



GHANA

2024-2026 IFRC network country plan

27 June 2024

Multi-Year Funding Requirement **CHF 19.7M**

In support of the Ghana Red Cross Society



10

National Society branches



65

National Society staff



84,062

National Society volunteers

People to be reached



100,000

Climate and environment



150,000

Disasters and crises



220,000

Health and wellbeing



40,000

Migration & Displacement



15,000

Values, power and inclusion

IFRC network multi-year focus

Longer-term needs

- Disaster risk reduction and anticipatory action
- Epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response
 - Water, sanitation and hygiene
 - Climate change adaptation and environmental protection
- Migration and displacement-related needs

Capacity development

- Communication and advocacy
 - Resource mobilization
 - Financial management

Key country data

Population **33.5M**

INFORM Climate Risk Index **Medium**

Human Development Index rank **133**

Population below poverty level **23.4%**

IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for
Nigeria, Togo, Benin & Ghana, Abuja

Funding requirements

2024

2025**

2026**

Total 5.6M CHF

Total 6.71M CHF

Total 7.38M CHF

Through IFRC

5M CHF

Through IFRC

6.1M CHF

Through IFRC

6.7M CHF

Through Host National Society

→ 580,000 CHF

Through Host National Society

→ 590,000 CHF

Through Host National Society

→ 649,000 CHF

**Projected funding requirements

IFRC Breakdown

Longer-term needs

1M CHF

Climate and environment

1.6M CHF

Disasters and crises

1.3M CHF

Health and wellbeing

600,000 CHF

Migration & displacement

325,000 CHF

Values, power and inclusion

175,000 CHF

Enabling local actors

Participating National Societies

British Red Cross*

Icelandic Red Cross

Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Netherlands Red Cross

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

IFRC Appeal codes

Longer-term needs:

MAAGH002

Hazards



Floods



Droughts



Disease outbreaks



Migration and displacement

NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

The **Ghana Red Cross Society** was established in 1958 and admitted to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1959. It is the largest volunteer-based humanitarian service organization in the country and has a presence in all 10 regions, with 153 district chapters and 77,625 volunteers. It works directly under the Ministry of Health as an auxiliary to public authorities in the humanitarian field.

Every district chapter supports communities in need through volunteers trained in First Aid, disaster management, water and sanitation, health and disaster risk reduction. The volunteers also respond to emergencies and carry out community rescue missions.

In 2023, the Ghana Red Cross Society sustained water supply services for 40,000 people and connected 450 households via the Urban WASH project with Ghana Water Company Limited. It trained 2,854 staff in First Aid, planted 30,000 tree seedlings funded by the Italian Red Cross.

The National Society has also developed its Strategic Plan 2022-2025 which outlines its vision and goal attainment strategy. Additionally, it's reviewing its 1958 Act to align with contemporary realities and has initiated a transformation roadmap in accordance with the 2022 Accra Commitments.

In 2022, the Ghana Red Cross Society reached 1.3M people through its long-term services and development programmes and 2,000 people through disaster response and early recovery programmes over time.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION

JOINT SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Ghana is in West Africa and has a population of over 32.83 million with an intercensal growth rate of 2.1%, the lowest since independence. The population is mostly youthful, with about 50% below the age of 18 years. The population is expected to reach approximately 35 million by 2025 of which 55% will be living in urban areas.

Ghana shares borders with Togo to the east, Ivory Coast to the west, Burkina Faso to the north and the Mediterranean sea to the south. The country is divided into three zones based on geography and other characteristics. These are the northern, middle and southern zones. The country's major settlements, namely, Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi-Takoradi, Ho, Sunyani, Cape Coast and Tema, among others, are in the south of the country. The North has Tamale, Bolgatanga and Wa as the major settlements. Following the discovery of offshore oil reserves and two decades of GDP growth above 5%, Ghana is now a lower middle-income country, with poverty rates reduced by half.

However, economic growth has not been fully inclusive, leading to increased inequality, mainly between the richer south and

the poorer north of the country. While Ghana has made progress in gender equality and women's empowerment, the social norms remain inadequate. The poor are disadvantaged in terms of owning assets and accessing financial institutions and services, quality education, healthcare, and safe water and sanitation facilities. This demographic, particularly women and children, are also disproportionately affected by natural hazards and the adverse effects of climate change. Despite the expansion of publicly supported mitigating measures in the form of social protection programmes, they remain insufficient. Sustainably reversing this trend of income disparity will be a major challenge for any development targets, including those related to disaster management. The poorest group earned 6.9% of total national income in the early 1990s, whereas the richest 20% earned 44% of total national income. By 2006, this gap had widened and the poorest earned just 5.2% of national income while the richest accumulated almost half, i.e., 48.3% (GLSSV).

Ghana was ranked 135th out of 162 countries in the 2019 Gender Inequalities Index (GII). Women's participation in decision-making is still low, with only 14.6 per cent of parliamentarians being women. Additionally, women have lower education levels compared to men, with only 55 % of women adults reaching secondary education compared to

71 per cent of the men. On average, women have 6.6 years of schooling. Youth unemployment is a pressing concern, with 9% of individuals aged 15 to 24 unemployed, and a female-to-male ratio of 0.97 in this group. Furthermore, 30% of young people are not in school or employed. This issue is expected to escalate with the country's projected annual youth population growth rate of 2.2% over the next decade. There is a high risk of overall and external debt distress due to the country's high level of debt adding to concerning developments on the fiscal and monetary domains. The international context is further exacerbating these challenges, with factors such as inflationary pressures, tightening of US/EU monetary policies and events such as the Ukraine war contributing to the complexity of the situation. The macroeconomic imbalances may have significant political and economic consequences.

Urban population in Ghana is on the increase and current estimates indicate a slight increase over the rural population. The 2021 census recorded a rural to urban population ratio of 42:58. The rate of urbanization has greater effect on urban development because of the growing number of informal

settlement and the concomitant rise in peri-urban communities. Urban development could impact the environment or ecosystem because of the varied developmental projects which hamper the permeability of soil, in turn increasing the risk of flooding especially in low-lying areas. Another challenge facing urbanization is the poor urban planning which increasingly exposes cities to varied hazards and extensive risks. Urbanization also puts immense pressure on social services and amenities including water supply and sanitation, energy supply and health services, increasing the vulnerability of residents.

Major urban centres such as Accra and Kumasi grapple with waste management, resulting in flash floods and outbreaks of diarrheal diseases. According to UNISDR (2009), the growing urban population and infrastructure development in high-hazard areas coupled with the marginalization and limited access to social services for the urban poor heighten their vulnerability to disasters.



Community members using the water supply system installed by the Ghana Red Cross, in September 2023 (photo: IFRC)



Climate and environment

Ghana is situated in one of the world's most complex climate regions, affected by tropical storms and the climatic influence of the Sahel and two oceans. Climate change is manifested in Ghana through rising temperatures, declining rainfall, increased variability, rising sea levels and high incidences of weather-related disasters. In Ghana, the major impacts of climate change affect various sectors and their objectives, places and population in diverse ways, depending on their respective levels of vulnerability. The most affected sectors in Ghana include the economic, social and infrastructural groups. The cumulative effects on these sectors determine the impacts and vulnerabilities of various livelihoods groups and locations in the country.

The primary source of livelihoods for the most impoverished households in Ghana is agriculture. About 52% of Ghana's labour force is engaged in agriculture, which contributes to 54% of GDP and 40% of the country's export earnings. Agriculture contributes to 90% of the food needs of the country. The sector is currently facing myriad challenges due to climate change. Changing rainfall patterns have had a devastating impact on food security and nutrition. An estimated 5% of Ghana's population is food insecure and about 2 million are vulnerable to food insecurity. In addition to erratic rainfall patterns, productivity is also impacted by inadequate irrigation facilities, poor nature of roads, inadequate storage facilities, land degradation, and bad farming and fishing practices. Combined, these factors have had significant economic implications on the livelihoods and economic empowerment of farming and fishing communities.

According to a UNDP paper, the annual cost of environmental and natural resource degradation in Ghana is equivalent to 9.6 per cent of the country's GDP. Ghana's forest cover decreased from about 7.5 million ha in 1990 to about 4.9 million ha in 2010, with a deforestation rate of approximately 2% per year. This deforestation is largely due to the unsustainable management of the country's forests, wildlife and fisheries. The long-standing extractive industries in Ghana have also been destructive, polluting most of the country's water resources and degrading arable lands. The rapid deforestation of the country and loss of biodiversity has created an emergency in the country, with increased risks of desertification, loss of ground and surface water reserves, change in rainfall patterns, food insecurity and poverty.

Given Ghana's geographical and the evident impacts of climate change, particularly on vulnerable sectors like agriculture, urgent action is needed to address these challenges.

Therefore, the Ghana National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (NCCAS) has been developed to provide a systematic and targeted approach to enhancing climate resilience and reducing vulnerability across the nation. The Ghana National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy intends to:

- Ensure a consistent, comprehensive and targeted approach to increasing climate resilience and decrease vulnerability of the populace
- Deepen awareness and sensitization for the general populace particularly policy makers about the critical role of adaptation in national development efforts
- Position Ghana to draw funding for meeting her national adaptation needs
- Strengthen international recognition to facilitate the mainstreaming of climate change and disaster risk reduction into national development

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Ghana Red Cross Society 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; (4) enabling climate-resilient livelihoods and ecosystem services.

- The Ghana Red Cross Society aims to focus on reducing the current and future humanitarian impacts of climate and environmental crises and supporting people to adapt and thrive in the face of it. Climate adaptation and mitigation are high on the National Society's agenda, integrating climate risk management across all programmes, operations, and advocacy. Its other high level objectives include to: Leverage the private sector to mitigate environmental degradation through innovative financing
- Support the government's initiatives such as the Green Ghana Annual Project and Africa Great Green Wall Project by raising awareness on afforestation and reforestation
- Provide training for communities and stakeholders on climate change-specific actions to ensure sustainability of mitigation efforts

- Involve communities by integrating climate-related activities into broader development plans such as enhancing agriculture and agroforestry productivity
- Foster collaboration with government agencies such as the Ghana forest commission and the Department of Environment to enhance effectiveness

- Enhance the technical and financial capacities of community members in alternative livelihood strategies and improve access to credit facilities

Planned activities in 2024

- Support planting and maintenance of 750,000 trees as part of its contribution to the Pan African initiative for tree planting and care
- Support the establishment 10 volunteer and community climate groups for championing climate action at the local level
- Strengthen institution and technical capacities of the communities, National Society staff and volunteers through training
- Conduct vulnerability, impact and capacity assessment
- Raise awareness on the available climate change information and analysis to support disaster risk informed planning
- Implement community-based disaster risk reduction and resilience building activities

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC, in collaboration with participating National Societies, will provide the following support:

- Support the Ghana Red Cross Society in climate change and adaptation measures such as the promotion of drought tolerant crops, diversified livelihood activities
- Support the National Society in conducting vulnerability capacity assessment (VCA) to identify most vulnerable people and communities
- Mobilize local and international support to the National society to enable it to undertake diverse initiatives which will position it as an important actor in climate mitigation and adaptation

The **Italian Red Cross**, through the IFRC is implementing an anticipatory action project in Ghana to enable early action on flood risk mitigation based on a simplified early action plan.



Disasters and crises

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

Ghana is prone to several hazards, both natural and human-induced, which have led to disasters affecting more than 100,000 people per year. According to the Department of Geography and Resource Development of the University of Ghana, out of the 9821 disasters recorded between 1900-2005, hydro-meteorological disasters ranked first with 7586 occurrences, followed by geological and biological with 1252 and 1083 occurrences, respectively. The impacts of the key hazards in Ghana such as drought, floods, wildfires, earthquakes, and epidemics present the highest risks and vulnerability to majority of Ghanaians. The country's continued vulnerabilities to disasters of such frequency and magnitude require an integrated disaster risk reduction investment that can improve both the preparation for, and mitigation of emergencies.

Flooding occurs annually during Ghana's rainy season (June-September) and affects the regions of Greater Accra, northern, upper east, eastern, Volta, western, central, Ashanti, upper west and Brong Ahafo. In recent years, floods have become frequent in Ghana affecting all regions of the

country. An estimated 70,000 people on average are affected by flooding in Ghana accounting for 0.24% of the population. Recent trends indicate that climate change has resulted in an extension of the flood season into November. Flood-prone areas are located mainly along the riverbanks, beaches and dam sites. Urban and metropolitan areas such as Accra, Kumasi, Tema, Tamale, Cape Coast and Sekondi-Takoradi are also affected due to poor drainage systems, human activities and their low-lying topography.

There have been three major droughts in Ghana from 1900 to 2015 that have affected a total population of approximately 12.5 million people, resulting in an accumulative loss of USD 100,000. The specific regions that are prone to drought are the Savannah, Forest, and Coastal belts of Ghana. Drought in Ghana is characterized by two main features: the reduction in the amount and frequency of precipitation and the reduction in streamflow.

Ghana's dependence on food imports has increased its exposure to armyworms, which has had a significant effect on farmers' livelihoods and food security in the country by reducing harvests. Diminished productivity and increased

costs of pesticides make it difficult for farmers to meet the nutritional, health, and educational needs of their families.

Seismic hazards, particularly earthquakes, is most prominent in the coastal regions and the eastern region of Ghana. Some communities in eastern, greater Accra and the central region are likely to be affected. A major challenge has been the construction and sand-winning activities along major ridges and coastal lines in earthquake-prone areas in the country.

To enhance its preparedness and response to disasters, the Government of Ghana has outlined strategic interventions such as developing a National Disaster Management Framework; enhancing the resilience of vulnerable communities and critical infrastructure; strengthening public education and awareness in disaster risk reduction; and raising public education and awareness in disaster risk reduction. The National Development Plan emphasizes the need for trained local authorities with appropriate resources to assess disaster risks and support the development of mechanisms to reduce risks, prevent losses, respond effectively, and recover quickly from disasters.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Ghana Red Cross Society aims to focus on preparedness and readiness to respond to shocks and enhancing community risk resilience such as early warning early action and anticipatory action to mitigate risks from multi-hazards. It will collaborate with the Department of National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) in disaster management to manage disasters and assist in the preparation of national disaster plans for preventing and mitigating the consequences of disasters. The National Society also seeks to ensure the presence of appropriate and adequate facilities for the provision of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction after a disaster and support the Government in risk assessment and elaboration of contingency plans at various levels, leading to the positioning of necessary resources. Additionally, it will reinforce coordination with the emergency operational centre and strengthen participation in the inter-agency working group on emergencies in line with the IFRC Pan-African Red Ready initiative. It also plans to focus on enhancing the

effectiveness of community-level disaster response units by improving the presence of district chapters and strengthening their capacities.

Planned activities in 2024

- Identifying mechanisms for cash and voucher-based transfer for vulnerable families in urban communities
- Develop and implement performance for effective response (PER) framework
- Set up emergency operation centre and develop standard operating procedures
- Enhance coordination and collaboration with key stakeholders including national and sub-national actors, civil society, civil protection mechanisms, the private sector, reference centres and research institutions

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will:

- Support the Ghana Red Cross Society in formulation of preparedness for effective response (PER) plan
- Support the National Society with the revision of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for cash and voucher assistance
- Provide the National Society with technical support in setting up emergency operation centre
- Assist the Ghana Red Cross Society in analyzing its disaster profile and capacities to design preparedness programmes which can respond to multi-hazard scenarios, as part of the anticipatory action support from the Italian Government

IFRC mechanisms such as the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (IFRC-DREF) and Emergency Appeals will be drawn on as needed for the National Society to respond to disasters and crises. In August 2023, IFRC provided DREF allocations of CHF 462,699 for flood targeting 12,000 people.



Ghana has a complex disease burden influenced by risk factors such as the physical environment, education, socio-economic situation, population lifestyles and demographic characteristics of the overall population. Historically, major health problems affecting Ghanaians have been primarily communicable, maternal, perinatal and nutritional diseases. Recently, other conditions such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, mental health and neglected tropical diseases have exacerbated Ghana's health situation. Non-communicable diseases are also rapidly becoming common in developing countries such as Ghana.

Several nationwide research studies have revealed weaknesses and inadequacies in disease surveillance and response systems. These include underqualified staff, cultural beliefs and lack of trust in the formal health care sector. The studies have also identified gaps such as delayed reporting, low-quality protective equipment (for example, gloves and aprons), insufficient staff and a lack of laboratory capacity.

Ghana is among the most cholera-prone countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The last major cholera outbreak occurred in 2014, with more than 29,000 cases and 250 deaths reported in 130 districts of all 10 regions of Ghana. Most cases emanated from urban metropolitan communities, customarily associated with a lack of access to water and sanitation. Weak or non-existent waste management systems exacerbated by unplanned urbanization are also common in overcrowded informal settlements.

Access to water, sanitation and hygiene services remains a challenge in Ghana, provoked mainly by a lack of availability and quality of service. There is an apparent wealth disparity in basic water access, with the wealthy nearly twice as likely to benefit than the poor. Hydrologically challenged regions such as the northern, upper east and upper west regions have lower than national average access to essential water, meaning improved water within 30 minutes by foot. Additionally, urban dwellers are more likely to have basic access than those in rural areas.

Only one in every five households in Ghana enjoys an improved sanitation facility. More than one in every five still practice open defecation, nearly half of the poorest quintile households, which significantly drops as wealth increases. Open defecation is more prevalent in rural areas. Sharing of sanitation remains dominant, and one in every four households uses public facilities. Nearly half of the population have access to mobile or fixed handwashing facilities with soap and water. About one in every five women feels excluded from social activities during menstruation. The low levels of sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services give rise to higher incidences of water-borne diseases, which affect, to a greater extent, women as well as children under the age of five.

In 2022, Ghana launched a five-year (2022–2026) National Health Promotion Strategy, which aims to improve the quality of health promotion services and increase collaboration for health service provision.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Ghana Red Cross Society aims to continue promoting the uptake of testing for non-communicable diseases and engage with the Ministry of Health to collaborate in health promotion activities and support the government of Ghana in mobilization of community health workers. It aims to train over 50 staff and volunteers in oral rehydration therapy (ORT) and continue social mobilization for oral cholera vaccination campaigns and collaborate with organizations such as UNICEF and UNAIDS for routine immunization for diseases such as polio and roll out the malaria vaccine. The National Society will also focus on partnering with leading agencies such as GHS, UNAIDS and the Ghana AIDS Commission to support the fight against HIV through community outreach programmes and outreach creation as well as supporting government efforts towards ensuring sustainable improvement in the quality of life of the most vulnerable individuals, households and communities in Ghana. Additionally, it seeks to enhance its institutional and organizational development for efficient and effective service delivery to the most vulnerable.

Planned activities in 2024

- Support communities to identify and reduce health risks through relevant community engagement, accountability and behaviour change approaches that ensure locally led solutions to address unmet needs
- Deliver evidence-based and impact-driven, effective, appropriate health promotion, disease prevention and community-based care activities, focusing on the people in situations of vulnerability in all contexts
- Set up a community feedback mechanism
- Integrate climate change and resilience activities into health-related programmes associated with the risks of climate change such as malaria, water-borne diseases (flooding) malnutrition (drought) cholera (frequent outbreaks with possible association
- Promote eye health in the northern, north east and Savannah regions targeting 1,300,000 people with eye health services including outreach programmes in schools, health promotion, screening and surgeries
- Continue providing water supply and hygiene promotion services to an estimated 50,000 people through existing and operational water supply systems

- Actively engage with potential donors to mobilize resources for water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) related projects.
- Conduct community mobilization and awareness campaigns to promote positive behavioural changes in personal and community hygiene, as well as address epidemics and pandemics

and sustainable WASH services, thereby advancing SDG 3 and 6

- Support Ghana Red Cross Society in fulfilling its role as a water sanitation service provider by providing training in business management

The **Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran** supports the National Society through a clinic in Accra providing clinical and preventive health services to its catchment areas. It collaborates with the Ghana Red Cross Society to provide outreach services in the outskirts of Accra city.

The **Netherlands Red Cross** will expand its support to Ghana Red Cross Society in the Ashanti region, scaling up the project to provide subsidized water supply connections to low-income households. The initiative will include a software component to boost community awareness and responsibility in bill payment, reporting leaks, and ensuring service quality from the Ghana Water Company.

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will:

- Support the Ghana Red Cross Society's health and WASH programme towards meeting its objective to be a significant player and delivery of its auxiliary role to the public authorities
- Support the National Society by contributing to the community health worker pool, extending reach to vulnerable communities with vital health information



Migration and displacement

Given Ghana's urbanization rate of 56.7 per cent in 2019, general neglect of infrastructure in rural Ghana has emerged. An overconcentration of economic benefits in urban areas has resulted in recent years in a drastic increase in migration from rural zones to cities such as Accra, Kumasi, Tema and Takoradi, as well as emigration to foreign countries.

In addition, although emigration has been increasing faster than immigration since the 1990s, Ghana remains an important destination country. Most non-Ghanaian residents are nationals of the Economic Community of West African States, followed by immigrants from other African countries, Europe and North America. Students make up a high proportion of arrivals. The overall immigrant population has remained relatively stable over the last two decades. In contrast, the number of asylum seekers and refugees, mainly from Liberia, has sharply increased.

More than two-thirds of people migrating from Ghana stay within West Africa, although a growing proportion are leaving the region. The two most important destinations for emigrants are the US and UK. People on the move have increased vulnerabilities to abuse and health risks. Irregular migrants may not be aware of their rights to health, security and other essential services along the way or at their destination. They may also find themselves in dangerous situations.

Despite the efforts of the government and its partners, persisting challenges remain in all migration areas in Ghana. These challenges encompass several facets:

- Migration governance: Issues such as limited coordination, unreliable data, and difficulties in accessing pertinent information, particularly disaggregated by age, continue to impede effective governance
- Border Management: Corruption and identity fraud remain significant challenges in managing borders effectively
- Irregular Migration: The country grapples with problems related to migrant smuggling, trafficking, and hurdles in facilitating re-admissions
- Reintegration Support for Returnees: Returning migrants often face a lack of sufficient reintegration and psychosocial support services, hindering their smooth transition back into society
- Support for Vulnerable Groups: Internally displaced persons (IDPs), asylum seekers, and refugees encounter obstacles in accessing emergency aid and sustainable solutions
- Community Engagement: Host communities may feel sidelined and may harbour mistrust

- **Diaspora Involvement:** Hindered by difficulties in investment and fully capitalizing on the potential ‘brain gain’

Available support for skills development and employability is limited for returnees and the whole resident population. There are insufficient sustainable alternatives to irregular migration or migration in general. Youth are particularly affected and represent a significant proportion of returning and potential migrants.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Ghana Red Cross Society 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 across Africa, the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa. The programme aims to support 4.7 million people on the move and people in host communities annually through three operational pillars: (1) improving access to assistance and protection, including through humanitarian service points; (2) strengthening National Society capacities; and (3) local to global humanitarian diplomacy.

The Ghana Red Cross Society will focus on making sure that all people who migrate and are displaced are safe, are treated humanely and with dignity, and have the assistance and protection support they need to thrive in inclusive societies. It will conduct a needs assessment in border communities and migratory routes to understand the situation and identify needs. The National Society also aims to support asylum seekers in areas of operational communication, restoration of family Links (RFL) and livelihoods support, and conduct a review of its operational strategy and policy to guide its actions in the country.

Planned activities in 2024

- Establish two humanitarian service points in border regions
- Raise awareness about the negative impacts of irregular migration and provide information on legal migration pathways to intending migrants

- Integrate migration programmes in routine disaster management activities
- Engage with opinion leaders of migrants, displaced persons and host communities for equitable access social services and understanding of the need of migrants
- Design tailor-made services such as maternal and child health services for migrant mothers and children under five
- Partner with the Ghana Immigration Service and the Ghana Refugee Board to reduce the negative impact on migrants and displaced persons in the country

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will:

- Enhance the Ghana Red Cross Society's capacities to understand migration dynamics in their contexts and deliver appropriate humanitarian services to migrants, displaced people and those impacted by the migratory and displacement phenomenon
- Support the National Society in coordination with relevant local and international actors.
- Support the regional branches in northern Ghana by enhancing their capacity to foster greater acceptance and understanding of the role of the Red Cross in humanitarian actions
- Support the National Society's engagement with organizations such as the European Union, the Ghana Refugee Board, UNHCR and NADMO in responding to the needs of migrant populations in Ghana

Under wider Movement support, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will support the Ghana Red Cross Society in areas of operational communication, RFL and livelihoods.



Values, power and inclusion

Ghana is said to have made impressive economic growth over the past decades leading to a drastic reduction in general poverty. Nevertheless, Ghana is becoming an increasingly unequal country where the benefits of economic growth and poverty reduction are not equally distributed across the nation, across gender and across economic quintiles. This trend has the potential to undermine earlier progress, weaken social connections, and substantially slow poverty reduction effects. While electoral democracy has seemingly gained a foothold in Ghana, there are grave issues regarding the transparent and harmonious conduct of elections in Ghana, from local to the national level, and an even greater challenge regarding the equal application of the law and justice systems and structures in Ghana.

Ghana has progressed in gender equality and women's empowerment, but social norms remain inadequate. Ranked 135 out of 162 countries in the 2019 Gender Inequality Index, women participation in Ghana, especially in politics and the economy, still leaves much to be desired. Only 14.6 per cent of parliamentarians are women. The education level, too, remains lower for women. Only 55 per cent of adult women enjoy secondary education compared with 71 per cent of adult males. On average, women have only 6.6 years of schooling. Over the years, various interventions including affirmative action, laws and other social security and protection mechanisms have been implemented aimed at promoting an inclusive society and development in Ghana (Abebrese, 2011; Tsikata, 2009).

Ghana does not fully meet the minimum standards for eliminating trafficking, although it is making significant efforts. Ghana is a source, transit and destination country in trafficking women and children for sexual exploitation and domestic and commercial labour. According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crimes global report on trafficking (2018), forced labour was the most detected form of exploitation in sub-Saharan Africa (63 per cent). In 2019, the Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC) recognized that 41.9 per cent of trafficking victims in Ghana were women, while 43.5 per cent of trafficked victims had Ghanaian citizenship. Furthermore, 88.3 per cent of victims with Ghanaian citizenship were children, while 93.1 per cent of trafficking victims were children. Children are, therefore, the biggest trafficked group from and into Ghana, as well as internally.

In Ghana, people living with disabilities account for 3.7 per cent of the population. According to UNICEF, about one in every five children aged two to 17 years have a functioning difficulty and this is more prevalent in the five- to 17-year age group than in children aged two to four years.

Furthermore, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 650,000 people in Ghana have a severe mental disorder. A further 2.2 million are suffering from moderate to mild mental illness. The treatment gap is 98 per cent of the total population believed to have a mental disorder.

Youth unemployment is particularly acute – nine per cent of young people between the ages of 15 and 24, and, according to UNDP (2020), 30 per cent of young people, are neither in school or employed. This will only intensify with the projected growth rate in Ghana's youth population over the next decade.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Ghana Red Cross Society aims to reach more local branches and increase awareness and actions through the power role of the youth and engagement with the education community. It also seeks to promote inclusive working dynamics, greater diversity, and intensify efforts to safeguard the dignity of people. The National Society will focus on involvement of minority groups and participation of all gender identities and backgrounds in all programmes. It also seeks to support the Ministry of Education and various stakeholders to develop a contingency plan for educational design during emergencies.

Planned activities in 2024

- Develop a comprehensive programme on humanitarian education targeting 3,000 young people in schools and out of school
- Conduct humanitarian education activities including dissemination of humanitarian principles and values for 5,000 young people
- Enhance partnerships and coordination during education in emergency with key stakeholders
- Integrate protection, gender and inclusion (PGI) and community engagement and accountability (CEA) in the strategic plan
- Develop key performance indicators disaggregated by sex, age and disability throughout the entire process of designing, assessing, monitoring and reporting on all programmes

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will provide support in the following ways:

- Provide training to Ghana Red Cross Society staff and volunteers to adopt an inclusive approach

- Support the National Society to ensure that issues of PGI are included in all its initiatives
- Enhance the capacity of the National Society to support individuals at risk or survivors of sexual and gender-based violence by strengthening prevention, response, and mitigation efforts through the coordinated development of standards and tools
- Assist in launching income-generating initiatives for women and youth groups and providing training on matters pertaining to their rights.

ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS

The Ghana Red Cross Society is committed to pursuing institutional strengthening, and it carried out the self-assessment part of the Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) process in 2017. The self-assessment is designed to capture the strengths and weaknesses of National Societies concerning a wide range of organizational capacities. The National Society is also

committed to the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) process and is in the action and accountability phase. The PER Approach is a continuous and flexible process that enables National Societies to assess, measure and analyze the strengths and gaps of their preparedness and response mechanisms, and ultimately take necessary action to improve.



Strategic and operational coordination

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Engage in inter-agency committees throughout Ghana
- Coordinate events to secure resources in collaboration with local companies and organizations
- Hire a resource mobilization relationship manager and a strategic partnerships officer to lead Ghana Red Cross's efforts in resource mobilization
- Expand its regional presence to all the 16 official regions in Ghana for more visibility and equity in the distribution of responsibilities among regional managers

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will advocate for the Ghana Red Cross Society with local and international funding partners and establish a coordination forum for neighbouring counties to monitor humanitarian needs and cross border operations. The IFRC will also provide support to the National Society to engage with humanitarian partners, embassies and international agencies based in Ghana for increased partnerships in the delivery of humanitarian and developmental assistance. Additionally, it will provide support in the formulation of a resource mobilization and strategic partnerships strategy.



National Society development

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Facilitate training sessions for staff and volunteers in leadership, partnership engagement and management at all levels (national, regional, district, and sub-district) to drive behavioural and policy change
- Establish mechanisms to coordinate youth activities during emergencies
- Disseminate its youth and volunteer policy
- Promote the mainstreaming of youth participation in all programme activities

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The **IFRC** will continue to contribute towards capacity development of the Ghana Red Cross Society through IFRC Capacity Building Fund. It will help create the right conditions for the National Society to increase its financial sustainability in order to reach more people in need, and will provide it with guidance to effectively operate its governance and management units.

The **ICRC** will provide guidance and advice regarding the induction of new board members into the Ghana Red Cross Society.



Humanitarian diplomacy

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Conduct awareness campaigns to enhance impact, build public trust and improve understanding of its roles and activities
- Participate in commemorating Red Cross days and international observances to spotlight the mission and mandate of the Red Cross
- Enhance its auxiliary role with local and national partners in Ghana, and foster stronger collaboration within a coordinated network and alongside other organizations
- Conduct advocacy among the UN, embassies, corporates and individuals of influence in Ghana
- Develop various communications materials for distribution to partners and other stakeholders
- Conduct a stakeholder analysis to identify partners and influential figures for advocacy at the national, regional, district and sub-district levels

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The **IFRC** will support the Ghana Red Cross Society to integrate humanitarian diplomacy into its day-to-day work, helping it to be better positioned and have a stronger capacity to protect the most vulnerable and safeguard the humanitarian space. The IFRC will also help strengthen the auxiliary role of the National Society with its public authorities and support it in the development of communication materials which will be featured both in the print and electronic media.

The **ICRC** will assist the Ghana Red Cross Society in institutionalizing security management, with particular attention to volatile and high-tension operating contexts.



Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Review its human resources policies and staff welfare to ensure that it attracts and maintains experienced and competent staff
- Roll out integrity guidelines for staff and volunteers
- Install a risk management framework and regularly review the risk register
- Maintain a credible and verifiable financial system
- Improve its accounting and procurement systems to bolster its integrity among partners
- Strive to improve its IT infrastructure to meet the trending changes in technology

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will ensure integration of innovation in the design, planning and implementation of all programmes of the Ghana Red Cross Society and assist it with piloting the use of mobile money to pay its volunteer incentives and allowances. It will also support the National Society to improve on its digital transformation and conduct its statutory meetings through an online platform. The IFRC will also support the Ghana Red Cross Society to implement risk management practices, transparency and zero tolerance on fraud and corruption within its structures. Additionally, it will support the National Society in the development of a solid country operational plan and the mechanism for monitoring and reporting on the plan as an accountability mechanism as well in reviewing its staff regulations.

The **Swiss Red Cross** will support the implementation of the 2022 Accra Commitments to address issues of governance, integrity, accountability and transparency within the National Society.

THE IFRC NETWORK

The IFRC

The IFRC supports the Ghana Red Cross Society in strategic and operational coordination, National Society development, and humanitarian diplomacy. It also promotes accountability as a cross-cutting theme. The IFRC provides support to the National Society through its country cluster delegation in Abuja and its country office in Ghana, where it has legal status with the Government. The office plays a role in representation, advocacy and coordination with the Ghana Red Cross Society and participating National Societies, thus supporting the IFRC network's strategic priorities and membership services.

The Ghana Red Cross Society received funding from the IFRC's Capacity Building Fund to support the review and dissemination of the Ghana Red Cross Act in 2022, with an elaborate dissemination exercise beginning late 2022 and continuing in 2023 and beyond.

In recent years, the IFRC supported the Ghana Red Cross Society through numerous Emergency Appeals and Disaster Response Emergency Fund (IFRC-DREF) operations concerning election preparedness, floods, dam spillage, and explosions.

IFRC membership coordination

IFRC membership coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situations and needs; agreeing on common priorities; jointly developing common strategies to address issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian access, acceptance and space; mobilizing funding and other resources; clarifying consistent public messaging; and monitoring progress. This also means ensuring that strategies and programmes in support of people in need, incorporate clarity of humanitarian action, links with development assistance, and efforts to reinforce National Societies in their respective countries, including through their auxiliary role.

The Ghana Red Cross Society is part of the four [IFRC Pan-African initiatives](#) focusing on Tree Planting and Care, Zero Hunger, Red Ready and National Society Development. These initiatives are reflected in the relevant sections of this plan.

The Ghana Red Cross Society enjoys longer-term partnerships with the following participating National Societies:

The **Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic of Iran** has a clinic in Accra, providing clinical and preventive health services to its catchment areas. It collaborates with the Ghana Red Cross Society to provide outreach services in the outskirts of Accra city.

The **Italian Red Cross**, though not having an in-country presence, has funded the planting and care of 15,000 trees in Ghana.

The **Netherlands Red Cross** has no country presence in Ghana. However, through the IFRC, it has started supporting an urban pilot water, sanitation and hygiene project targeting Kumasi and Accra city, primarily targeting low-income communities with a number of interventions. The pilot project began in 2022, aiming to increase demand for safe drinking water and better service delivery from the Ghana Water Company. Low-income communities willing to get connections will have their costs subsidized. The project will also address community health through a hygiene promotion package to accompany the supported household connections. An innovation to this project delivery will be using [cash and voucher assistance](#) to subsidize the household connections and to deliver hygiene products to women and adolescent girls. The project will increase community awareness of preventable water, sanitation and hygiene diseases.

The **Swiss Red Cross** was active in Ghana from 1983 to 2023 when it supported projects in disaster risk reduction, health and WASH. Although it closed its delegation and projects in Ghana in 2023, the Swiss Red Cross has committed to continued support to the Ghana Red Cross Society in National Society development through the IFRC.



Ghana Red Cross installs vital water supply systems in Eastern and Ashanti regions, March 2022 (photo: IFRC)

Participating National Society Support

National Society name	Funding Requirement	Climate	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing	Migration	Values, power and inclusion	Enabling local actors
Icelandic Red Cross							●
Iranian Red Crescent Society				●			
Netherlands Red Cross				●			●

Movement coordination

The Ghana Red Cross Society ensures regular exchanges with the IFRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross and participating National Societies, for the alignment of support and action between Movement partners. In times of emergencies, closer coordination is organized. 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 visits places of detention and supports the Ghana Red Cross Society in its response to emergencies and assists the authorities promoting the international humanitarian law.

Coordination with other actors

The Ghana Red Cross Society works directly under the Ministry of Health as a parent ministry. In discharging its mandate as an auxiliary to the public authorities, the National Society works closely in consultation and collaboration with other sectoral ministries and departments, such as the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, the Forestry Commission, and the Ghana Water Company. The National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO) is responsible for emergency coordination at all levels. The National Society collaborates closely with NADMO for rapid assessments during emergencies and humanitarian assistance, and this involves collaboration with district directors and regional coordinators of NADMO.

The National Society also collaborates with other main stakeholders including Ghana's health service, district assemblies, traditional leadership, UN agencies and other civil society actors.

In 2023, the National Society with the IFRC, made engagements with the EU delegation, USAID, Australian High Commission, Turkish Embassy, Embassy of Denmark, Korea and Italian Embassies. These engagements will be further developed and strengthened in 2024 and beyond.

The National Society also closely collaborates with national entities such as the Rotary club and St John Ambulance services in First Aid.



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 Ghana Red Cross Society, 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 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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