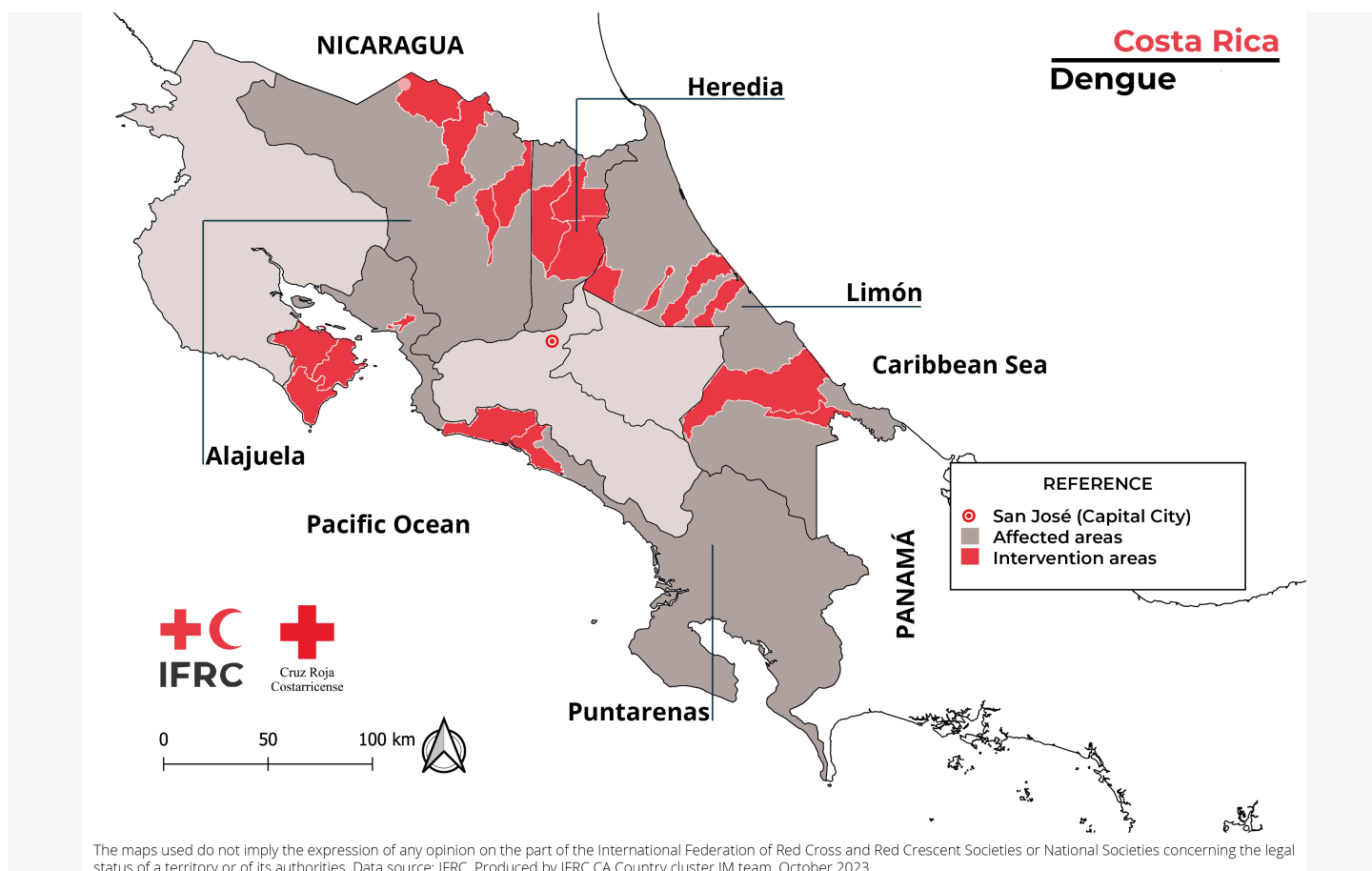




Implementation of actions by Costa Rican Red Cross volunteers within the framework of the IFRC-DREF. Source: CRRC

Appeal: MDRCR023	Total DREF Allocation: CHF 413,678	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Epidemic
Glide Number: -	People Affected: 345,285 people	People Targeted: 26,665 people	
Event Onset: Slow	Operation Start Date: 20-10-2023	New Operational End Date: 30-04-2024	Total Operating Timeframe: 6 months
Reporting Timeframe Start Date: 20-10-2023		Reporting Timeframe End Date: 15-01-2024	
Additional Allocation Requested: 0		Targeted Areas: Alajuela, Heredia, Limon, Puntarenas	

Description of the Event



Most affected areas and areas prioritized by the Costa Rican Red Cross for the implementation of this IFRC-DREF operation. Source: CRRC

Date when the trigger was met

2023-10-11

What happened, where and when?

In 2023, Costa Rica faced a worrying increase in dengue cases, a situation that alerted the country's health authorities. This increase was associated with a variety of factors, including favorable weather conditions such as heat and humidity, which favored the proliferation of mosquito breeding sites (1).

Dengue, the most prevalent arbovirus in the Region of the Americas, presents cyclical outbreaks every 3 to 5 years. All four virus serotypes (DENV1, DENV2, DENV3, and DENV4) circulate in Central America. In 2023, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua reported simultaneous circulation of these serotypes (2).

On September 6, 2023, Costa Rica issued a health alert due to a significant increase in dengue cases, based on epidemiological week 34 (August 20-26), where 8,261 cases were reported, almost double compared with the same date the previous year, increasing by 42% compared with the 4,780 cases in 2022 (3).

The Ministry of Health also called on key social actors, such as municipal governments, the Ministry of Public Education, community organizations, the tourism sector, and the Costa Rican Social Security Fund, to join in dengue containment and prevention actions. The population was encouraged to check and eliminate possible mosquito breeding sites and to be attentive to the ministry's recommendations.

On October 11, the collaboration of the Costa Rican Red Cross was formally requested in response to the health alert. This collaboration focused on public education activities, prevention, elimination of breeding sites, use of larvicides, and support in fumigation campaigns, especially in the most affected provinces: Puntarenas (North Central region), Limón (Huetar Caribe region), Heredia (Chorotega region)

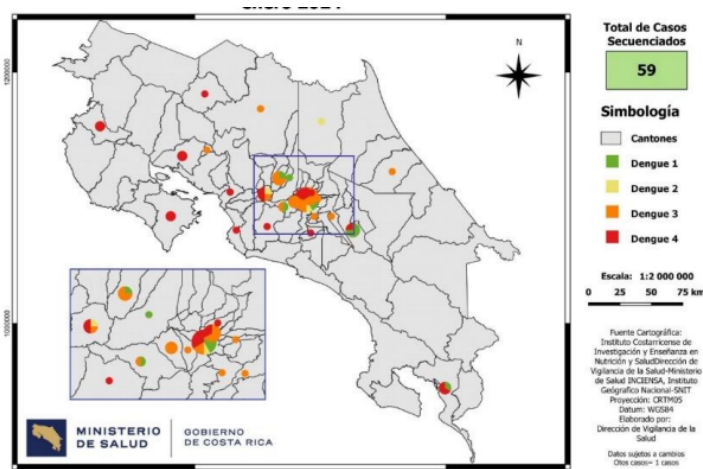


and Alajuela (Central Pacific region), as shown in Table 1.

The management of dengue in Costa Rica during 2023 has highlighted the importance of the collaboration between the Costa Rican Red Cross and the Ministry of Health. This alliance has been key to address the challenge from different fronts: prevention, education, and rapid response. The contribution of the National Society in mobilizing resources and volunteers has been crucial, especially in high-risk areas, contributing to the establishment of a solid model of collaboration for future public health interventions in the country.

Región	Casos	Tasa
Central Norte	646	61,7
Central Sur	519	33,7
Pacífico Central	454	141,7
Chorotega	332	70,3
Central Este	254	44,2
Huetar Caribe	237	49,5
Brunca	120	31,8
Occidente	73	31,9
Huetar Norte	44	16,4
Total	2679	50,5

Table 1. Dengue cases and rates by region until SE 04, 2024. Source: Ministry of Health



Map 2. Spatial distribution of dengue serotypes, Costa Rica, 2,024. Source: Ministry of Health

Scope and Scale

The global incidence of dengue has increased over the past two decades and dengue has become a growing public health problem worldwide. Between 2000 and 2018, the World Health Organization (WHO) recorded an eight-fold increase in the number of dengue cases worldwide, from 500,000 to 4.2 million reported cases. Cases reached an all-time high in 2019, with 5.2 million cases reported in 129 countries.

From early 2023 through November 23, 2023, the world has faced an upsurge in dengue transmission characterized by the number, size, and concurrence of multiple outbreaks, as well as spread to previously dengue-free areas. Several countries have experienced unexpected increases in dengue cases, with more than 5 million cases and more than 5,000 dengue-related deaths reported in 80 countries/territories worldwide, although this figure is likely an underestimate of the true burden of disease (1).

In the Americas, 2023 is the year with the highest number of dengue cases ever reported, with more than 4.1 million new infections. Surpassing the figures recorded in 2019, when more than 3.1 million cases were reported, including 28,203 severe cases and 1,823 deaths (2).

In Costa Rica, dengue has exerted a considerable impact, triggering outbreaks that have harmed thousands of people across the country. The year 2023 marked a sustained increase in dengue cases, compounding the burden on a health system already challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. But the impact of dengue goes beyond health: it has left a significant economic footprint. Those affected often suffer prolonged incapacity for work and, in severe situations, require hospitalization, resulting in adverse economic costs. The spread of dengue has prompted the implementation of prevention and mosquito breeding site eradication campaigns, which has required additional government resources.

According to the latest data from the Costa Rican Health Surveillance Directorate, up to epidemiological week 4, which covered January 21-27, 2024, the country recorded a total of 2,679 cases of dengue (3), representing a sharp increase of 88.88% compared to the 298 cases reported for the same period of the previous year, although no deaths were recorded.

The three regions with the highest number of dengue cases reported in the last epidemiological week are the Central North region with 646, followed by the Central South with 519, and the Central Pacific region with 454 cases. Similarly, the cantons with the highest number of cases are Alajuela 308 cases, San José 236, Puntarenas 218, Turrialba 183 and Atenas 94 cases, as shown in Table 1.

The Ministry of Health, with the support of the Costa Rican Red Cross, continues to carry out different actions to stop the spread of this disease, such as interventions with vector control teams, in which fumigations are carried out, elimination of breeding sites inside and outside homes and house to house visits as part of the focal work.



Dengue in Costa Rica goes beyond a health crisis, as it has a profound impact on the national economy and the well-being of citizens. The costs of medical treatment, prevention, and vector control strategies, as well as the decrease in labor productivity due to the disease, highlight the economic burden of this arbovirus. In addition, the impact on the quality of life and potential long-term complications of those affected continues to demand a comprehensive and sustainable response.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link
1. Risk assessment - OPS Americas	https://bit.ly/47XJV3O
2. Epidemiological alert - OPS Americas	https://bit.ly/3Sk9jen
3. Report of cases/EW 4.2023 - Ministry of Health	https://bit.ly/3HTz0xv

Summary of Changes

Are you changing the timeframe of the operation	Yes
Are you changing the operational strategy	No
Are you changing the target population of the operation	No
Are you changing the geographical location	No
Are you making changes to the budget	No
Is this a request for a second allocation	No
Has the forecasted event materialize?	No

Please explain the summary of changes and justification:

Through this Operation Update No. 1, the Costa Rican Red Cross (CRRC) intends to inform about:

- A no-cost time extension of 2 months (new end date: April 30, 2024).

The Costa Rican Red Cross is requesting a time extension to successfully complete the IFRC-DREF Action Plan activities due to unforeseen setbacks that have delayed its implementation. One of these setbacks includes the delay in the educational talks on dengue prevention, hampered by the diversity of activities in schools at the end of the 2023 school year, which resulted in a partial implementation and limited distribution of school kits. These activities have been rescheduled for the beginning of 2024, coinciding with the new school year.

Additionally, the Ministry of Health has requested the collaboration of the National Society for the acquisition of insecticides needed to continue vector control actions, still relevant due to the significant increase in cases reported up to epidemiological week 4 of 2024 (covered January 21-27), which shows an increase of 88.88% compared to the same period of 2023. The Ministry's difficulty in making these purchases quickly, due to lengthy governmental procedures, has made the support of the National Society indispensable.

The selection of a suitable coordinator for the DREF and delays in the procurement process, exacerbated by the year-end vacations that affected the availability of suppliers, have been other challenges faced. These delays have necessitated the re-launch of procurement processes to meet IFRC standards.

Therefore, granting this time extension at no cost is critical for the National Society to effectively complete all planned activities, including the delivery of insecticides to the Ministry of Health, in an effective manner, thus ensuring maximum benefit to the affected communities in the prevention and control of dengue.



Current National Society Actions

Start date of National Society actions

2023-10-11



Cleaning day in coordination with the Ministry of Health. Source: CRRC



Fumigation day in coordination with the Ministry of Health. Source: CRRC



Talks in educational centers on dengue prevention. Source: CRRC



Community talks on dengue prevention. Source: CRRC

Health

Posters and flyers with preventive information were distributed in the most affected regions through the Auxiliary Committees of the National Society. Additionally, stickers for WhatsApp were created and shared to raise awareness.

In Puntarenas, a region critically affected by outbreaks of dengue and malaria, actions have been intensified in collaboration with the Costa Rican Social Security Fund, the Ministry of Health, and the municipality. This joint effort has been crucial to managing the situation in one of the most impacted cantons.

In Siquirres, Limón, various strategies have been implemented, such as sweeping of the most affected communities, house-to-house fumigation with heavy equipment and thermal foggers, tire collection campaigns, and educational campaigns in schools.

In the Northern Zone of Alajuela, the National Society has actively participated in regional and local meetings, working closely with health commissions to address the problem of dengue. We have strengthened the accompaniment at the work tables and have achieved effective training by the Ministry of Health for members of the Red Cross in Ciudad Quesada and Pital.

Coordination

At the national level, key meetings have been held with the Ministry of Health to coordinate joint activities. During these meetings, the head of the Ministry's Health Surveillance Directorate formalized, through an official document, the strategic alliance with the Costa Rican Red Cross, focused on addressing the problem of dengue fever in the country.



	<p>At the regional and local level, the Auxiliary Committees of the National Society have established coordination with the regional representations of the Ministry of Health. This coordination has included the organization of educational talks and support in activities planned for communities and educational centers.</p> <p>Internally, the National Society has held meetings both at the central level and with the auxiliary committees (branches). These meetings have been aimed at coordinating the effective implementation of the actions planned within the framework of the IFRC-DREF, ensuring an organized and coherent response in the fight against dengue.</p>
National Society Readiness	<p>The Costa Rican Red Cross plays a crucial role in monitoring and managing the dengue outbreak in the country, maintaining constant vigilance to take appropriate measures in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. This continuous attention not only facilitates a rapid response to changes in the situation but also ensures that assistance reaches the most affected areas in an effective and timely manner.</p> <p>Through IFRC-DREF funds, the National Society has been able to hire personnel specifically trained to lead the specific actions of the operation. These specialized personnel not only lead the strategically planned actions but also coordinate efforts between different levels of the National Society. This coordination includes the integration of the National Society's Auxiliary Committees, which play a vital role in the implementation of strategies at the local and regional levels.</p> <p>In addition, this coordinated approach allows for a more efficient distribution of resources and expertise. Workshops and training programs are organized to strengthen the skills of staff and volunteers in dengue management at the local level.</p>
Assessment	<p>The National Society (NS) carried out a preliminary assessment through the Operational Coordination of its Auxiliary Committees at the regional level, which facilitated the precise identification of the areas most impacted by the dengue outbreak, including specific regions, cantons, and districts. This assessment was based on requests for support received from the Ministry of Health. The findings of this initial survey have been critical, serving as key evidence to strengthen strategic planning and decision-making. This methodical approach has ensured that actions implemented under the IFRC-DREF are targeted and effective, concentrating on areas of greatest need and optimizing available resources for a more effective response to the dengue outbreak.</p>

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	<p>The IFRC, through its Central America Country Cluster Delegation (CCD), has provided constant and direct specialized technical support at all stages of the IFRC-DREF, from initial planning to implementation. To ensure effective accompaniment, regular follow-up meetings have been organized, allowing for optimal monitoring and advice.</p> <p>In addition, the IFRC Regional Office for the Americas has contributed significantly through assistance at specific times in various aspects related to the emergency, including health, WASH, and logistics, among others.</p>
Participating National Societies	<p>Within the framework of this IFRC-DREF, the Costa Rican Red Cross has not established collaboration commitments with other Participating National Societies for the development of actions. Furthermore, it is not anticipated that such collaborations will be established in the months following the implementation of the IFRC-DREF.</p>

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The Costa Rican Red Cross has not coordinated with the International Committee of the Red Cross regarding the development of this IFRC-DREF. Likewise, no joint actions with this entity are contemplated in the coming months of implementation.



Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	No
National authorities	<p>The Costa Rican Ministry of Health has intensified its efforts to prevent dengue fever by implementing a series of effective strategies. This includes fumigation campaigns, tire collection, and collaborations with various institutions and companies, focusing especially on priority areas. In addition, it has launched the "Basta de aplausos" communication campaign, aimed at raising awareness among the population with clear and direct messages about the importance of eliminating mosquito breeding sites to fight vector-borne diseases.</p> <p>In parallel, the Ministry has been establishing strategic alliances with key social actors, such as municipal governments, the Ministry of Public Education, community organizations, the tourism sector, the Costa Rican Social Security Fund, and the Costa Rican Red Cross, among others. These collaborations have been crucial in coordinating and reinforcing the various initiatives promoted by the Ministry to control and prevent the spread of dengue. In addition, the Ministry has continuously called on citizens to inspect and keep their homes, yards, and communities clean, eliminating possible breeding sites of the mosquito that transmits dengue, as part of a comprehensive approach to prevention and control of the disease.</p>
UN or other actors	<p>In July, the Ministry of Health, with the support of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), presented the update of the National Integrated Management Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Arbovirolosis, as part of the actions in the fight against dengue, Zika and Chikungunya in the country. At the moment, PAHO/WHO has been supporting the Ministry in specific actions of technical advice and monitoring of the strategy.</p>

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

The Ministry of Health and the Costa Rican Social Security Fund continue to maintain a coordinated and continuous effort, organizing periodic meetings with the Municipal Emergency Committees. The objective of these meetings has been to concretize joint actions focused on the prevention of dengue fever. The decisions and information shared at these meetings have been fundamental in strengthening the initiatives which, in turn, are coordinated directly with the National Society. This collaborative approach facilitates the implementation of a unified strategy at the national level, allowing for a more effective and cohesive approach in the fight against dengue.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Amid the dengue emergency in Costa Rica, it is crucial to address several key health needs to mitigate its impact. These needs have been identified through reports prepared by the Costa Rican Red Cross branches in the provinces with the highest rates of dengue cases. These needs have also been based on direct requests from the Ministry of Health to the National Society to provide an optimal response to the current dengue epidemic. Among the priority needs, the reinforcement of prevention and control strategies, with the central objective of reducing the spread of this disease, stands out.

In addition to the increase in dengue cases, the rainy season exposes the population to gastrointestinal, dermatological, respiratory, and vector-borne diseases, which could lead to epidemiological outbreaks with consequences for vulnerable groups of people. Stagnant water is a favorable environment for vectors that transmit diseases such as dengue and other arboviruses, so the immediate needs revolve around the elimination of breeding sites. This work involves close collaboration with communities to identify and eliminate mosquito breeding sites through home visits, cleaning campaigns, and the implementation of preventive measures, such as the destruction of containers that hold stagnant water.

Furthermore, for the effective management and prevention of the dengue epidemic, it is imperative to address fundamental healthcare requirements. This includes bolstering the capabilities of healthcare personnel and volunteers through comprehensive training in the



identification and prompt treatment of dengue. It's equally important to disseminate this knowledge within communities, involving community leaders, educational institutions, and public awareness initiatives, as these play a pivotal role in curbing the spread of dengue. Educational campaigns and awareness-raising discussions must be carried out to inform the population about preventive measures, the disease's signs and symptoms, and the critical significance of seeking early medical intervention.

Vulnerable families need to be provided with basic supplies to promote safe practices and stress the importance of preventing the spread of the virus, such as mosquito nets and repellents, but also there is a need to address children in educational centers, as lessons from past interventions have shown that children often replicate in their homes what they learn, and this helps to reach a greater number of people.

In the context of IFRC-DREF implementation, progress has been observed in the execution of specific actions. However, a quick analysis of health needs in the intervened regions reveals that important challenges remain, such as the continuation of epidemiological surveillance at the community level, which is crucial for dengue prevention due to its ability to detect outbreaks early, allowing for a rapid and targeted response. By monitoring the incidence of dengue and the transmitting vectors, communities can implement effective preventive measures, such as mosquito control and public health education. This close surveillance also facilitates the adaptation of prevention and control strategies to local circumstances, thereby improving the effectiveness of interventions and reducing the spread of dengue.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Addressing water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) needs in the context of a dengue emergency is essential to prevent the spread of the disease and preserve the well-being of affected communities. A comprehensive approach requires addressing two basic needs: first, a thorough vector control strategy must be implemented in close coordination with the Ministry of Health, including the elimination of mosquito breeding sites and the promotion of vector control practices in communities. Second, protection, sanitation, and hygiene practices must be improved, promoting awareness of the importance of hand washing and proper waste management and distributing mosquito nets and repellents to the most vulnerable families.

It is necessary to work with communities to identify and eliminate mosquito breeding sites, through clean-up campaigns and the implementation of preventive measures, such as the destruction of containers where stagnant water accumulates and appropriate waste collection. Also, the Ministry of Health has requested specific support from the National Society to carry out fumigation campaigns to help reduce the number of dengue cases.

Timely and accurate information reaching rural communities is key, for which it is essential to disseminate information campaigns that encourage the population to seek medical attention in time when they experience symptoms, which is essential for early diagnosis and treatment.

In the context of IFRC-DREF implementation, progress has been observed in the execution of specific actions. However, a quick analysis of water, sanitation, and hygiene needs in the intervened regions reveals that significant challenges remain, such as the destruction of containers where stagnant water accumulates and the effective disposal of waste. These challenges are rooted in the specific structural and baseline conditions of these communities, implying that the WASH needs initially identified remain relevant and require continued attention.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

The approach and prevention of dengue in Costa Rica must consider the needs of protection, gender and inclusion, to ensure that all people, regardless of sex, gender, socioeconomic status or whatever their situation, have equal access to the necessary prevention and care measures. This is essential to protect the health of the entire Costa Rican population.

First, it is necessary to ensure the protection of the most vulnerable groups, including adequate medical care for people affected by the disease, especially children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with pre-existing medical conditions.

In addition, to ensure the relevance of actions, it is necessary to incorporate a gender approach in all prevention strategies. This implies actively including women and men in decision-making and implementation of prevention measures, as well as addressing gender inequalities that may influence the spread of dengue.

Inclusion of the most vulnerable groups is also necessary. This involves tailoring dengue prevention and control strategies to address the specific needs of these populations, including the promotion of culturally sensitive prevention practices and the availability of accessible health services. In this regard, the Costa Rican Red Cross will develop a Protection, Gender, and Inclusion strategy related to dengue prevention actions to ensure their relevance.



In the context of IFRC-DREF implementation, progress has been observed in the execution of specific actions. However, a quick analysis of PGI needs in the intervened regions reveals that important challenges remain, such as equitable and safe participation of all vulnerable groups. These challenges underscore the need for more inclusive and gender-sensitive strategies that not only address the specific needs of these groups but also strengthen their capacity to actively participate in dengue prevention. These challenges are rooted in the specific structural and grassroots conditions of these communities, implying that the PGI needs initially identified remain relevant and require continued attention.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Ensuring community participation and accountability strengthens collaboration between health authorities and communities, resulting in a more effective and sustainable approach to dengue prevention and control in Costa Rica.

The main needs in this sector involve the active participation of communities in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of prevention and control strategies. This includes the promotion of participatory decision-making, where the voices of the communities are heard and considered in the formulation of programs and strategies.

In addition, it is necessary to establish clear and transparent accountability mechanisms through which the health authorities and the Costa Rican Red Cross inform the community about the progress and results of the actions undertaken. This not only builds trust and cooperation but also allows communities to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures taken and propose adjustments when necessary.

Despite significant progress in the implementation of actions under this IFRC-DREF, the initial needs related to Community Engagement and Accountability in the intervened areas remain the same, which implies that, although important interventions have been carried out, there are still inherent challenges that require continued and focused attention, based on the fact that community participation also involves strengthening local capacities in information dissemination, identification of mosquito breeding sites and promotion of dengue prevention practices.

Any identified gaps/limitations in the assessment

The Costa Rican Red Cross has not faced critical constraints that could compromise or delay the implementation of planned actions. So far, the National Society has had constant access to the necessary information and requests made. This effective flow of resources and information is due in large part to the strong relationship it maintains with the Ministry of Health, as well as with local and community authorities. This collaborative environment has been essential to the advancement of Red Cross initiatives in the context of dengue prevention and management.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

Through this IFRC-DREF operation, the Costa Rican Red Cross aims to contribute to the national response to the prevention of dengue, providing support to the emergency needs of 5,333 families (26,665 people) in the areas of health, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), protection, gender, and inclusion (PGI) and community engagement and accountability (CEA) in the Huetar Caribbean Region (Province of Limón), North Huetar Region (Province of Alajuela), Central Pacific Region (Province of Puntarenas) and North Central Region (Province of Heredia).

This will be done by promoting the reduction of the incidence of dengue cases in the most vulnerable cantons of these provinces, through the implementation of strategies that include chemical and physical control and the promotion of disease prevention actions at both family and community levels in these geographic areas.

Operation strategy rationale

Dengue prevention has become a public health priority in Costa Rica, given the constant threat posed by this mosquito-borne disease. The increase in the incidence of dengue during the last months of 2023 posed significant challenges that require a comprehensive intervention adapted to the local context. In this regard, the Costa Rican Red Cross, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health, conducted an assessment in the cantons of the four most affected regions. The purpose of this assessment was to identify which of these cantons have the highest incidence of dengue cases and, based on this evidence, to determine which populations are most at risk. Based on this information, intervention areas were prioritized that have been addressed specifically with these IFRC-DREF funds.



The response strategy proposed by the Costa Rican Red Cross has effectively and sustainably contributed to addressing these challenges by combining multiple interconnected actions. The implementation of the strategy has been carried out in close collaboration with authorities at the national and local levels, including the Ministry of Health and the focal points of the Ministry of Education. In addition, advantage has been taken of the working spaces established by the National Society's branches in the most affected and priority provinces.

The strategy began with the detailed elaboration of an action plan, in coordination with the focal points assigned by the Ministry of Health and the educational authorities of the affected provinces. The main objective has been for each actor involved to assume their responsibility in the fight against dengue. Efforts have also been made to strengthen communication with the representatives of the cantons of the prioritized provinces so that they actively support the planning and execution of the proposed activities.

The Costa Rican Red Cross has played a key role in supporting the families of the most affected cantons, the Ministry of Public Health and the focal points of the Ministry of Education in reducing the Aedes index, the presence of the vector and the incidence of dengue cases. The proposed strategy has focused on the following sectors and specific actions:

HEALTH:

Reach 6,000 people through the implementation of Health related activities including:

A series of actions will be carried out to strengthen dengue prevention and promote safe practices in the communities. These actions include conducting informative talks with community leaders, awareness sessions in educational centers, distribution of school kits designed to prevent dengue and educate students on the importance of stopping the spread of the virus. In addition, a percentage of the National Society's staff and volunteers will be trained and updated on topics related to dengue prevention and self-protection measures, so that they can pass this knowledge on to other National Society volunteers and staff. In addition, essential supplies such as insecticides, liquid larvicides and personal protective equipment will be donated to the Ministry of Health, which will allow greater coverage of the fumigation campaigns to be carried out jointly with the National Society in the cantons of the most affected provinces.

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH):

Reach 26,665 people (5,333 families) through the implementation of WASH-related activities, including:

Initially, 30 community clean-up campaigns (frequent emptying and cleaning of water containers, and capping of water storage tanks, etc.) to eradicate mosquito breeding sites, 30 home visits to raise awareness on vector control measures through practical recommendations adapted to the context, distribution of family kits with implements such as repellents and mosquito nets, community talks on topics related to safe water, dengue prevention practices, sanitation and hygiene, maintenance of thermonebulizers and support to the Ministry of Health in the development of dengue spraying campaigns in the prioritized provinces. The frequency of campaigns, home visits and spraying will be determined once field actions are initiated to ensure their relevance.

PROTECTION, GENDER AND INCLUSION (PGI):

Development of refresher talks for staff and volunteers of the delegations in the four prioritized provinces on PGI issues with special emphasis on the community level and the development of a PGI strategy focused on the proposed actions for this IFRC-DREF on dengue. In addition, taking into account the work to be done at the school level, the Costa Rican Red Cross will also carry out a risk analysis for child protection.

COMMUNITY, ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CEA):

Post-distribution accountability feedback mechanisms will be implemented (to be defined after the development of the CEA strategy), complaint management through a specific telephone line for the operation, development of refresher talks for staff and volunteers of the delegations in the four prioritized provinces on CEA-related issues, with emphasis on the accountability mechanisms applicable under each of the actions proposed in the action plan and development of a CEA strategy focused on the actions proposed for this IFRC-DREF on dengue.

STRENGTHENING OF THE NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP:

The recruitment of 2x profiles to support the implementation of the actions contemplated in this IFRC-DREF Application, as well as the provision of visibility for volunteers, mobilization expenses, food and lodging for staff and volunteers active in the operation, along with the organization of the lessons learned workshop. A significant amount in operational costs has been considered due to the fact that 80% of the intervention will be carried out in rural areas located at great distances, which often implies additional expenses in fuel and, sometimes, payment for boats.

To ensure the correct development of the actions proposed in the strategy, the National Society has held periodic coordination meetings with the Ministry of Health to follow up on ongoing actions, including the planning of joint fumigations and ensuring that in-kind donations delivered to the Ministry of Health are being used as agreed and in accordance with the needs of the affected population. Regular coordination and follow-up meetings have also been held with the focal points of the Ministry of Education and local authorities.



The extension of time at no cost will allow the National Society to carry out the actions proposed in this strategy for the benefit of the people and regions most affected by dengue in the country.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

The Costa Rican Red Cross has focused on assisting families in the cantons of the four regions that, according to data provided by the Ministry of Health, have the highest incidence of cases as of Epidemiological Week 39. These regions are:

- Huetar Caribe Region (Province of Limón)
- North Huetar Region (Province of Alajuela)
- Central Pacific Region (Province of Puntarenas)
- Central North Central Region (Province of Heredia)

The Costa Rican Red Cross, in close coordination with the Ministry of Health and local authorities, has followed up to ensure that assistance is provided to the most affected population.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

According to data provided in epidemiological week 39, the Costa Rican Red Cross has estimated that in the cantons that make up the provinces of the four regions with the highest prevalence of dengue cases, a total of 345,285 people are at risk due to their residence in these areas with a high incidence of dengue cases. In light of this, the National Society has conducted an internal assessment of its current capacities, as well as the funds required through this IFRC-DREF, and has determined adequate assistance to 5,333 families (26,665 people) in the most affected and prioritized geographic areas.

Although the Costa Rican Red Cross has been providing support to all people who require it, it has placed special emphasis on children, pregnant women, the elderly, and people with pre-existing medical conditions, considering their level of vulnerability to dengue.

Total Targeted Population

Women	10,667	Rural	85%
Girls (under 18)	2,666	Urban	15%
Men	10,666	People with disabilities (estimated)	2%
Boys (under 18)	2,666		
Total targeted population	26,665		

Risk and Security Considerations

Please indicate about potential operation risk for this operations and mitigation actions

Risk	Mitigation action
Shortage of prevention inputs (such as repellents or fumigation equipment)	Establish partnerships with local and national suppliers to ensure a steady supply at affordable prices. Maintain adequate inventory and place orders in advance to avoid interruptions in the availability of supplies.
Resistance of Aedes mosquitoes to insecticides	Implement continuous monitoring of the effectiveness of the insecticides used in coordination with the Ministry of Health. Alternate or combine different types of insecticides to prevent the development of resistance in mosquitoes.



Low community participation	Strengthen awareness and education campaigns in the communities, using various communication channels such as social networks, local media, and community workshops. Establish dialogues with community leaders and local groups to encourage active participation and information dissemination.
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Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

One of the ongoing safety concerns relates to the exposure of staff and volunteers to mosquito-borne diseases, including dengue fever. Since much of the intervention takes place in rural areas prone to the proliferation of the Aedes aegypti mosquito, staff and volunteers may be exposed to an increased risk of contracting the disease. To address this safety concern, the National Society has been implementing prevention measures such as the use of repellents, protective clothing and the promotion of personal prevention practices, along with constant monitoring of the health and well-being of staff and volunteers in the field.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?
Yes

Planned Intervention



Budget: CHF 115,979
Targeted Persons: 6,000

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of people reached through talks with community leaders on dengue prevention.	400	300
Number of people reached through talks in educational centers on dengue prevention.	6,000	2,500
Number of people reached through school kits for dengue prevention.	6,000	2,500
Number of personnel and volunteers trained and updated on topics related to dengue prevention.	240	120

Progress Towards Outcome

The National Society has made significant progress in its community actions. To date, 16 informative talks have been held in communities affected by dengue in the regions of Limón, Zona Norte and Heredia. These talks have reached 300 people and have covered fundamental topics such as the generalities of dengue, its consequences, prevention methods and strategies to eliminate mosquito breeding sites. In addition, participants have been provided with printed materials containing practical information on dengue prevention in their daily activities.

At the educational level, talks have been given on dengue prevention and practical measures both at school and at home. These have reached 2,500 children and have taken place in 26 schools in Limón, Zona Norte, Heredia, and Puntarenas. During these sessions, school kits have been distributed to children to promote dengue prevention. Although the purchase of these kits, planned within the framework of the DREF, is in process, the distribution began with an existing stock at the National Society.

Finally, the training of the National Society's technical staff and volunteers has been strengthened through 11 training sessions



coordinated with the Ministry of Health. These sessions covered topics related to dengue, Zika, Chikungunya, other arboviruses, Nile Virus and encephalitis, integrated vector management, use of products, home visit protocols, home preparation, and personal protection measures. These training activities have been attended by 265 technicians and volunteers from Limón, Heredia, Northern Zone, and Puntarenas, demonstrating an active commitment to the fight against dengue and similar diseases.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 220,551

Targeted Persons: 26,665

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of families reached through the distribution of family kits for the prevention of dengue.	5,333	0
Number of community clean-up campaigns for the eradication of breeding sites completed.	10	11
Number of home visits to raise awareness about vector control measures completed.	30	16
Number of community talks on topics related to safe water, hygiene and dengue prevention completed.	15	16

Progress Towards Outcome

To date, the National Society has faced certain challenges in the distribution of family kits for dengue prevention. Although part of the necessary supplies (mosquito nets) are available, the acquisition of the other essential part (repellents) is still in process, so it is projected that the distribution can be carried out as of the third week of February 2024.

As for community clean-up campaigns to eradicate mosquito breeding sites, 11 campaigns have been successfully carried out. These have been carried out in collaboration with the municipalities and with the active participation of community groups in the regions of Limón, Zona Norte, and Heredia. During these campaigns, volunteers were provided with personal protective equipment, sunscreen, and repellent to ensure their safety against environmental and vector risks.

Concerning home visits aimed at raising awareness about vector control, 16 visits have been made in the aforementioned regions, accompanied by personnel from the Ministry of Health.

In addition, 16 community talks focused on the importance of drinking water, hygiene, and dengue prevention were held in the regions of Limón, Zona Norte, and Heredia. These talks have been carried out in parallel with other community activities on dengue prevention, as part of the initiatives in the health sector. These efforts reflect significant progress in the implementation of comprehensive strategies for the prevention and control of dengue in Costa Rican communities.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Budget: CHF 2,982

Targeted Persons: 0



Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of personnel and volunteers who have participated in talks on PGI issues.	75	75
Number of specific PGI strategies for IFRC-DREF implementation completed.	1	1

Progress Towards Outcome

The National Society has made significant progress in strengthening its technical staff and volunteers, focusing on sensitization and updating on aspects related to Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI). Four workshops have been held on these topics, with the active participation of 75 representatives from the regions of Limón, Northern Zone, Heredia, and Puntarenas, where the IFRC-DREF is currently implemented. These workshops have aimed to train/update staff and volunteers on the person-centered approach, with emphasis on gender, children, and diversity, to ensure sensitive and appropriate approaches in all activities.

In addition, the National Society has developed a specific strategy for IFRC-DREF, based on the Dignity, Access, Participation, and Safety (DAPS) framework. This strategy provides staff and volunteers with practical tools to integrate crucial aspects of PGI into all activities implemented under the IFRC-DREF.

In line with child protection commitments, the National Society has conducted a child protection analysis, especially concerning work carried out in educational centers. This analysis ensures that all actions take into account the specific needs and interests of children, thus ensuring a comprehensive and respectful intervention.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 2,982

Targeted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of staff and volunteers who have participated in CEA-related talks.	75	75
Number of CEA strategies developed	1	1

Progress Towards Outcome

The National Society has made progress in strengthening Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA). Four CEA training/refresher workshops have been organized, with the participation of 75 people, including technical staff and volunteers from the regions of Limón, Northern Zone, Heredia, and Puntarenas, where the DREF is implemented. The purpose of these talks has been to provide staff and volunteers with tools to improve feedback and community participation. These workshops have focused on how to effectively integrate the CEA in the communities, for example, through community talks and in educational centers, and on rumor management, which involves a prior analysis of the community's knowledge.

In addition, in line with its commitment to accountability, especially at the community level, the National Society has developed practical guidelines under CEA. These are designed to make staff and volunteers involved in the implementation of the IFRC-DREF aware of and employ alternative mechanisms for consultation, collection of queries, complaints, comments, and rumors. This approach allows valuable information to be gathered to adapt actions as needed and ensure that they are both of quality and relevant to the needs of the community.





Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 7,136

Targeted Persons: 1

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of follow-up field visits by IFRC.	1	0

Progress Towards Outcome

Due to initial delays in the implementation of activities, the IFRC had been maintaining a constant virtual follow-up. However, to ensure a more detailed follow-up, a field visit has been scheduled. This visit, which will be conducted by the Disaster Management Coordinator of the Central America Cluster, is scheduled to take place between the last week of February and the second week of March 2024.



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 64,049

Targeted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
Number of technical personnel hired specifically for the operation.	2	2
Number of staff and volunteers receiving institutional visibility items.	400	0
Number of lessons learned workshops conducted	1	0

Progress Towards Outcome

The National Society has hired a project technician and a procurement assistant, who have been coordinating the specific actions of the IFRC-DREF, with the support of personnel from various areas of the National Society, both at the central level and in the Auxiliary Committees in the regions where the project is implemented.

As for the acquisition of uniforms and visibility elements for technical staff and volunteers active in the operation, the purchase process is still underway. However, their safety has been prioritized, ensuring that, while the acquisitions are being completed, they are provided with temporary visibility elements.

In addition, a lessons learned workshop is planned to be held in person in the last month of IFRC-DREF implementation. This workshop will be a crucial opportunity to evaluate the operation, identify areas for improvement, and consolidate learning, which will contribute to the effectiveness of future interventions.



About Support Services

How many staff and volunteers will be involved in this operation. Briefly describe their role.

The Costa Rican Red Cross operates with an extensive network that includes 120 branches, 1,147 permanent staff members, and approximately 6,000 volunteers throughout the country, distributed in nine regional offices and three national headquarters: Administrative Headquarters, Operational Headquarters, and Metropolitan Headquarters. A multidisciplinary technical team ensures the efficiency of activities and supervises emergency operations under the coordination of the Risk Management Department, with the support of the General Directorate and the general administrative structure.

This IFRC-DREF operation has been supported by 400 volunteers (approximately 100 in each province), who have been rotating according to the demands of the operation. The Costa Rican Red Cross, under a comprehensive response approach, implements its actions regionally. This involves the mobilization of personnel and volunteers available in the branches located in each of the regions: Huetar Caribe (Limón) with 5 branches, Central Norte (Puntarenas) with 5 branches, Pacífico Central (Alajuela) with 4 branches and Chorotega (Heredia) with 3 branches. These teams mobilize and coordinate with each other within their respective regions, according to the actions planned and the needs that arise during the response phase. In this regard, the budget allocated for mobilizations has been managed at the regional level during the temporary nature of the IFRC-DREF. In addition, it has sometimes been necessary to cover expenses not only for per diem but also for lodging, depending on the needs.

Finally, although insurance costs are not included in the budget for this operation, staff and volunteers have been covered by the National Society's insurance policy.

If there is procurement, will it be done by National Society or IFRC?

For the implementation of this IFRC-DREF, it has been necessary to procure materials both nationally and internationally, due to the limited availability of certain essential products, such as mosquito nets, in local markets.

The Costa Rican Red Cross has a procurement department dedicated to managing the purchase of all supplies and equipment required by the committees at the national level, in addition to operating a central warehouse. These procurement procedures are supported by the government, as many of them are financed with state funds. This state funding implies the adoption of specific government procedures for all purchases made.

On the other hand, the Logistics Unit has provided constant support to the National Society. This unit has been responsible for overseeing the quality of purchases, ensuring that they comply with the authorization levels required in the procurement procedures, including those stipulated by the IFRC. Among these responsibilities was the procurement and coordination of the transportation of mosquito nets.

How will this operation be monitored?

Process monitoring is the responsibility of the National Society's National Risk Management Directorate, with the support of the General Management, and covers the institutional administrative structure of all its departments. In addition, the National Society's Headquarters has a team in charge of monitoring financial reports and ensuring the quality of intermediate products and final reports submitted.

Concerning Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (PMER), the National Society has a team composed of staff from the Risk Management Department. This team has been responsible for formulating this operation update and will also be responsible for generating the final report on the operation and, in parallel, has been responding to requests for information necessary for accountability.

In the area of Administration and Finance, the Finance and Accounting Department has trained personnel to provide the necessary support to the work areas included in the Action Plan. The Finance-Accounting Department's strategy focuses on:

- (a) Having department staff available to address specific aspects of the operation.
- (b) To comply with the issuance of reports and to constantly monitor compliance and proper use of budget items.
- (c) Informing the different coordinators of the work areas on the optimization and proper use of the resources assigned to the Action Plan.



Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation

The National Society has an Institutional Communications Department dedicated to establishing and maintaining effective internal and external communications strategies. The main purpose of this department is to ensure adequate visibility and provide essential support to the organization's activities, especially during the emergency response and recovery phases. In the specific context of this IFRC-DREF, the department has been focusing on the implementation of actions related to the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) approach. In addition, it has started to provide support in initial discussions with the team for the development of the communication and awareness campaign on dengue prevention measures, which is scheduled to be launched from February 2024.



Budget Overview



DREF OPERATION

MDRCR023 - Costa Rican Red Cross Costa Rica: Dengue

Operating Budget

Planned Operations	342,493
Shelter and Basic Household Items	0
Livelihoods	0
Multi-purpose Cash	0
Health	115,979
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	220,551
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	2,982
Education	0
Migration	0
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	0
Community Engagement and Accountability	2,982
Environmental Sustainability	0
Enabling Approaches	71,185
Coordination and Partnerships	0
Secretariat Services	7,136
National Society Strengthening	64,049
TOTAL BUDGET	413,678

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)



Contact Information

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[Click here for the reference](#)

