



# MEKONG

2024 IFRC network country plan

28 June 2024

Funding Requirement **CHF 3.08M**

In support of the Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam National Societies



**16,538**

National Society branches



**12,425**

National Society staff



**389,052**

National Society volunteers

## People to be reached



Climate and environment



Disasters and crises



Health and wellbeing



Migration and displacement



Values, power and inclusion

**Cambodia**

**10,000**

**10,000**

**52,000**

**Lao**

**50,000**

**550,000**

**4,000**

**2,000**

**207,000**

**Thailand**

**850,000**

**250,000**

**600,000**

**10,000**

**17,000**

**Viet Nam**

**7,000**

**1,000**

**119,000**

**4,000**

**4,000**

## IFRC network

### multi-year focus

#### Longer-term needs

- Disaster risk management
- Climate change adaptation
  - Health and wellbeing

#### Capacity development

- Resource mobilization
- Legal base and systems
- Youth and Volunteering

## Key country data

	Cambodia	Lao	Thailand	Viet Nam
Population	<b>16.8M</b>	<b>7.5M</b>	<b>71.7M</b>	<b>98.2M</b>
INFORM Severity rating		<b>Low</b>	<b>Low</b>	
INFORM Climate Change Risk Index	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Medium</b>
Human Development Index rank	<b>146</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>115</b>

IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for Cambodia, Laos, Thailand & Viet Nam, Bangkok

## Funding requirements

### Cambodia

**Total 719,863** CHF

Through the IFRC

**719,863** CHF

#### IFRC Breakdown

##### Longer term needs

**300,000** CHF

Health and wellbeing

**178,000** CHF

Values, power and inclusion

**241,863** CHF

Enabling Local Actors

### Lao

**Total 583,245** CHF

Through the IFRC

**583,245** CHF

#### IFRC Breakdown

##### Longer term needs

**266,382** CHF

Disasters and crises

**75,000** CHF

Health and wellbeing

**241,863** CHF

Enabling local actors

### Thailand

**Total 1,415,168** CHF

Through the IFRC

**1,415,168** CHF

#### IFRC Breakdown

##### Longer term needs

**447,000** CHF

Climate and environment

**169,305** CHF

Disasters and crises

**10,000** CHF

Health and wellbeing

**72,000** CHF

Migration and displacement

**200,000** CHF

Values, power and inclusion

**516,863** CHF

Enabling Local Actors

### Viet Nam

**Total 367,863** CHF

Through the IFRC

**367,863** CHF

#### IFRC Breakdown

##### Longer term needs

**126,000** CHF

Climate and environment

**241,863** CHF

Enabling Local Actors

## Hazards



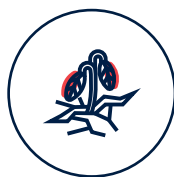
Cyclones/  
Typhoons



Heatwaves



Floods



Drought



Air pollution

## Participating National Societies

American Red Cross\*

Finnish Red Cross

Italian Red Cross

Japanese Red Cross Society\*

Korean Red Cross\*

Swiss Red Cross\*

Thai Red Cross Society

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

## IFRC Appeal codes

Longer-term needs:

**MAAKH002**

**MAATH001**

**MAALA002**

**MAAVN002**

# NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

## Cambodian Red Cross Society

The **Cambodian Red Cross** Society was established through a Royal Decree in 1955 and was admitted to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1961. It is the primary national humanitarian organization in the country and has a privileged position in coordination mechanisms for disaster management and health service provision at all levels of governance. The National Society plays a key role in Cambodia's national disaster management system and enjoys a permanent seat on committees for disaster management at national, provincial, district and commune levels. It has 25 provincial branches and 203 district sub-branches across Cambodia, and its permanent presence and well-established local networks are a key strength for the National Society.

The Cambodian Red Cross Society's humanitarian services are founded on three programmatic and operational pillars: disaster management, health and care in communities, and promoting the Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

These cover both response and developmental approaches relating to community-based risk reduction, community-based health and first aid, disaster preparedness, and youth and volunteer development. Overall, the National Society has 378 staff and more than 50,000 volunteers across 1,880 branches.

Following its Strategy 2021-2030, the Cambodian Red Cross Society will continuously contribute to the reduction of morbidity and mortality of mothers and children, prevention and elimination of communicable diseases and non-communicable diseases, health in emergency interventions, aging health, first aid and community health promotion.

In 2022, the Cambodian Red Cross Society reached approximately 347,000 through its disaster response and early recovery programmes.

## Lao Red Cross

The **Lao Red Cross** was established in 1955 as an auxiliary to the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Laos) in rendering humanitarian services in the country. It was admitted to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1957. Through its core programmes and services, it responds to the needs of the most vulnerable people in Laos. In 2017, the National Assembly of Laos passed the Red Cross Law, mandating the National Society to provide primary relief assistance and first

aid, encourage blood donations and supply blood to survivors, promote basic health care and carry out emergency rescue operations, mobilize resources, and train volunteers to provide humanitarian assistance.

The Lao Red Cross is a member of the National Disaster Prevention and Control Committee and communicates directly with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. Its branches are members of provincial and district disaster prevention and control committees. The National Society's efforts are sustained by its more than 1,000 volunteers, 488 staff, and its 74 branches in the country.

The National Society's Strategic Plan 2021-2030 revolves around three primary programmatic components which are:

- Enhance capacity on disaster preparedness, response, and basic relief assistance
- Promote access to health services for a decent quality of life
- Develop Lao Red Cross to become a strong and sustainable humanitarian organization, able to operate with effectiveness and efficiency

In 2022, the Lao Red Cross reached approximately 66,000 through its disaster response and early recovery programmes.

## Thai Red Cross Society

The **Thai Red Cross Society** was founded in 1893 and was admitted to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1921. The Thai Red Cross Society today is a national charitable organization which carries out humanitarian activities in keeping with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement. The National Society's work focuses on four key areas:

- Medical and health care services
- Disaster preparedness and response
- Blood transfusion services
- Social welfare and quality of life promotion

The Thai Red Cross Society is designated as a primary responder under Thailand's disaster management system, with its role and functions included in the national disaster risk management plan. The National Society has more than 11,000 staff, approximately 51,000 volunteers, and 392 branches throughout the country. The National Society's Relief and Community Health Bureau leads on disaster management and health programming, in coordination with

Thailand's Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation and Ministry of Public Health. The National Society provides knowledge, technical skills, and training, and has an established disaster operations centre which can be used as a source of information and coordination. It also has a network of health stations throughout the country.

Over the recent years, the IFRC and the National Society in Thailand have used a mobile app called PhonPhai to facilitate their humanitarian relief efforts. The app was developed with the financial support of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance. Using the app, the National Society ordered and processed relief kits in collaboration with 19 government disaster response agencies, including the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, the Ministry of Public Health and the Department of Public Works. It also coordinated with frontline responders and community members to deliver the kits to vulnerable households. Healthcare volunteers in rural communities are also using PhonPhai to support vulnerable people in quarantine at home by conducting primary health screenings. Volunteers can use PhonPhai to order relief kits, which are then delivered directly to households.

The Thai Red Cross Society contributes to all components of the Thailand Strategy and Government Official Action Plan 2022–2027 in disaster management, in collaboration with other government and civil society actors. This comprehensive plan consists of four key areas: developing an efficient disaster management system with standardized protocols, leveraging digital technology to enhance disaster management capabilities, strengthening disaster prevention and mitigation agencies in the region, and building strong partnerships with network partners to improve disaster prevention and mitigation efforts.

The National Society's [Strategic Plan 2023-2027](#) focuses on five core programmatic components which are:

- Production of quality medical personnel and services up to international standards
- Comprehensive services of blood transfusion, biological products, eyes and organs
- Speedy and effective assistance to disaster victims

- Development of volunteer work to enhance the quality of life
- Effective system of organizational management

In [2022](#), the Thai Red Cross Society reached approximately 581,000 people through its disaster response and early recovery programmes.

## Vietnam Red Cross Society

The **Vietnam Red Cross Society** was founded in 1946 and was [admitted](#) to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1957. It is one of the leading humanitarian actors in Viet Nam, with approximately 271,000 volunteer members, 65 National Society staff, and 14,191 local units across the country. The National Society's mission is to become a social humanitarian organization that connects and encourages Vietnamese people at home and overseas to carry out humanitarian activities without discrimination of class, ethnicity, religion, or sex. It also promotes humanity, peace, and friendship, with a view to building a powerful Viet Nam, a strong nation and an equitable, democratic and civilized society that provides for a good life with freedom, well-being, and conditions for comprehensive development.

In 2008, a Law on Red Cross Activities was approved, defining the National Society's seven core areas of activity: emergency relief and humanitarian aid, health care, first aid, donation of blood, tissues, organs and bodies, tracing relatives missing in wars, natural disasters and other disaster, disseminating humanitarian values, and participating in disaster preparedness and response.

The National Society's [Strategic Plan 2020-2030](#) aims to build the Vietnam Red Cross Society into an increasingly strong, professional organization which plays a supportive role for the Government and acts as the driving force in humanitarian activities. It aims to raise its capacity to respond to challenges and emergencies in humanitarian work, contribute to the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and boost international cooperation in humanitarian sector.

In [2021](#), the National Society reached approximately 110,000 people through its disaster response and early recovery programmes.

# IFRC NETWORK ACTION

## JOINT SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

All four Mekong countries involved in this plan—Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam—score differently on the Human Development Index (Viet Nam 0.70, Thailand 0.77, Laos 0.61, and Cambodia 0.59). Despite these differences, they share common challenges and emerging risks, including rapid urbanization, climate change, and environmental pressures. They also face recurring disasters, health risks, rising inequalities, migration, gender discrimination and violence, and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Cambodia

Having sustained high levels of economic growth over the last two decades, Cambodia is on the path to becoming a higher middle-income country by 2030. However, high inequality and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local economies are hampering growth. This is particularly true for vulnerable, marginalized rural populations, who were significantly harder hit by the pandemic's effects on employment, household wages, and non-wage incomes than macroeconomic trends suggest.

Cambodia is one of the world's more disaster-prone countries, particularly due to seasonal flooding and droughts. Over the last decade, these events have resulted in significant loss of life and economic loss. As a less developed, agrarian country where more than 75 percent of people live in rural areas, Cambodia has a strong dependency on climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, land, water resources, forestry, and fisheries. These factors make Cambodia particularly vulnerable to climate change, further exacerbated by weak adaptive capacity, poor infrastructure, and limited institutional capacity. The government recognizes floods and droughts as the main drivers of poverty, and rural households, particularly women, are especially vulnerable to climate change and struggle to adapt.

Climate change may be increasing the risk of water- and vector-borne diseases and the likelihood of epidemics. Droughts, rains, and floods are linked with an increased risk of outbreaks of diseases, including diarrhoea, cholera, dengue, malaria, and respiratory tract infections, putting additional strain on local health services. High temperatures also drive vector-borne diseases such as dengue.

### Laos

Like its neighbours, Laos has made impressive development gains in recent years, halving poverty and reducing malnutrition.

The challenge now is to enable all Lao people to benefit from the country's development, ensuring that the results of high economic growth, which have averaged more than 4.9 per cent for the past five years, are evenly distributed and translated into inclusive and sustainable human development.

Communities across the country are affected by frequent small-scale, recurrent disasters which have significant socio-economic impacts, making poor populations increasingly vulnerable and undermining their existing coping mechanisms. Laos also continues to deal with unexploded ordnance and bombs in many areas.

In 2022 after achieving a high vaccination rollout rate, most of the measures put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19 were relaxed, including the opening of international borders. However, this coincided with a period of global macroeconomic instability, with soaring prices of food, fertilizer, fuel, and finance (4F Crisis) and a sharp depreciation of the national currency. This affected all aspects of national development. The country depends on imports for key commodities, such as fuel, food, and medicines. This resulted in a rapid increase in domestic inflation, reaching a record 39 per cent by the end of the year. Moreover, the new Prime Minister of Lao PDR was appointed and committed immediately to efforts to improve macroeconomic stability, pursue sustainable development, poverty alleviation, and to narrow inequalities in the country.

### Thailand

Over the last four decades, Thailand has made remarkable progress in social and economic development, moving from a low-income country to an upper-income country in less than a generation. It has the second-largest economy in Southeast Asia, driven by manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism. While poverty has declined over the last three decades (from 65 per cent in 1988 to nearly 10 per cent in 2018), income inequality has increased.

Thailand remains at risk of major disasters such as floods, tropical cyclones and droughts, as well as other risks related to health issues, which can cause economic loss as well as costing lives. Major health risks include pandemics, non-communicable diseases, infectious diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, and traffic accidents.

### Viet Nam

Viet Nam has one of the fastest-growing economies of the 21st century. Economic and political reforms launched in 1986 have spurred rapid economic growth and development, transforming Viet Nam from one of the world's poorest nations to a lower-middle-income country. It has made significant

progress towards its [sustainable development goals](#), with poverty rates dropping from nearly 10 per cent in 2015 to less than seven per cent in 2017, and a primary net enrolment rate of 99 per cent.

Viet Nam is also one of the countries most affected by climate change and is at continuous risk of disasters caused by natural hazards such as floods, tropical cyclones, landslides, droughts and heatwaves.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



### Climate and environment

The four Mekong countries face increasing levels of risk in both rural and urban areas, due to massive urbanization, climate change and the growth of megacities in low-lying flood plains.

**Cambodia** is [projected to experience](#) a warming of 3.1 degrees Celsius by the 2090s under the highest emissions pathway (RCP8.5), with increases in annual maximum and minimum temperatures exceeding average temperature rises. This will heighten pressures on health, livelihoods, and ecosystems, particularly threatening outdoor labourers and urban populations due to the urban heat island effect. Climate change may also increase the transmission of water and vector-borne diseases, though further research is needed. Without action, the population exposed to extreme river floods could grow by around 4 million by the 2040s, with human factors like Mekong River damming potentially altering flood dynamics. Upstream dam construction and deforestation threaten the productivity of Tonle Sap Lake and Cambodia's fisheries, crucial for many poor, rural communities. Projected climate trends indicate more severe floods and droughts, potentially affecting Cambodia's GDP by nearly 10 per cent by 2050. Significant adaptation efforts are needed to manage yield losses due to extreme heat during staple crop growing seasons, particularly for subsistence-level, rain-fed agriculture. These impacts may exacerbate wealth and income inequality, hindering poverty alleviation efforts.

**Laos** is among the most vulnerable countries to climate change, facing significant climate-related hazards exacerbated by poverty, malnutrition, and high exposure of marginalized communities. Increased extreme heat threatens human health, particularly for outdoor laborers and urban populations amid rapid urban migration. Without action, the population exposed to river flooding is projected to double to over 80,000 people by the 2030s, with potential for even greater impacts from flash flooding and landslides. [Projected warming](#) of 3.6 degrees Celsius by the 2090s under the highest emissions pathway (RCP8.5) will likely increase pressure on health, livelihoods, and ecosystems. These impacts will disproportionately affect

poorer communities, and widening inequality in Laos may further amplify the effects of climate-related disasters.

**Thailand** ranks ninth among [flood-prone countries](#) globally, trailing only Viet Nam, Myanmar, and Cambodia in the region. The poorest groups in society are likely to be disproportionately affected by climate risks. Heavy manual labour jobs, which are among the lowest paid, are most at risk of productivity losses due to heat stress. Poor farmers and communities struggle to afford local water storage, irrigation infrastructure, and technologies for adaptation. Marginalized groups, including ethnic minorities, remote communities, and people with disabilities, are typically the most vulnerable to natural hazards in Thailand. Flooding, which accounts for nearly 100 per cent of average annual loss associated with hazards, is a significant concern. The Greater Bangkok area, where over 14 million people live and where the most significant portion of national GDP is generated, is highly vulnerable to flooding. By 2035-2044, the number of people affected by extreme river floods could increase by over 2 million, while coastal flooding may impact an additional 2.4 million people by 2070-2100. The operation of hydropower dams will further influence future flows in the Mekong River. Bangkok faces risks from rising seas, sinking land, and potential cyclone-induced storm surges. The World Bank estimates that by 2030, a major flood like the one in 2011 could cost more than 10 per cent of GDP in lost production.

**Viet Nam** is [highly vulnerable to natural hazards](#), including tropical cyclones, storm surges, droughts, and floods. Tropical cyclones are the most significant threat, with over 80 storms affecting approximately 45 million people and causing nearly 19,000 fatalities from 1953 to 2010. Flooding is the second most dangerous hazard, with 60 significant incidents, 5,000 deaths, and 25 million people affected over the last 50 years. As one of the five countries most vulnerable to climate change, Viet Nam faces significant risks to its key economic sectors—industry and agriculture—located in coastal lowlands and deltas. Human development pressures, such as increased groundwater use, land-use changes, and rapid urbanization, further strain water resources. Sea-level rise threatens an estimated 12 million people with irreversible inundation in low-lying areas. National efforts to protect the coastline include hard infrastructure



and mangrove restoration. Climate change will impact food production and labour conditions, with temperatures in Da Nang projected to exceed thermal comfort thresholds by 2050, affecting millions of workers. Without effective disaster risk reduction and adaptation measures, Viet Nam could see increased multidimensional poverty and inequality.

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

The four National Societies will translate climate action commitments into actions through advocacy, awareness, education, risk assessments, and community-based interventions and practices. In addition, they will scale up anticipatory action focusing on emerging hazards such as heatwave, pollution, floods, drought, and typhoon. The National Societies will take actions aligned with their commitments to the Charter, including clear targets (e.g. reducing carbon footprint, Green Response, mainstreaming climate change adaptation in climate-based disaster risk reduction projects). The National Societies will also address the compounding effects of air pollution and heatwave using a science-based approach and practical measures and will work to mainstream climate change adaptation and nature-based solutions in their long-term community-based projects.

The Vietnam 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; and (4) enabling climate-resilient livelihoods and ecosystem services

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## Planned activities in 2024

### Cambodia

- Assessment of the carbon footprints of services and programmes
- Integration of practical measures to reduce the negative impact of humanitarian operations on the environment

### Laos

- Creation of a training module focused on climate-smart Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (EVCA)
- Coordination meetings to raise awareness about climate-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) projects and select communities for implementation
- Integration of IFRC tools for disaster management and health into EVCA and community action plan processes

### Thailand

- Conduct training for National Society, staff, youth volunteers, and community-based youth on climate change
- Distribute Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials about climate change adaptation and environmental projects in communities and schools
- Orientation on CBDRR concepts and integration of climate change adaptation and environmental protection for community leaders and representatives

### Viet Nam

- Stock-taking exercise to evaluate the impact of the Greening DRR project's first phase



Thai Red Cross Society has been involved in outreach and care of migrant workers in terms of providing assistance, preventive equipment and distribution of relief kits. (Photo: Thai Red Cross Society)

- Development of National Society's climate and environment policy
- Updating National Society's community-based programming by mainstreaming [nature-based solutions](#) approach and tools
- Integration of mangrove planting and community forest management into ongoing projects
- Scaling up recycling initiatives in other provinces to bring income-generating activities at the community level
- Assessment of carbon footprints and proposal of options to reduce or offset them

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the Cambodian Red Cross, Lao Red Cross, the Thai Red Cross Society, and the Vietnam Red Cross Society

in encouraging them to sign the Climate and Environment Charter and in developing the respective National Society's climate and environment policy. The IFRC will continue to advocate for all four National Societies and support them to scale up climate action and climate-smart interventions. These include nature-based solutions and rolling out the [Charter](#). A major focus will be put on promoting an understanding of the Charter and translating it into practical actions.

The **American Red Cross** works with the Vietnam Red Cross Society to develop and test EAPs for floods and typhoons. It also supports the National Society in implementing a two-year Greening Disaster Risk Reduction initiative.

The **Finnish Red Cross** works with the Cambodian Red Cross Society to enhance coordination, information sharing and weather forecasting which aims to save lives by improving early warning and action.



## Disasters and crises

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For real-time information on emergencies, visit IFRC GO page [Cambodia](#), [Laos](#), [Thailand](#), and [Viet Nam](#).

In **Cambodia**, [droughts](#), floods, cyclones, and heatwaves are expected to rise significantly. The current rate of 4 per cent annual probability of severe meteorological drought is expected to rise 5 to 9 per cent by 2080-2099 with global warming. Floods impact around 4 million people, with a 19 per cent increase in exposure projected by 2050 due to climate change, though upstream hydropower development may mitigate some effects. Coastal zones are at risk from cyclones and sea-level rise, threatening agricultural communities. Heatwaves, with 64 days annually exceeding 35 degrees Celsius, are becoming more frequent and intense, posing severe risks to human health and biodiversity. Urgent adaptation and mitigation measures are essential to address these climate-induced hazards.

**Laos** is particularly [susceptible](#) to flooding, primarily from the Mekong River during the southwest monsoon season. It affects critical infrastructure and hampers disaster response. Other climatic hazards include increased risks of droughts, cyclones, and heatwaves. Cyclone hazards are high, with a more than 20 per cent change of damaging wind speeds in the next decade, necessitating resilient construction design. Heatwaves, with an average monthly maximum temperature of 28 degrees Celsius and May maximum of 31 degrees Celsius, have a 3 per cent median probability and are projected to increase in frequency due to global warming. Poorer communities suffer the worst consequences in the aftermath of disasters, as they are more vulnerable, less resilient and cannot recover as quickly. This

further raises their levels of vulnerability and undermines their existing coping mechanisms. Laos also continues to deal with unexploded ordnance and bombs in many areas.

**Thailand** faces increased climate-related hazards including droughts, floods, cyclones, and heatwaves. With El Nino and rising CO2 levels, meteorological and hydrological droughts are expected to double in frequency by 2080-2099, increasing risks of air pollution and forest fires. Floods, the most frequent and damaging natural hazard, cause annual losses of about 2.6 billion dollars, potentially escalating to 6.9 billion dollars in urban damage by 2030 due to climate change. Cyclones and rising sea levels further heighten flood risks. Heatwaves, with temperatures exceeding 35 degrees Celsius, are projected to rise significantly, particularly under higher emissions scenarios, posing additional threats to public health and economic stability.

In **Viet Nam**, the annual probability of [drought](#) is projected to increase by 10 per cent under all emissions pathways, remaining constant from 2020 to 2100, with more frequent and prolonged droughts across all regions. Floods pose the greatest economic risk, causing 97 per cent of annual hazard losses and affecting approximately 930,000 people annually, with impacts concentrated in the Red River and Mekong River deltas. Climate change and rising sea levels are expected to exacerbate flood risks, potentially increasing the affected population by 3–10 million by 2035–2044. Viet Nam's northern coast is highly exposed to tropical cyclones, with risks of intensified storm surges due to sea-level rise and increased cyclone intensity, potentially putting 9 per cent of GDP at



risk in the Red River Delta by 2050. Heatwaves, with average monthly maximum temperatures of 28 degrees Celsius and a May maximum of 31 degrees Celsius, are projected to become more frequent and severe under all emissions scenarios.

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

With reference to the [Manila Call for Action](#) targets, the four National Societies aims to be “cash ready” by the end of 2025. The IFRC Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) framework will be adopted as the standard preparedness framework by the four National Societies and will have at least one PER trainer by the end of 2025. The National Societies will enhance their response capacities under PER and will work to be inducted with new tools and policies such as the IFRC disaster response management strategy and the road to resilience as well as enhanced vulnerability and capacity assessment (EVCA).

In Cambodia, a preparedness for effective response was conducted for the National Society leadership and management level and a self-assessment will be conducted moving forward. The preparedness and response enhancement for Laos will remain a top priority both at the policy and strategy level. A critical task for the Lao Red Cross is the establishment of a financial service provider. It works closely with the Government and is supporting the development and establishment of its disaster emergency fund decree. This will enable the National Society to strengthen its position as an auxiliary to the Government in Laos. In Thailand, the replication and improvement of PhonPhai application will be the major emphasis in the next two years along with the knowledge and technology transfer and support to the Vietnam Red Cross Society for the inception of the [PhonPai application](#). The Vietnam Red Cross Society will continue to focus on enhancing preparedness and response, with a special emphasis on enhancing the capacity of its branches at the provincial level.

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## Planned activities in 2024

### Cambodia

- Conduct a PER self-assessment and develop disaster risk management plans for targeted communities
- Review and develop contingency plans, organize coordination meetings among members for preparedness and response operations
- Organize annual pre-disaster meeting with Red Cross branches and its partners

### Laos

- Formulation of a risk profile and simplified [Early Action Protocol](#) for floods
- Conduct a PER self-assessment focusing on disaster preparedness and response at policy and strategy levels

- Strengthen response capacities of Lao Red Cross staff and develop a Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Strategy, and emergency response procedures
- Procure relief and hygiene kits for regional warehouse and headquarters
- Develop a cash standard of procedures for the National Society and a cash transfer programme plan
- Conduct warehouse, stock, and inventory management training for National Society staff at headquarter and branches
- Establish a dedicated unit to carry out and coordinate all logistics activities

### Thailand

- Enable the PhonPhai application to incorporate air image data collected by drones
- User acceptance testing, development of standard operating procedures, and training for Thai Red Cross Society personnel and relevant organizations on the PhonPhai application and air image processing system
- Dissemination of the PhonPhai application through digital marketing, event organization, and orientation events for VNRC and relevant government agencies
- Organize meetings and training with National Society staff and volunteers, and government authorities on disaster response
- Organize training on [disaster risk reduction](#) and project management for National Society personnel
- Engage in mapping disaster-related laws, policies, and regulations related to auxiliary role

### Viet Nam

- Focus on bolstering preparedness and response, with an emphasis on enhancing the capacity of Red Cross branches at the provincial level to effectively respond to disasters
- Conduct refresher training for disaster response teams focusing on disaster prevention, responding processes, and disaster response in the context of pandemic
- Organize annual pre-disaster meeting with government agencies to discuss weather forecast and response preparedness

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## Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC provides support to the four National Societies in areas such as the development of an enhanced vulnerability and capacity assessment plan and conducting EVCA in communities. It supports and facilitate PER-related and EVCA-related activities. The National Societies are supported in programme designing and training on relevant themes and

are also supported in facilitating warehouse management enhancement and replenishment of relief kits. The IFRC also provides technical and funding support to the National Societies to implement the PER workplan, in addition to cash and voucher assistance readiness for future emergencies.

The IFRC and the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre supports the National Societies on forecast-based financing, developing early action protocols in response to heatwaves and other hazards such as floods and typhoons. In countries such as Cambodia and Viet Nam, it focuses on anticipatory action to these hazards. In Thailand, the IFRC supports the National Society in enhancing disaster risk reduction capacity by integrating links between community-based disaster risk reduction and climate-smart action.



## Health and wellbeing

The Mekong River region faces several health risks and impacts that affect the local population and ecosystems such as malaria and dengue fever. The Mekong River and its tributaries serve as a vital source of water for drinking, bathing, and fishing for millions of people. However, the river's water quality is compromised by pollution, agricultural runoff, and inadequate sanitation systems, leading to the spread of waterborne diseases such as typhoid and diarrheal illnesses. Additionally, the warm and humid climate provides a conducive environment for the breeding of disease-carrying mosquitoes. Furthermore, the Mekong River is subject to seasonal flooding, which can have severe health consequences. Floods often lead to the displacement of communities, increasing the risk of waterborne diseases, malnutrition, and mental health issues among those affected. This region is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts, including rising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns. These changes can have far-reaching health effects, such as increased heat-related illness, water scarcity, and food insecurity.

**Cambodia** is considered a global hotspot for the transmission of emerging, re-emerging and epidemic-prone diseases – in particular, zoonotic diseases such as avian influenza and rabies, which are increasingly concerning. These diseases need multi-sector and multi-disciplinary approaches to preparedness and response, and these approaches are currently lacking in the country. Key drivers of risk to zoonotic diseases in Cambodia include low-risk perception, misinformed practices such as consuming animals known to be sick or found dead, the close co-habitation of animals in cooking and sleeping areas, wet markets, and the consumption of wild meats.

**Laos** faces many challenges in its health sector, including a shortage of adequately trained personnel, weak infrastructure, a limited ability to conduct surveillance of infectious diseases

The **American Red Cross** supports the Vietnam Red Cross Society on disaster risk management and climate action activities.

The **Finnish Red Cross** supports the Cambodian Red Cross Society in enhancing its capacity to respond to disasters. This includes the development of community contingency plans, EVCA exercises, and creation of a community risk reduction plan of action.

The **Swiss Red Cross** supports the Lao Red Cross in preparing for effective response through interventions such as response team training and through the development of SOPs.

and respond to outbreaks, limited maternal and child health care coverage, and an overstretched health care workforce. The country faces heightened pandemic infectious disease threats due to a combination of its location in the heart of the Mekong region and rapid socio-economic changes that increase cross-border commerce and migration. Maternal and child mortality rates are among the highest in the region, with almost 20,000 children under the age of five dying each year from diarrhoea, malnutrition, and respiratory diseases. Providing education and work for people living with disabilities also remains a serious problem in Laos.

In **Thailand**, non-communicable diseases accounted for the bulk of morbidity and mortality before the COVID-19 pandemic. Infectious diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, as well as road accidents and air pollution, are also major public health concerns. The COVID-19 pandemic was an unprecedented disaster globally, and for Thailand in particular. Its GDP depends heavily on tourism and services, so the pandemic was a devastating blow to the economy, causing drastic damage to the income and livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people around the country. Coupled with the impact of natural disasters, the economic impact of the pandemic was severe, especially for the most vulnerable groups of the population.

Although **Viet Nam** has seen strong economic growth in recent years, it still needs significant investment in its healthcare sector. The lack of sufficient quantity and quality of water due to saline intrusion in many coastal areas, and the changing patterns of infectious diseases, pose new threats to health and livelihoods. As a tropical country, Viet Nam is prone to diseases such as dengue fever, malaria, avian influenza, and hand, foot, and mouth disease. As a result of climate change, several climate-sensitive diseases have also transformed, resulting in more outbreaks and infectious cases, further

threatening communities' capacity to cope with health and economic impacts.

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

The four National Societies aims to strengthen their epidemic preparedness mechanisms in order to enhance their readiness for possible epidemics in the future. They will also work to strengthen their response to the compounding effect of extreme heat and air pollution on people's health conditions. As part of their response to crises and hazards, the National Societies will step up their actions on mental health and psychosocial first aid (MHPSS) and psychological first aid (PFA).

The **Cambodian Red Cross Society** will continuously coordinate with the Ministry of Health and provide education on disease prevention behaviours and disaster response at the community level. This is in response to the evolving risks associated with epidemics in Cambodia. The National Society will enhance its first aid activity and also work on HIV awareness activities for those who are particularly vulnerable.

The **Lao Red Cross** will work on first aid dissemination and first aid education as an integrated response to traffic accidents and disaster victims. It will also roll out an emergency water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) as a response to disasters and will spread community awareness about prevention of infectious diseases.

The **Thai Red Cross Society** will work on developing a response to the health impact of climate change at the national level and will continue providing existing professional health services including immunization campaign by using new technology.

The **Vietnam Red Cross Society's** objectives revolve around preventing communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases, first aid, WASH, pandemic and epidemic preparedness through capacity enhance of its staff and volunteers.

WASH promotion remains a primary need in emergency operations within the Mekong countries, and this is a particular strength of the National Societies in Cambodia, Laos and Thailand. These three National Societies are recognized by public authorities as key water, sanitation and hygiene service providers in emergencies and in development.

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## Planned activities in 2024

### Cambodia

- Develop a commercial first aid sustainable system and a mental health and psychosocial support framework
- Promote mother, infant, and child health
- Provide assistance in border areas for HIV/AIDS awareness

- Build capacity for staff and volunteers at all levels for community health promotion
- Update first aid policies and strengthen skills and knowledge of trainers and volunteers
- Emphasize community health promotion, hygiene, disease outbreak prevention, and preparedness.
- Engage stakeholders for epidemic response support
- Empower Red Cross Volunteer networks and communities for effective disease prevention and response

### Laos

- Expand the role and effectiveness of first aid and health promotion among volunteers
- Implement comprehensive measures for health promotion, particularly concerning HIV/AIDS
- Conduct Training of Trainers on first aid
- Provide training to teachers and students
- Organize World First Aid Day events
- Facilitate Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) efforts
- Collaborate with government bodies for operational enhancement
- Strengthen contributions to public health, preparedness, and community well-being

### Thailand

- Administer vaccines to individuals without identification documents
- Enhance online First Aid training program
- Equip dedicated First Aid training centers and health stations
- Conduct inclusive immunization campaigns for diverse groups
- Strengthen coordination between public health facilities and the National Society
- Focus on disaster preparedness, first aid, and risk reduction training in specific regions

### Viet Nam

- Disseminate a revised WASH framework
- Integrate disease awareness into school curriculums
- Establish Red Cross first aid stations in accident-prone areas
- Enhance first aid trainer capacities and provide necessary equipment
- Develop a commercial first aid sustainable system

- Implement MHPSS efforts including assessment, course development, training, and advocacy
- Conduct health campaigns covering non-communicable diseases and hygiene promotion
- Ensure preparedness and response aligned with global health guidelines

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The **IFRC** supports the National Societies to scale up first aid activities as part of its efforts to strengthen the IFRC network's collective capacities, capabilities, and a renewed commitment to reposition first aid at the centre of [IFRC Strategy 2030](#). The IFRC will continue to strengthen and promote cross-border and peer support between Laos and Thailand, Laos and Viet Nam,

and Thailand and Cambodia in areas such as blood services as well as [epidemic and pandemic response and preparedness](#). It will continue to provide technical and financial support to the National Societies in promoting its objectives and carrying out initiatives under health and wellbeing.

The **Finnish Red Cross** supports the Cambodian Red Cross Society in areas such as localized epidemic preparedness, enhancing its engagement with government counterparts in health, and widening the base of stakeholders to contribute to the National Society's efforts, among others.

The **Japanese Red Cross Society** supports the Lao Red Cross in rolling out its first aid initiatives which has reached schools through the creation of a pool of trainers. From 2023 to 2025, the National Society will target six more provinces and roll out these interventions in at least 24 more schools.



## Migration and displacement

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Within the four Mekong countries, people migrate through both regular and irregular channels, driven by employment opportunities, lack of livelihoods, family reunification, access to health care, education, seeking safety and protection, or simply wanting a better life. In 2021, the total population of the Asia-Pacific region was more than 4.6 billion people, or about 60 percent of the world's population. Nearly 107 million people from Asia-Pacific countries were living outside their countries of birth in 2021, accounting for nearly 40 percent of the world's 281 million international migrants. Humanitarian needs relating to migration, displacement and identity are complex and multi-dimensional.

During the global pandemic period, the region experienced massive waves of migrant movement to their countries of origin, while others continued to remain stranded often without access to justice. Addressing the [human mobility aspects of the pandemic](#) has been an essential part of disease response, but this also led to repercussions for the rights of migrants in these countries. While the COVID-19 pandemic threat has decreased, the measures taken by governments to respond to the pandemic continues to have devastating consequences for migrants in these regions who have undergone financial hardships, health challenges, and other issues.

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

Asia Pacific National Societies have made a number of commitments to increase local, national and regional capacity and action in response to the humanitarian consequences of migration and displacement. These are reflected in the [Manila](#)

[Call for Action](#), which is a set of 21 commitments and 13 targets agreed by leaders of the Asia Pacific National Societies at the 10th Asia Pacific Regional Conference held in the Philippines in 2018. The National Societies of Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand have worked on improving awareness around safe migration across borders, and to improve support to migrants in Laos and Thailand. Moving forward, targeted areas of migration-related initiatives for the four National Societies will consist of interventions such as health awareness sessions targeting migrants, conducting assessments to pinpoint the specific requirements of migrant groups, strategizing small-scale pilot initiatives for migrants, and establishing operational standards in humanitarian assistance, among others. These interventions will enable the National Societies to make informed decisions about operations and programming that could be undertaken to support migrants and displaced people.

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### Planned activities in 2024

#### Cambodia

- Conduct a migration and displacement assessment to better understand dynamics, stakeholders, and humanitarian needs related to migration and displacement in Cambodia
- Provide assistance in border areas through HIV/AIDS awareness interventions targeting migrant workers
- Train National Society staff and branch focal points on safe migration and train volunteers on principles and rules of safe migration

## Laos

- Assist migrant workers living in Laos for through health promotion and prevention of disease
- Provide assistance in border areas through HIV/AIDS awareness interventions targeting migrant workers

## Thailand

- Address the protection and assistance needs of internally displaced people, including in urban internal displacement contexts, and through access to protection during displacement
- Conduct advocacy in support of migrants and displaced people for access to essential public services

## Viet Nam

- Conduct a national level needs assessment on humanitarian needs of migrants and displaced people

- Conduct national strategic workshop on addressing humanitarian need and assess the current status of humanitarian aid implementation
- Conduct training for National Society staff on upholding accountability principles in humanitarian aid delivery

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the National Societies in identifying their needs and priorities under migration and displaced to develop an action plan that is based on their strengths and limitations. As with Cambodia in 2023, the IFRC will provide both technical and financial support to the four National Societies in identifying their needs and priorities to meet the needs of migrants and displaced people. The IFRC also supports the National Societies to coordinate with key partners on health for migrants and displaced persons.

The **Italian Red Cross** provides support to the Cambodian Red Cross Society and the Lao Red Cross in its HIV/AIDS project for migrants.



## Values, power and inclusion

In the Mekong countries, significant strides have been made in terms of gender equality, particularly in the areas of education and health. Increasing female enrolment in schools and improvements in maternal health are clear indicators of progress. However, substantial challenges persist. Women often encounter barriers in accessing economic opportunities and leadership roles, with limited representation in political and decision-making positions. Traditional gender roles continue to dominate, particularly in rural areas, where women's participation in the labour market is often restricted to lower-paying jobs and informal sectors. Violence against women and gender-based violence are pervasive issues that further hinder gender equality.

Social inequalities are also prominent in these countries. In Laos, ethnic minority groups face higher poverty rates and limited access to services compared to the Lao-Tai majority. In Thailand, disparities between urban and rural areas are significant, with marginalized groups such as migrants and ethnic minorities experiencing discrimination and restricted access to resources. Cambodia, despite achieving near gender parity in primary education, still struggles with gaps in higher education and employment, and domestic violence remains a serious concern. In Viet Nam, although women play a significant role in the labour force and legal frameworks support women's rights, wage gaps, limited political representation, and

domestic violence are ongoing challenges. Ethnic minorities in Viet Nam experience higher poverty rates and poorer health and education outcomes compared to the majority Kinh population.

Efforts to address these disparities are ongoing across all four countries, with various policies and programs aimed at promoting gender and social equality. However, substantial challenges remain in overcoming deeply entrenched social norms, ensuring effective implementation of legal protections, and providing equitable access to resources and opportunities for all populations, particularly women and marginalized groups in rural and ethnic minority communities.

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

The four National Societies have focused on protection, gender, and inclusion (PGI) in recent years and have implemented several initiatives which include mainstreaming PGI in strategies, plans and services; training on PGI mainstreaming; and increasing societal awareness about preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence. The challenge and opportunity for the four National Societies in 2024 and beyond will be to prioritize the implementation of key recommendations from their recent sexual and gender-based violence research, as well as positioning themselves as strong actors in this area. They will be achieved through partnership



with the relevant national authorities, such as ministries of health, national committees responsible for human affairs, specialized civil society organizations, and United Nations agencies with a presence in the countries.

The Mekong country National Societies will seek to strengthen women's leadership initiatives, collect disaggregated data around sex, age and disability, and develop a policy for preventing sexual exploitation and abuse, clarifying referral mechanisms for reporting and support.

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## Planned activities in 2024

### Cambodia

- Conduct workshops for the revision of youth and volunteer policies
- Integrate focus on sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and people with specific needs and vulnerabilities into the youth advisory board committee activities
- Introduce new tools for youth engagement
- Conduct training sessions on PGI minimum standards in emergencies for National Society staff and volunteers
- Develop information, education, and communication materials addressing SGBV and PGI minimum standards in emergencies
- Review and revise the National Society's Gender and Diversity Policy, along with the Child Protection Policy

### Laos

- Hold network meetings to develop or update the PGI policy
- Conduct training of trainers (ToT) sessions for youth staff
- Organize workshops on youth and volunteer recruitment and retention
- Provide seed funding for volunteer project initiatives
- Develop a youth policy through collaborative workshops
- Conduct training workshops on gender mainstreaming and child protection
- Establish a community engagement and accountability (CEA) feedback mechanism

### Thailand

- Create a youth engagement policy and guideline
- Develop a youth development plan
- Organize workshop to train staff and youth volunteers on school safety initiatives
- Conduct coaching and mentoring training for youth staff
- Carry out research on youth and volunteer trends
- Actively participate as a SEAYN (Southeast Asia Youth Network) chair member

### Viet Nam

- Facilitate an international youth camp
- Establish clean kitchen points in disadvantaged schools
- Provide livelihood support to underprivileged women through the women empowerment programme

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## Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the four National Societies with the priorities identified in their strategic and development plans. It emphasizes volunteering, integrity, transparency, and accountability as critical aspects of strong National Societies. Revitalizing the Southeast Asia Protection, Gender and Inclusion Network is a priority for the IFRC, with a view to strengthening peer learning and mainstreaming protection, gender and inclusion in emergencies. The terms of reference have been updated, and regular meetings are held by the IFRC throughout the year, allowing National Societies to meet and coordinate on key initiatives. The IFRC will support investment in leadership cultures that include women and minority groups.

The IFRC hosts and convenes the Southeast Asia Networks of National Societies for leadership, youth and for practitioners working on protection, gender and inclusion, and community safety and resilience. It will continue to leverage these networks for peer exchange, knowledge sharing and development.

The IFRC will also focus on embedding recent IFRC and Movement statutory resolutions and commitments, including anticipatory action, the Climate and Environmental Charter, and IFRC policies on volunteering, first aid, and protection, gender and inclusion. It will also support investment in leadership cultures that include women and minority groups.

## ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS

The National Societies in the Mekong region are committed to pursuing institutional strengthening and have all recently

carried out reviews and development activities. They are now in the process of operationalizing their plans. As part of their priorities, all four strive to increase their relevance in the face of evolving humanitarian and social needs, and to be recognized as partners of choice. The self-assessment is intended to capture the strengths and weaknesses of National Societies as a whole in relation to a wide range of organizational capacities.



### Strategic and operational coordination

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

##### Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam

- Focus on development of resource mobilization and enhance the skills of all National Societies on resource mobilization
- Increase collaboration with relevant government ministries and agencies to scale up humanitarian assistance
- Coordinate support, digitalize fundraising systems and tools and enable peer-to-peer exchanges
- Increase engagement in the regional humanitarian action working group and collaborate with other external actors to coordinate and improve work

#### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the National Societies in adopting a long-term approach towards resource mobilization development and financial sustainability. This includes developing resource mobilization plans tailored to the National Society's contexts and needs, coordinating partner support, bolstering fundraising mechanisms, and enabling peer-to-peer exchanges within cluster countries. It is committed to supporting the National Societies in new financing modalities in line with the [IFRC Strategy 2030](#). Based on data such as a core cost analysis, market assessment, and financial sustainability indicators, the IFRC will support the National Societies in developing their resource mobilization plans.



### National Society development

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

##### Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam

- Strengthen the legal base and auxiliary role of the National Societies, as well undertake policy development and strengthen systems support for finance, human resources, and information management and technology
- Organize orientation on increasing awareness on accessing grants or awards related to National Society development programming
- Focus on empowering local emergency responders and community-based organizations through the provision of technical training and resources
- Develop a National Society development plan and in the process, enhance its ability to identify gaps and capacity-building needs both at the headquarters and at the branch level
- Integrate the Red Ready project in the disaster preparedness and response activities within the National Society's existing strategic plans in **Laos**
- At branch level in the **Lao Red Cross**, more focus will be placed on decentralization, as well as staff and volunteer operational capacity
- Provide training in finance for **Vietnam Red Cross Society** staff and volunteers

- Focus on new ways of engaging volunteers, managing volunteer data, and improving volunteer safety and wellbeing

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the four National Societies in engagements with their respective governments on the legal base of the

National Societies. The IFRC also supports the development of the respective National Society development plans. The IFRC also provides technical support to the National Societies to improve their understanding and the application for funding support for National Society development from various stakeholders and avenues such as the [IFRC Capacity Building Fund](#).



## Humanitarian diplomacy

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

#### Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam

- Conduct communications workshops with the aim of improving the capacity of the National Societies to promote their work and build public trust
- Improve community awareness of the role and activities carried out by the National Societies
- Participate in webinars, events and other fora to promote the work of National Societies, and share good practices and learning
- Conduct campaigns to disseminate information about the fundamental principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

- Conduct effective advocacy with Government agencies about the interventions of the National Societies and advocate for assistance for vulnerable people

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the four National Societies in promoting their work and in increasing their overall visibility in their respective countries. It plays a key role in promoting the work of the National Societies in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam. The IFRC supports the National Societies by facilitating close collaboration with regional development partners in relevant meetings and forums. In 2023, the IFRC supported the National Societies in organizing key events such as the regional launch of the IFRC World Disasters Report, a webinar on equitable partnerships and the role of National Societies, two events on Early Warning For All and on climate change, among others.



## Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

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

#### Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam

- Develop a fraud and corruption policy for the respective National Societies
- Strengthen the capacities of the National Societies in planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (PMER)
- Conduct training for staff in upholding accountability principles
- Develop policies on child safeguarding and the [prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse](#)
- Strengthen the financial auditing systems of the National Societies and conduct training in finance for National

Society staff and volunteers to increase transparency and accountability

- The IFRC supports the National Societies in their effort to improve financial auditing as well as developing a fundraising policy
- Update the **Vietnam Red Cross Society's** regulations on project management and revise financial management guidelines

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the Mekong countries with their respective priorities under accountability and agility. It emphasizes integrity, transparency, and accountability as critical aspects of strong National Societies. In this connection, the IFRC helps

the National Societies develop their capacities in financial management, human resources, and in strengthening the

planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems to enhance accountability.

## THE IFRC NETWORK

### The IFRC

The IFRC supports the four National Societies of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam through its country cluster delegation based in Bangkok, Thailand. It supports the National Societies in enhancing their institutional capacities, responding to humanitarian needs in the event of disasters and crises, implementing long-term programmes, with accountability as a cross-cutting theme.

The IFRC also supports the National Societies in leveraging their auxiliary role and influencing regional, national and subnational processes to ensure more effective laws and policies for climate, disaster risk management, and emergency preparedness and response, including for public health emergencies. It also focuses support on engaging the military

and other security forces in disasters. This includes holding high-level discussions with National Society leadership to discuss civil-military relations trends and preparing them to engage effectively in civil-military relations, disseminating the relevant Movement handbook and developing an initial civil-military relations plan.

In recent years, the IFRC has supported the National Societies through a number of disaster response emergency fund (IFRC-DREF) and Emergency Appeal-supported operations related to storms and floods, drought and saltwater intrusion, typhoons, and other disasters. Through its global appeal, the IFRC also supported the National Societies in their response during the COVID-19 global pandemic



*National Society volunteers help in distributing relief supplies in flood-affected areas in south-eastern Laos. (Photo: IFRC)*

## IFRC membership coordination

IFRC coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situations and needs; agreeing common priorities; co-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, of links with development assistance, and of efforts to reinforce National Societies in their respective countries, including through their auxiliary role.

### Cambodia

Under the global Pilot Programmatic Partnership between the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) and IFRC, the Finnish Red Cross supports the National Society's efforts in disaster risk management, epidemic and pandemic preparedness, and risk communication and community engagement and accountability (CEA).

The **Italian Red Cross** provides support for the National Society's HIV-AIDS related interventions.

### Laos

The **Italian Red Cross** supports the National Society in HIV/AIDS prevention awareness in border areas with high population flows.

The **Japanese Red Cross Society** supports the National Society's first aid as well as emergency WASH programming by strengthening the capacities of staff and volunteers. The Japanese Red Cross Society will also contribute to mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) through first aid programming.

The **Swiss Red Cross** provides support to the National Society's interventions under disaster risk management, health, WASH, and National Society development. It has also provided support through emergency operations mainly on needs assessment, shelter, and essential household items.

### Viet Nam

The **Korean Red Cross** supports the Vietnam Red Cross Society in coordinating partnerships in youth and volunteering development.

The **Swiss Red Cross** supports the Vietnam Red Cross Society in resource mobilization.

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## Movement coordination

The Mekong countries National Societies work closely alongside the IFRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and participating National Societies. It organizes quarterly international Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement coordination meetings and an annual partners meeting. 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** has a regional presence in Bangkok and field offices in the north and south of Thailand. It provides its expertise in activities such as detention, restoring family links, helping vulnerable communities, and the promotion of international humanitarian law.

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## Coordination with other actors

In line with their auxiliary roles, all four National Societies engage extensively in their national coordination disaster risk management mechanisms. They also collaborate with ministries and departments on a broad range of activities and with public authorities at all levels. The IFRC engages with United Nations agencies based in Bangkok and is a permanent observer to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). The IFRC also engages formally within humanitarian coordination

platforms in Bangkok, and chairs the technical working groups on emergency preparedness, cash, protection, risk communication and community engagement.

With IFRC support, the Vietnam Red Cross Society leads the shelter cluster in disasters. The [Global Shelter Cluster](#) is an Inter-Agency Standing Committee coordination mechanism, and the IFRC has led it in disaster contexts since this approach was established in 2005. This critical mandate places the IFRC as a lead agency in the international humanitarian



coordination system. It leverages this leadership position in the Global Shelter Cluster for better coordination, stronger policies and standards across the sector, and better support for affected people in their recovery.

The IFRC in Bangkok supports the IFRC in Jakarta to engage with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on

programme priorities. It is also exploring closer collaboration with the private sector such as the Thai CP Group which is working across borders, supporting the Vietnam Red Cross Society and it has also expressed an interest in supporting the National Societies of Cambodia and Laos.



## 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 Cambodian Red Cross Society, Lao Red Cross, the Thai Red Cross Society, the Vietnam 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.

### Contact information

**Cambodian Red Cross Society**  
[redcross.org.kh](https://redcross.org.kh)

**Lao Red Cross**  
[Lao Red Cross | Facebook](#)

**Thai Red Cross Society**  
[redcross.or.th](https://redcross.or.th)

**Vietnam Red Cross Society**  
[redcross.org.vn/](https://redcross.org.vn/)

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