitates strengthened coordination between various institutions and governing bodies.

There is a notable lack of disease prevention culture in El Salvador, especially among vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, pregnant women, and those living with non-communicable diseases like hypertension and diabetes. The population is predominantly affected by vector-borne diseases like Dengue, Zika, and Chikungunya, as well as acute respiratory infections, a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in children under five. Nutritional issues, such as chronic malnutrition in young children, intestinal diseases, and anaemia in mothers, are also significant health concerns.

### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

From 2016 to date, the Salvadorean Red Cross has worked to increase preparedness and response capacities in the health and water, sanitation, and hygiene sectors. It also worked to increase community capacities for early warning and community-based response to epidemics, complementing Ministry of Public Health interventions and improve hospital and extra-hospital health services, with the objective of effective early detection and early response to disease outbreaks and health risks.

The Salvadorean Red Cross is committed to implementing community health actions, including water, sanitation, hygiene promotion and promoting healthy lifestyles. This commitment involves strengthening its structure and expanding coverage through its branches with targeted actions. The National

Society's work in this mission area encompasses health education, community health, emergency services, mental health and psychosocial support, and safe blood provision, aligning with the broader goal of an integrated and responsive health system in El Salvador.

The Salvadorean Red Cross high-level objectives include to:

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



including blood donor recruitment plans, and improve dissemination of service information.

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### Planned activities in 2024

- Strengthen promotion of and access to health and disease prevention services at the community level for better community health implementation
- Model the context-specific community engagement strategies and community-led programming to accelerate access to essential health services and achieve health outcomes, including in health emergencies
- Encourage early response to outbreaks through community surveillance, vector control, oral rehydration points, active case finding, contact tracing, infection prevention and control in NH-run health facilities, immunization, and psychosocial support
- Develop an information and awareness plan to promote health education for users of the Salvadorean Red Cross' health initiatives

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The **IFRC** will offer support to the Salvadorean Red Cross in developing and revising health strategies tailored to the unique needs and context of the community. The IFRC will also support the establishment of feedback systems to monitor and act on community perceptions, concerns, rumours, and misinformation about specific diseases. This effort will involve using innovative methods like mobile cinema and radio

programmes to increase awareness and promote healthier, safer practices, especially during public health emergencies.

The IFRC will also provide technical expertise for developing and implementing national plans for epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response, including epidemic contingency plans and National Action Plans for Health Security.

Under the global [Pilot Programmatic Partnership](#), and with implementation support from EU National Societies, the Salvadorean Red Cross has improved WASH services at the community level. The National Society will carry out health promotion activities for early detection and early action through community-based education campaigns. It will continue to promote community health processes and strengthen the participation of local health partners with communities as the basis to prevent, detect and respond to outbreaks. Community health committees will be created and recognized by health authorities. Ten communities will participate, with activities implemented and supervised by the Ministry of Health, accompanied by the Salvadorean Red Cross. A community-based surveillance system will be developed according to existing national standards, guidelines and policies. The design of the surveillance strategy will be developed and implemented as a pilot in one health facility and the five communities it serves. The National Society will also support authorities to adopt and strengthen relevant national plans, strategies and policies related to epidemic, pandemic and disaster preparedness and response. Capacities of the Salvadorean Red Cross will be strengthened as health emergency responders, including response to epidemics.



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## Migration and displacement

It is estimated that more than half of Salvadorean households have a relative abroad. Even among the inhabitants of El Salvador, intentions to migrate are high. About 4 in 10 people have seriously considered migrating to another country, one of the highest proportions in Latin America. Remittances sent by Salvadoreans abroad reach one in five households in the country. According to IOM in 2017, on average, the remittances received by each household reached about US\$ 3,000 per year, which are used mainly to cover consumption needs. At an aggregate level, this flow of money from abroad represents more than 20 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product.

Since the beginning of 2022, there has been a massive increase in the number of refugees, migrants and returnees in transit by land, northwards through Central America, compared with

previous years. In El Salvador, there has been a 209 per cent increase in deportations from the United States and Mexico in the first semester of 2022 compared to the same period in 2021. Migrants, refugees and returnees mostly move through irregular channels. Along the routes, many of them face administrative barriers, suffer accidents and injuries, face extortion and sexual violence, and are separated from their families. Tragically, others die from disease or harsh environmental conditions and weather. The majority come from Cuba, Venezuela and Haiti. The situation is especially serious for the most vulnerable groups such as children, young people and women; indigenous communities; people living with disabilities; the LGBTI+ community and the elderly population. People on the move require significant assistance,

in particular those with health problems. This high demand for assistance can be hampered by the exhaustion of personnel or the limited availability of food, water, facilities and first aid supplies. The impact of migration on children is of increasing concern as they face the threat of drowning, physical violence, sexual violence, human trafficking, exploitation and health risks, including mental health.

Internal displacement is also of concern in El Salvador. Sudden displacement can cause the loss of family assets, leaving families without the resources to meet even the most basic and critical needs, such as housing, food, school fees, or medical care. Displacement also disrupts social protection networks, causing stigmatization and revictimization, and exposing the displaced population to specific protection risks such as trafficking, gender-based violence, other situations of violence, social exclusion and lack of access to basic services. Exposure to such risks and feelings of vulnerability can cause profound psychological effects that may prevent displaced persons from seeking assistance and protection. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), during 2020, in El Salvador, there were 114,000 people forced to flee their homes due to violence, while the Salvadorean government, reported 71,500 internally displaced persons in 2018.

The El Salvador Supreme Court of Justice officially recognized forced internal displacement in 2018, and the government drew up a National Response Plan with 43 commitments by 2022 in protection, health, education and livelihoods to help internally displaced persons, refugees and asylum seekers.

### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Salvadorean Red Cross is actively engaged in responding to the needs of vulnerable migrants, and has focused its efforts over the past years on increasing its capacities for caring for and protecting vulnerable migrant and displaced populations, responding to mixed flows and mass population movements. The National Society provides case management for people internally displaced by other situations of violence and works within the framework of its auxiliary role by strengthening public institutions linked to migration and displacement. It has established humanitarian service points to provide comprehensive and integrated assistance and protection services to migrants based on need. Humanitarian service points sit along migratory routes to provide a neutral, welcoming and safe environment for migrants to access essential services that might otherwise be inaccessible. Services include psychological first aid, drinking water and hygiene supplies, and primary health care, first aid, food and non-food distribution, support to restore family links, accurate information on service points along the route and, in some cases, legal advice.

The Salvadorean Red Cross is part of the IFRC three-year Global Route-Based Migration Programme, which aims to

improve the safety and dignity of people on the move along deadly and dangerous land and sea-based migration routes. The programme aims to support 4.7 million people annually across the world who are either on the move or living in host communities. It will do so through three operational pillars: (1) improving access to assistance and protection, including through humanitarian service points; (2) strengthening National Society capacities; and (3) local to global humanitarian diplomacy.

The Salvadorean Red Cross high-level objectives include to:

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

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### Planned activities in 2024

- Continue to provide tailored services to vulnerable migrants and displaced populations as per needs
- Strengthen the National Society network of humanitarian service points (HSPs)
- Ensure at least one community engagement and accountability (CEA) feedback mechanism in each HSP, promoting the DATA Network, as well as the use of

consultation tools on the satisfaction of the services provided and information as aid

- Continue to contribute and invest in the regional information management system on migratory flows

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

Under the global Pilot Programmatic Partnership between IFRC and DG ECHO, and with implementation support from EU National Societies, hygiene kits were delivered to displaced persons, mental health capacity was strengthened, and psychosocial support was provided for branch staff. The National Society established three Humanitarian Service Points (HSP) in San Salvador, Santa Ana and San Miguel in order to provide attention and protection to migrants that is safe, accountable and participatory. There are plans to increase

information management and coordination capacities via the Salvadorean Red Cross' Victim Attention Units in these locations and through referrals to the National Attention and Protection System. Assistance includes protection case management of the target population of migrants, displaced persons, and host communities in vulnerable situations, and the pre-positioning of supplies for immediate attention, to ensure access to basic hygiene, and reduce the spread of diseases.

The IFRC supports the Salvadorean Red Cross in line with the IFRC Americas Regional Migration Plan of Action (2021–2024), enhancing National Society's capacities to understand population movement dynamics, as well as deliver appropriate and differentiated humanitarian services. The IFRC also supports the development of the National Society's migration strategy along with other Movement actors.



## Values, power and inclusion

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Central America continues to be considered highly violent. Although crimes affecting life and property have seen a decline, organized crime and gangs, including human trafficking organizations and other non-state armed groups, are still a major concern for many people. Opportunities to break out of these violent environments are few, because of high levels of structural inequality. These circumstances hinder equitable access to basic services and livelihoods that would allow for a standard of living above that of survival.

According to recent statistics, the homicide rate in El Salvador has been dropping annually since 2015, when it stood at 103. As of 2022, the number of murders has fallen to fewer than 500, which is a 56 per cent decrease from the previous year. Although crimes affecting life and property have seen a decline, organized crime and gangs, including human trafficking organizations and other non-state armed groups, are still a major concern for many people. Opportunities to break out of these violent environments are few, because of high levels of structural inequality. These circumstances hinder equitable access to basic services and livelihoods that would allow for a standard of living above that of survival.

These compounded risk and vulnerability factors have a disproportionate impact on women, children, the LGBTI+ community and people living with disabilities, and are not

addressed by the state. Vulnerable groups suffer not only differential impacts of compounded crises, but they face additional barriers to access adequate assistance and protection mechanisms. Gender inequalities are aggravated in rural communities, partly due to the traditions of indigenous populations, where inequalities are established at the moment of birth.

In El Salvador, about 60 per cent of the population works in the informal sector, most of them women, many mothers, and many adolescent mothers who are heads of households. Women's organizations call for more data reporting on the protection of women's human rights and emphasize the difficulties women have had accessing institutions and complaint mechanisms. Women's organizations involved in reporting and support have registered an increase in calls received and in legal and psychological interventions for women, youth and the LGBTIQ+ population.

In 2020, the Legislative Assembly approved the "Special Law for the Comprehensive Care and Protection of Persons in Situations of Forced Internal Displacement" a fundamental instrument to provide care, protection and durable solutions to internally displaced persons or persons at risk of displacement due to the violence.

## Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Salvadorean Red Cross' goal is to reduce inequalities linked to social origin, identities, roles, and power relations. This entails providing inclusive services so that people have access to resources, facilitating access to development opportunities and the exercise of their rights through measures aimed at addressing, reducing, and eliminating exclusion, stigmatization, and discrimination. It also entails offering assistance and protection to people at risk, including migrants and internally displaced persons and those affected by other situations of violence, working on the interrelated factors that increase or reduce the risks and consequences of violence, discrimination, and exclusion. The Salvadorean Red Cross maintains an inclusive approach in all actions in accordance with the IFRC's [protection, gender and inclusion policy](#).

The Salvadorean Red Cross high-level objectives include to:

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

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## Planned activities in 2024

- Generate development opportunities for people in situations of social vulnerability by strengthening livelihoods and employability for people with low vision, blindness, and reduced mobility
- Build capacity in livelihoods through entrepreneurship and employability for people in the communities of intervention, with special emphasis on youth and women
- Implement the National Society's social inclusion programme
- Build capacity in social inclusion for the Salvadorean Red Cross staff and volunteers

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## Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The **IFRC** will support the National Society to ensure that programmes and operations promote dignity, access, participation and safety under the agreed [minimum standards for protection, gender and inclusion in emergency operations](#), programmes and training. The Salvadorean Red Cross, with IFRC support, is developing a roadmap for the implementation of the [community engagement and accountability minimum commitments](#). The National Society is currently being supported to deepen the implementation of community engagement and accountability in the country immunization processes. In addition, community engagement and accountability are integrated into migration interventions by providing lifesaving information and developing feedback mechanisms with migrants in transit and host populations.

Under the [Pilot Programmatic Partnership between IFRC and DG ECHO](#), the Spanish Red Cross supports the National Society to institutionalise a community engagement and accountability approach at all levels. After capacity building activities, a community engagement and accountability implementation plan will be rolled out, facilitating participation of people affected in programme evaluation and decision-making, and bettering coordination with Civil Protection System authorities.

Furthermore, participating National Societies will also assist in providing technical and financial support for the Salvadorean Red Cross unit for psychosocial care for victims of violence.

## ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS

The Salvadorean Red Cross is committed to pursuing its institutional strengthening and is actively using IFRC assessment tools and approaches to guide its development. It has carried out the self-assessment part of the [Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification \(OCAC\)](#) process in 2013 and 2018. In the year 2023, the Salvadorean Red Cross conducted a third round of the OCAC self-assessment with the aim of assessing institutional capacities and identifying opportunities for improvement. It obtained approval for 100 per cent of the attributes. The second phase of the process is planned to continue in the first quarter of 2024. The Salvadorean Red Cross is also implementing the Branch Organizational Capacity Assessment ([BOCA](#)).

In 2023, the Salvadorean Red Cross conducted the phases of evaluation, analysis, and prioritization of the IFRC [Preparedness for Effective Response \(PER\)](#) process with the purpose of assessing its preparedness and response capacity for crises and disasters that may occur in the nation's territory. The PER Approach is a continuous and flexible process that enables National Societies to assess, measure and analyse the strengths and gaps of its preparedness and response mechanism, and ultimately take necessary action to improve it. Consequently, the National Society developed a 5-year action plan that will allow for achieving the prioritized requirements for an effective response. Lastly, the Salvadorean Red Cross has also been positively evaluated through the IFRC Working with Project Partners process (WWPP), which reviews financial management systems.

The Salvadorean Red Cross's development strategy for 2024-2026 prioritizes strengthening volunteerism as its

fundamental pillar. Recognizing the crucial role volunteers play in delivering humanitarian services, the focus will be on enhancing the network of branches by 2026. This enhancement will encompass infrastructure improvements and streamlined administrative processes, contributing to the continuous development of branches. The strategy will be executed through key focus areas: volunteer management, infrastructure and mobilization for response, and branch management.

Organizational development is identified as a critical support process integral to the continuous improvement of the Salvadorean Red Cross. This aspect involves ensuring that all support processes are interconnected and adequately resourced, with a particular emphasis on the integration of technological tools. This approach aims to optimize operations and maintain the effective functioning of the National Society across various sectors.

Innovation forms a core part of the strategy, driving the improvement of institutional processes to keep the Salvadorean Red Cross at the forefront of humanitarian service delivery. Focus areas have been defined to cover a broad range of areas, including human talent, information management, advocacy, humanitarian diplomacy and corporate relations, quality management, communication, engagement and accountability, asset management, logistics chain, document management, institutional identity, and legal framework. This comprehensive approach ensures alignment with National Society Development priorities, facilitating access to funding streams and promoting peer exchange and learning.



### Strategic and operational coordination

#### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Generate and consolidate alliances, partnerships, and inter-institutional coordination outside the IFRC network, with government institutions, humanitarian-relevant actors and civil society organizations, academia, social influencers, media and alternative distribution platforms
- Ensure all the IFRC network present in respective countries adheres to the framework for joint planning and priority setting, using the common action strategy as the basis for unified country planning





## National Society development

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### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Develop the recruitment, retention, and recognition of volunteers as vital members of the institution, coupled with developing their competencies for quality service delivery
- Manage improvements in infrastructure, transport, and communication across branches to contribute to their continuous improvement
- Update the internal regulatory framework to reflect current needs and standards
- Increase technological capacities at both the headquarters and branches, with a focus on applying information management tools tailored for emergencies or disasters
- Develop an efficient logistics chain for programme implementation and emergency responses, including maintaining a comprehensive documentary record of institutional activities
- Increase the implementation of security measures to mitigate social risks, safeguarding volunteers, and the communities they support
- Enhance service quality by implementing specific standards, including a defined service portfolio and comprehensive staff training, catering to both internal and external users
- Develop and implement innovative sustainability initiatives that not only create new funding sources but also establish robust support mechanisms for branches, enhancing their economic sustainability and self-management



## Humanitarian diplomacy

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### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Project a strong public profile and engage as an effective advocate, influencing both public behaviour and policy change
- Strengthen advocacy by generating alliances, creating interinstitutional spaces, and promoting International Humanitarian Law across various national sectors



## Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

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### Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

#### Accountability

- HR: safeguarding, staff safety and security, staff development, gender diversity and inclusion
- Finance: transparent management of financial resources and related systems, financial reporting, and accountability to donors
- Integrity: policy, response to integrity cases, fraud, and corruption

- Risk management: systems, monitoring, and implementation

#### Digital transformation

Continue to strengthen technological capabilities including at branch level. This improvement will complement information management initiatives related to emergencies and disasters.

#### Innovation

Focus on transformational leadership, experimentation, innovation mainstreaming, enabling local innovation, and partnerships.

## Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will undertake a series of focused initiatives. This includes strengthening the use of services provided by the Inter-American Volunteer Development Centre (ICVD), utilizing its five main tools to bolster volunteer development. Key aspects of this support involve the use of the Volunteer Development Platform (VODPLA), integration of National Society members into the network of experts, and participation in working groups, labs, and exchanges. Additionally, the IFRC will offer ongoing monitoring and support for the OCAC process of the National Society.

The participating National Societies of **American Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross, and Swiss Red Cross** will also provide support towards National Society development efforts.

The IFRC and network partners will help prepare, maintain, and update advocacy strategies that promote the humanitarian diplomacy capacities of the National Society, and enable them to maximize their privileged position as an auxiliary to the authorities. The IFRC network will also promote the innovation of structures, processes, and competencies to develop and implement a communications incubator and accelerator for the National Society to create, test and run innovative formats and strategies that increase their impact and build public trust and understanding of their roles.

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# THE IFRC NETWORK

## The IFRC

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

Society Development, strengthening disaster response management and preparedness, health, WASH, migration and displacement, cash transfers, and community engagement and accountability.

In recent years, the IFRC has supported the National Society through a number of Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) and Emergency Appeals operations in relation to tropical storms and storm surges, floods, droughts, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, disease outbreaks and population movement.

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## IFRC Membership coordination

The IFRC coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, situations, and needs, and co-developing common strategies to address issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian access, acceptance, and space. This also means ensuring that strategies and programmes in support of people in need incorporate clarity of humanitarian action, development assistance, and efforts to reinforce the auxiliary role of National Societies in their respective countries.

The National Society leads its partnerships with sister National Societies in the region. The combined experience,

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

The National Society in El Salvador is part of the global Pilot Programmatic Partnership between DG ECHO and the IFRC,

with implementation support from the **Spanish Red Cross** as lead EU National Society, and from the **Italian Red Cross** and **Norwegian Red Cross**. The partnership implements of activities in the areas of disaster risk management, epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response, humanitarian assistance and protection for people on the move, cash and voucher assistance and risk communication, and community engagement and accountability.

The partnership meets the realities of extended crises with longer-term predictable funding, facilitating actions and processes with the potential for greater, longer-term impact. It leverages the IFRC's global network and unique access to people and communities, and it helps to fulfil the ambitions of the European Union as the world's biggest international donor for humanitarian assistance.

The following participating National Societies have provided support to the Salvadorean Red Cross:

The **American Red Cross** has had interventions in the country for 13 years with disaster risk reduction, organizational development, and response programmes with the Salvadorean Red Cross, considering El Salvador as a priority country.

The **German Red Cross** signed a framework of understanding in 2022 to initiate cooperation processes with the Salvadorean Red Cross to contribute to the fulfilment of their strategic objectives in areas of mutual interest. The German Red Cross develops actions under the framework of integration and coherence in interventions with the rest of the Central American National Societies.

The **Italian Red Cross** has been developing interventions for some years through partnerships with other participating National Societies. It provides support and technical advice in risk and disaster management, climate change adaptation, and organizational development, and is considering other areas of cooperation.

The **Norwegian Red Cross**, with a delegation in the country since 2017, began operations in El Salvador as a participating partner in 2011, supporting the Global HIV Alliance in the Americas programme, under the responsibility of IFRC, and implemented by various National Societies. Between 2011 and 2013, it supported the Salvadorean Red Cross for community WASH programmes, funded by NORAD. WASH continues to be a priority for the Norwegian Red Cross. Other projects include strengthening access to education and health in urban areas, protection of health services and strengthening educational centres to respond to emergencies and disasters. The ECHO-funded Children for Peace Project to increase access and permanence in schools for children affected by violence ran from 2016 to 2018, and the Swiss Development Cooperation-funded project to promote access to protective

learning environments for children displaced by situations of violence in the Northern Triangle of Central America ran from 2018 to 2020.

From 2012 to 2015, the Salvadorean Red Cross received support in financial management, a topic that continues to be a priority for the Norwegian Red Cross. The National Society was also supported by the Norwegian Red Cross in resource mobilization in 2016 and strengthening the planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting department from 2016 to 2019.

The **Spanish Red Cross** has been present in El Salvador since 1998, in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. It focuses on technical support to the National Society in strengthening disaster risk management capacity, assistance, and protection to people on the move, violence prevention and livelihoods. Interventions it supports include mental health and psychosocial support, cash and voucher assistance and differentiated services for people with disabilities and other vulnerable populations. The added value of the Spanish Red Cross is its long-term commitment to supporting the Salvadorean Red Cross in these areas, as well as providing technical assistance in financial and regulatory compliance.

Globally, the Spanish Red Cross hosts the IFRC Livelihoods Resource Centre with the mission of assisting IFRC members by increasing awareness and effective programming strategies through training and competency development, to build individual and community capacities to restore and strengthen economically secure living conditions.

The **Swiss Red Cross** began working in El Salvador after the 1986 earthquake. To date, it has maintained an uninterrupted presence, providing support to the Salvadorean Red Cross to respond to various disasters such as Hurricane Mitch in 1998, the earthquakes in 2001, and tropical storms Stan in 2005, Agata in 2008, and Ida in 2009. During these years, humanitarian assistance and reconstruction and rehabilitation projects were developed with a community focus, including community health, disaster risk management, and institutional strengthening of the National Society. In 2010, El Salvador became a priority country programme, giving greater emphasis to projects with a long-term development approach, and with a focus in the central and eastern areas of the country. In 2010, in the Bajo Lempa region in the department of Usulután, the Swiss Red Cross started supporting the Salvadorean Red Cross to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable populations, focusing on community health, disaster prevention and adaptation to climate change.

The Swiss Red Cross contributes to the institutional strengthening of the Salvadorean Red Cross through its projects. All projects are directly executed by the Salvadorean Red Cross, with the Swiss Red Cross providing technical and




















financial support, incorporated into the National Society cost recovery policy. The 2021–2024 country programme focuses on disaster risk management, social inclusion with emphasis

on community health and the returnee population and strengthening National Society capacities..



*Salvadorean Red Cross delivering cash aid to 1,193 families affected by storm Julia as a part of the Programmatic Partnership with DG ECHO.  
(Photo: Salvadorean Red Cross)*

## Participating National Society Support

National Society name	Funding Requirement	Climate	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing	Migration	Values, power and inclusion	Enabling local actors
American Red Cross							
German Red Cross							
Italian Red Cross	30,000						
Norwegian Red Cross	362,000						
Spanish Red Cross	988,000						
Swiss Red Cross							

Total Funding requirement

**1.4M**

## Movement coordination

The IFRC leads regular coordination meetings between the different International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement actors, including participating National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), through established national and regional mechanisms. It also coordinates humanitarian assistance during emergency responses. This is carried out in line with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) principles, and the newly adopted [Seville Agreement 2.0](#).

The ICRC contributes the National Society's work in protection, including minimum standards, restoring family links, self-care messages for migrants, health and first aid, and support in humanitarian diplomacy. The ICRC also specifically supports the Salvadorean Red Cross on shelter, livelihoods, and multi-purpose cash.

## Coordination with other actors

The Salvadorean Red Cross, in its auxiliary role, is jointly defining humanitarian objectives together with public institutions such as the National Civil Protection System, including active participation in platforms such as CEPREDENAC, the National Health System/Ministry of Public Health and the National Attention and Protection System. The Salvadorean Red Cross coordinates with the platform 'Management for the Attention to Migrants' to provide timely humanitarian assistance to returned migrants, as well as coordinating with international bodies. Activities with public authorities include:

- increasing the disaster risk management capacities of the National Civil Protection System
- reinforcing epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response capacities of the Ministry of Public Health by

supporting hospital and pre-hospital health assistance services, contributing to vaccination and information campaigns, reinforcing public health and social measures, and strengthening community early warning and early response structures

- working together with the National Attention and Protection System, led by the National Directorate of Attention to Victims, to assist and protect victims of situations of violence, including people on the move

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Society worked alongside governmental institutions, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The IFRC assisted in making recommendations to ensure an appropriate response and coordinate activities.



To ensure adequate communication and collaboration with all key stakeholders involved in the response to COVID-19, the National Society held regular technical coordination meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Health, PAHO, WHO and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) at the national level, with support of the IFRC.

Regular coordination with other humanitarian actors is ensured through participation in El Salvador's Humanitarian Country Team, alongside the IFRC and participating National Societies as relevant. The National Society participates in the cash voucher assistance and community engagement and accountability working groups and works closely with many agencies of the United Nations System: shelter cluster with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), health cluster with PAHO, protection and health clusters with the United National Children's Fund (UNICEF) and protection cluster with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). In recent years, the National Society

has positioned itself as a key stakeholder in the protection sector thanks to the support of the IFRC and the Spanish Red Cross, assuming leadership roles in cluster coordination and reaching partnership agreements with UNICEF and UNHCR. The IFRC network maintains fluid coordination with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and UNICEF through the Humanitarian Country Team coordination, specifically related to livelihoods, food security, WASH, and child protection.

The Salvadorean Red Cross also participates in civil society coordination spaces with Doctors of the World, Médecins Sans Frontières, Save the Children, Plan International, Oxfam and many Salvadorean civil society organizations linked to health and protection issues.

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



## **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.

### **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](#)

This plan reflects the priorities of the Salvadorean Red Cross, the IFRC and National Societies providing international support, for 2024 and subsequent years. It is aligned with [IFRC Strategy 2030](#), representing the collective ambitions of the IFRC membership, and is the result of a joint planning process, and will serve for joint monitoring and reporting. It will be revised on an annual basis to adjust priorities and funding requirements to the needs in-country.

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