



BAPHALALI ESWATINI



2026-2028 IFRC network country plan

9 February 2026

In support of the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society



5
National Society branches



150
National Society local units



65
National Society staff



5,200
National Society volunteers

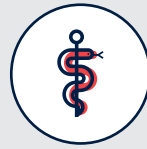
People to be reached in 2026



92,000
Climate and environment



1.3M
Disasters and crises



177,000
Health and wellbeing

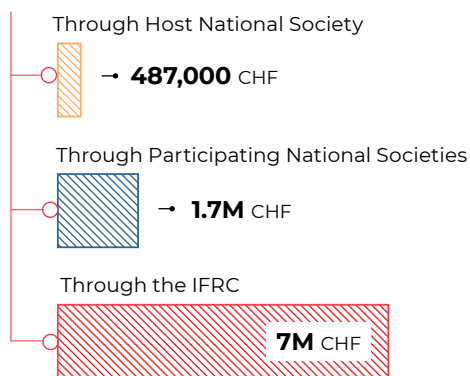


32,000
Values, power and inclusion

IFRC network Funding Requirements

2026

Total 9.2M CHF



2027

Total 5.3M CHF

2028

5.3M CHF

Projected funding requirements

Participating National Societies

British Red Cross

Finnish Red Cross

IFRC Appeal codes

Longer-term needs:

MAASZ003

Hazards



Drought



Floods



Storms



Food Insecurity



Social unrest

IFRC network multi-year focus

Longer term needs

- Disaster risk reduction
- Food security and livelihoods
- Climate change adaptation
 - Health
- Water, sanitation and hygiene

Capacity development

- Humanitarian diplomacy
 - Branch development
- Internal systems strengthening
 - Financial sustainability

Key country data links

INFORM Severity rating

Medium

INFORM Climate Change Risk Index

Low

Human Development Index rank

126

World Bank Population figure

1.2M

World Bank Population below poverty line

59%



Teams of the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society interacting with a farmer as part of the National Society's cash transfer programme (Photo: IFRC)

Detailed funding requirements

	2026		2027		2028	
	Host National Society	IFRC	Host National Society	IFRC	Host National Society	IFRC
Longer-term needs						
Climate and environment	25,000	1M	28,000	1M	35,000	1M
Disasters & crises	389,000	1M	400,000	1M	420,000	1M
Health & wellbeing	66,000	5M	70,000	1M	95,000	1M
Values, power & inclusion	7,000		40,000		50,000	
Enabling local actors			10,000		15,000	
Total	487,000	7M	548,000	3M	615,000	3M

Participating National Societies bilateral support

National Society	Year	Funding Requirement	Confirmed Funding	Climate and environment	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing	Migration and displacement	Values, power and inclusion	Enabling Functions
British Red Cross	2026	526,000	526,000		-				-
	2027	526,000	526,000						
	2028	526,000	526,000						
Finnish Red Cross	2026	1.2M	1.2M			1.2M			
	2027	1.2M	1.2M			1.2M			
	2028	1.2M	1.2M			1.2M			

NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

The **Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society** was founded in 1933 and was admitted into the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in its current form in 1979. In 1970, King Sobhuza II, the then patron, named it Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Society. In the same year, the Baphalali Swaziland Red Cross Act of Parliament legally recognized the National Society's role as an auxiliary to the public authorities to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need.

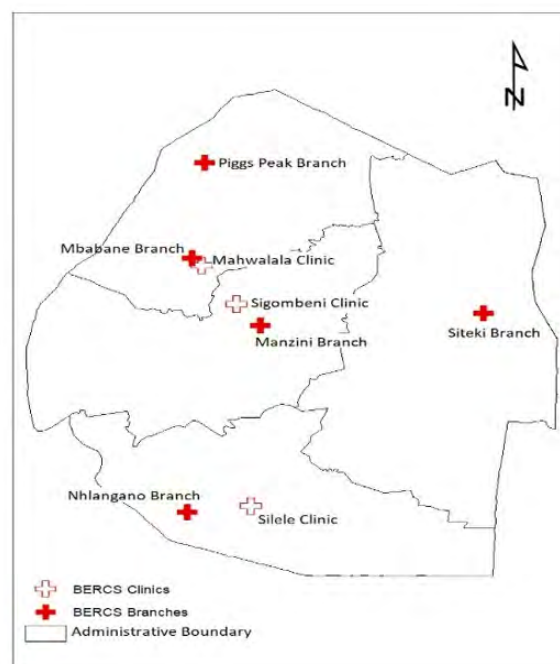
The National Society's mandate facilitates its cooperation with the Government and the administrative authorities, while it remains independent and guided by the fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society is governed by the national executive committee (board), which is elected by the General Assembly. The board has a total of 14 members, two of which are from the government of Eswatini. The National Society also has a management structure which provides support to the regional offices and oversees the general administration of the National Society while monitoring programme implementation.

The Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society continues to provide services to the public on disaster management, healthcare and first aid. These services are provided in collaboration with the deputy prime minister's office. The National Society provides its services to people in Eswatini through five branch offices and three health facilities.

The National Society's Strategic Plan for 2021–2025 is currently being updated and will continue to respond to the evolving needs of people in Eswatini through four broad strategic objectives: disaster management, health care and livelihoods, first aid and community engagement. As part of the ongoing update, several emerging themes have been highlighted from identified priority areas. The revised plan seeks to:

- Enhance governance structures within the National Society to improve decision-making and accountability
- Promote local resource mobilization and support income-generating initiatives, ensuring sustainability and community ownership
- Expand volunteer engagement, particularly by encouraging greater youth involvement
- Strengthen branch development and establish robust volunteer management systems
- Build capacity in disaster risk reduction, preparedness, and response, reinforcing the National Society's auxiliary role to the public authorities

To achieve these aims, the plan proposes key components such as implementing standardized training programmes across national, regional, constituency and community levels. It also emphasizes the continued development of financial management systems and the reinforcement of accountability mechanisms, ensuring that all efforts are both transparent and effective in meeting the needs of the people.



Map of Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society branches

The map does not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the IFRC or the National Society concerning the legal status of a territory or its authorities

JOINT SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Eswatini is a landlocked country bordering Mozambique to the northeast and South Africa to the east, west and south. It extends about 110 miles (175 kilometres) from north to south and about 80 miles (130km) from west to east. The country is home to major perennial rivers with their sources in South Africa. They flow through Eswatini to the Indian Ocean. Rainfall can be unreliable, and periods of drought occur in some of the regions. About 80 per cent of the precipitation falls during the summer months from October to March, usually in the form of thunderstorms and frontal rains, often bringing floods.

Eswatini has a young population of 1.2 million people, with a median age of 20.5 years. People aged 14 or younger comprise 34 per cent of the total population. Literacy rates are high at 88 per cent, and there is access to education across the country. According to the constitution of Eswatini, the King is a symbol of unity and the eternity of the Swazi nation. For the purposes of local administration, Eswatini is divided into four regions: Hhohho, Lubombo, Manzini and Shiselweni. Each has an administrator appointed by the King. Parallel to the government structure is the traditional system of the King and his advisors, traditional courts, and 59 traditional Tinkhundla chiefdoms.

The staple crop in Eswatini is maize. Other crops such as sorghum (mainly used for brewing beer), pumpkins, beans, peas and other vegetables are also grown. Crop yields are generally low, but the more progressive farmers produce quantities that match those in the large-scale commercial sector. The livestock population in Eswatini is relatively high because cattle are traditionally used as a store of wealth.

Eswatini's economy is projected to grow by 4.0% in 2026, following an estimated 5.0% growth in 2025, assuming successful implementation of public and private investment projects, moderate trade uncertainty, and progress on structural reforms⁵. Key growth drivers include infrastructure development, digital transformation, and expansion in sectors such as manufacturing, services, and agriculture.

Inflation is expected to moderate to 4.42% in 2026, down from a projected 4.92% in 2025⁶. However, price pressures remain a concern due to rising utility tariffs and wage adjustments. Food inflation has eased, but other components continue to exert upward pressure on the cost of living.

The unemployment rate, while slightly improving, remains high. It is forecasted to decline marginally to 33.6% in 2026, from 34.0% in 2025⁷. Youth unemployment and informal sector dominance continue to challenge inclusive growth and poverty reduction efforts.

Eswatini's public debt is expected to rise, with total debt commitments approaching 57.87% of GDP, nearing the IMF's recommended threshold of 60%⁸. Debt servicing consumes over 7% of government revenue, limiting fiscal space for development. The country remains heavily reliant on Southern African Customs Union (SACU) transfers, which exposes it to external revenue volatility.

Eswatini's economy is projected to grow by 4.0 per cent in 2026, following an estimated 5.0 per cent rise in 2025. This outlook relies on successful public and private investment, manageable trade uncertainty, and ongoing structural reforms. Growth will be driven by infrastructure development, digital transformation, and expansion across manufacturing, services, and agriculture.

Inflation is expected to ease, reaching 4.42 per cent in 2026 from a projected 4.92 per cent in 2025. Nonetheless, cost pressures persist due to rising utility tariffs and wage adjustments. While food inflation has moderated, other components continue to drive up the cost of living.

Unemployment remains a significant challenge, with a slight improvement forecasted: the rate is expected to decline to 33.6 per cent in 2026 from 34.0 per cent in 2025. High youth unemployment and dominance of the informal sector continue to hinder inclusive growth and poverty reduction initiatives.

Public debt is set to rise, with total commitments approaching 57.87 per cent of GDP, close to the IMF's recommended ceiling of 60 per cent. Debt servicing now absorbs over 7 per cent of government revenue, constraining fiscal space for development. Eswatini's reliance on Southern African Customs Union (SACU) transfers leaves the country vulnerable to external revenue shocks.

Persistent food insecurity manifests in chronic malnutrition with 26 per cent of children under 5 experiencing stunting. Eswatini is also facing a drought in the south and east of the country. There is currently no comprehensive social protection policy to address the needs of the extremely poor and chronically vulnerable, potentially condemning future generations to vicious cycles of malnutrition.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Climate and environment

Eswatini is prone to extreme weather events which have negative impacts on the most vulnerable people especially in the Lubombo and Shiselweni regions. These two regions are the poorest regions of the country and often marginalized. The country is prone to disasters such as drought, windstorms, hailstorms, fall armyworms and invasive species such as *chromolaena odorata*.

Climate change and variability are also evident in Eswatini in other forms, including hydrological disasters (droughts and storms), changes in rainfall regimes, including heavy rainfall events and extreme weather conditions. The country has recently been impacted by large variations in rainfall as well as recurring drought events. This is expected to have an increasingly adverse effect on agricultural production, particularly that of smallholder farmers. This is further exacerbating the country's existing challenges of food insecurity, affecting its ability to attain development goals. According to the IPC Acute Food Insecurity Analysis released in July 2025, Eswatini is projected to face worsening food insecurity during the period October 2025 to March 2026. About 259,000 people (approximately 21 per cent of the population) are expected to be in IPC Phase 3 or above (Crisis or worse), marking a significant increase from 193,000 people in the previous period (June–September 2025). Land degradation and resulting erosion is also further exacerbated by heavy rains, increasing vulnerability for more than 70 per cent of the population that is reliant upon the agricultural sector.

Eswatini government has emphasized its priority for climate change which is to mitigate the impacts of climate change through the strengthening and implementation of the National Adaptation Strategy combined with the National Resilience Strategy. These strategies work in complementarity with the NDC, also known as the National Climate Action Plan which was launched in May 2023. The successful roll out of the NDC will enhance climate action and meet the goals of the Paris Agreement, covering 12 priority areas: agriculture, health, water, ecosystems and biodiversity, infrastructure, energy, waste, industry, forestry, gender, youth and disaster risk reduction.

Eswatini launched a national tree planting campaign entitled Hlanyela Sihlahla, Wonge Imvelo (Plant a Tree and Save the Environment). The campaign aims to plant 10 million trees of indigenous and high-value species in Eswatini over the next five years, to help mitigate the effects of climate change. The tree planting will support improved livelihoods, reduce

land degradation, improve nature conservation, increase biodiversity, build resilience to climate change in the long run.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society aims to actively support the reduction and adaptation to the rising and evolving risks from the climate and environmental crises by participating in environmentally sustainable practices that contribute to mitigation of risks associated with climate change. Through its programmes it will strengthen community resilience to climate change and disasters by integrating Anticipatory Action into the disaster risk management cycle. The National Society also works to incorporate climate risks into its ongoing programmes and operations by improving preparedness and early warning systems to address the increasing intensity of disasters such as floods and storms. Additionally, the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society seeks to expand partnerships with development organizations to further strengthen climate change mitigation efforts and contribute to global initiatives.

Planned activities in 2026

- Set up climate focal points and climate working groups
- Carry out national climate risk assessments and climate-smart screening
- Conduct awareness raising sessions and activities for community, including school-based activities on adapting to and reducing climate-related risks
- Design and implement nature-based solutions
- Design and implement interventions around climate-smart agriculture and livelihoods
- Develop its environment policy
- Promote green logistics and supply chain practices
- Pilot new initiatives such as address environmental issues household energy and clean cooking; community waste management and recycling; tree planting and care; and carbon market projects
- Launch campaigns to mobilize climate change mitigation efforts and influence behaviour change

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society in systematically integrating climate change adaptation and mitigation measures to reduce the impact of climate change while aligning short- and long-term projects, programmes and operations. It provides training for National Society staff and volunteers on community engagement, with a focus on behaviour change approaches for climate adaptation. It assists the National Society in advancing community-driven solutions to address challenges, foster positive behaviours and promote climate action.

The IFRC will provide the National Society with technical support in conducting national climate risk assessments, implementing climate-smart screening and developing multi-year climate strategies, including setting targets for the climate and environment charter. It will also help strengthen the National Society's capacity to build strategic partnerships to expand environmental initiatives, including planting and maintaining multipurpose trees. The IFRC will also continue supporting the National Society to expand its forecast-based financing approach, which will initiate activities taking into consideration extreme weather events such as droughts. It will identify relevant environmental screening tools, such as the Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool (NEAT+), along with training and piloting.



Disasters and crises

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

Eswatini is prone to disasters and crises of different magnitudes. While windstorms and hailstorms are the most commonly occurring natural hazards, droughts affect the highest number of people severely. Drought not only destroys crops but also leads to livestock death. Eswatini also experiences heavy storms every year, usually starting in September. The main impact of these events is on housing, damaging or destroying roofs and other possessions. In recent years, Eswatini has experienced several disasters that have contributed to the economic challenges currently faced by the country.

Food insecurity continues to be a concern. According to the [IPC Acute Food Security Analysis](#) for the projected period (October 2024 to March 2025), an estimated 270,000 people are classified in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and 34,000 are in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency). This mostly includes resource-poor vulnerable households faced mainly with chronic food insecurity.

The impacts of climate-related disasters extend to public health. Droughts and food insecurity can exacerbate existing health issues, particularly among vulnerable populations such as women and children. Additionally, the stress on water resources can lead to sanitation challenges, increasing the risk of waterborne diseases. These disasters have hindered the country's ability to effectively address the requirements of its citizens, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

The Government enacted the Disaster Management Act in 2006 and the Disaster Management Policy in 2010, forming a legal framework for disaster risk reduction in the country. The National Disaster Management Agency's strategic plan aims for a substantial reduction in disaster risk and loss, by harnessing the power of coordination and cooperation.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society aims to strengthen community-based disaster risk reduction initiatives by strengthening capacities of community members to withstand, adapt to and recover from adverse socio-economic and climate-induced events. It seeks to increase the resilience of communities and institutions by fostering disaster preparedness initiatives and promoting sustainable practices in disaster risk reduction. The National Society will also focus on putting a rapid, effective and well-coordinated emergency response in place to save lives and protect property. Additionally, it will optimize the coordination of resources and services during disaster response and recovery phases. Its high-level objectives include to

- Build resilience through the distribution of food, cash transfers, health and nutrition and strengthening community assets
- Expand disaster law capacity and leadership to effectively respond to the wide spectrum of evolving crises thereby strengthening its auxiliary role and disaster risk management
- Collaborate with the Government on Zero Hunger and other national plans

Planned activities in 2026

- Support and train disaster management committees to scale up community-led disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities in urban and rural areas, including enhanced vulnerability and capacity assessments (eVCA)
- Develop a strategic plan for reducing disaster risk (including climate risk), particularly in high-risk areas, with

identified priority areas for action, aligned with existing/ planned projects

- Raise awareness on disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness via radio, theatre and other means
- Establish community early warning systems (CEWS), ensuring effective linkages with the national early warning system
- Provision of shelter assistance through conditional [cash and voucher assistance](#) (CVA)
- Provide training to the staff and volunteers on forming regional response teams (RRT)
- Provide timely response to disaster affected communities through [cash and voucher assistance](#)
- Improve the capacity of construction workers through community-level training
- Provide food security and livelihoods (FSL) safety nets to support basic needs, prevent asset depletion and protect livelihoods of vulnerable low-income households

- Undertake advocacy activities to engage authorities in the development and adoption of tripartite pre-disaster agreements

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society in strengthening its capacity for preparedness and readiness, enabling it to anticipate and respond to crises in a timely, appropriate and accountable manner. It will provide access to essential tools and resources for effective crisis and disaster response while assisting in risk identification, addressing gaps in response systems and applying emergency response tools to meet operational needs. This includes support for disaster response emergency funds and emergency appeal capacity strengthening, surge tools and planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) standardization. It offers technical assistance to the National Society across all pillars of [Preparedness for Effective Response](#) (PER) and the implementation of its plan of action. Additionally, it provides expertise and support in developing anticipatory action systems, including forecast analysis, contingency planning and [early warning and early action](#) measures.



Volunteers of the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society conducting a post-distribution monitoring survey in Nkilongo, Lubombo region (Photo: IFRC)



In Eswatini, the main causes of morbidity and mortality are lower respiratory infections, diabetes, tuberculosis and diarrhoeal diseases. The risk factors that drive most morbidities, disabilities and death are unsafe sex, malnutrition, dietary risk, water, insufficient sanitation and hygiene and intimate partner violence. The under-five mortality rate stands at 47 deaths per 1,000 live births, while the infant mortality rate is currently 37 children per 1,000 live births.

Eswatini is battling with conditions such as tuberculosis and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs). In Eswatini, approximately 37 per cent of hospital beds are occupied by individuals grappling with these health conditions. Most prominent NCDs are cardiovascular disease (CVD), type-2 diabetes, cancer, and chronic obstructive respiratory diseases. The Government has a running NCD programme aimed at addressing these threats.

Eswatini has the highest HIV prevalence globally with a prevalence rate of 27 per cent among 15- to 59-year-olds. Women are disproportionately affected, with 120,000 (63.16 per cent) out of the 190,000 adults living with HIV being women. New HIV infections among young women aged 15–24 years were more than four times higher than those among young men.

Eswatini faces a growing mental health crisis, with up to one in three individuals likely to experience a mental health disorder during their lifetime. The country's mental health system is under-resourced, with limited access to care, especially in rural areas. Contributing factors include high levels of poverty, trauma, gender-based violence and a significant HIV burden, all of which increase vulnerability to conditions such as depression, anxiety and PTSD. Mental health services remain underdeveloped, with stigma and limited infrastructure posing barriers to care.

The country also continues to grapple with significant nutrition challenges, particularly among children under five. Chronic malnutrition, evidenced by stunting, affects approximately 25 per cent of children in this age group, with the highest rates found in the Lubombo and Shiselweni regions. Acute malnutrition and underweight prevalence remain persistent. The country's nutrition landscape is further complicated by climate shocks such as droughts, which have disrupted food production and increased food insecurity. Despite efforts to roll out integrated management of acute malnutrition and promote infant and young child feeding practices, multisectoral coordination remains weak.

Eswatini is trying its best to meet the minimum recommended distance that patients need to travel when they seek medical assistance in health facilities. In Eswatini, some people still travel more than 15–20 kilometres to the nearest health facility, yet the recommended maximum distance is 5 kilometres. In

addition to this challenge, the country is financially unable to provide adequate drugs and medication in these facilities. Staffing is also an issue, as the country is a long way from matching the recommended patient to health worker ratio.

There is a low level of investment, coordination and partnerships in the health sector, in terms of clean water, basic toilets and good hygiene practices. Influencing changes in behaviour towards good hygiene practices, while ending open defecation, also remains a national challenge. There is a clear discrepancy in access to water, sanitation and hygiene between rural communities, urban areas and the growing informal settlements around urban centres.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society seeks to strengthen community health systems by integrating its volunteers into primary health care services. It aims to provide differentiated models of care by incorporating HIV and non-communicable disease management at the community level. The National Society works to protect and improve community health and well-being by ensuring access to sustainable, affordable, appropriate and quality health services across all stages of life. It also seeks to expand access to affordable, appropriate and environmentally sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services for communities at risk from pandemics and epidemics.

Planned activities in 2026

- Develop a health strategy and participate in public health forums such as nutrition national forum and public health emergency operations centre
 - Advocate for early, coordinated and sustained mental health and psychosocial support in response to critical events
 - Conduct outreach services, household visits and door-to-door health promotion activities
 - Conduct community assessments using and train communities to map health risks and service providers
 - Establish referral pathways for sexual and gender-based violence survivors
 - Train volunteers in community-based surveillance systems and provide First Aid and mental health and psychosocial support training for staff and volunteers
 - Carry out water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) preparedness activities, including capacity building of technicians and volunteers
 - Raise awareness on menstrual hygiene management and deliver WASH services in rural and urban areas
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Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society in strengthening community health resilience and care by addressing immunization, non-communicable diseases and the prevention and control of major disease threats such as HIV, tuberculosis and malaria. It will provide technical support



Migration and displacement

Eswatini's migration landscape is shaped by a complex interplay of socio-economic, historical, and regional dynamics. The country experiences both emigration and immigration, with significant internal migration driven by urbanization and economic disparities. Labour migration to South Africa has historically been a dominant trend, with many Swazis seeking employment opportunities in mining and agriculture. Conversely, Eswatini also hosts migrants from neighbouring countries, particularly Mozambique, often for work or refuge. The country faces challenges in managing irregular migration and human trafficking, which are exacerbated by porous borders and limited enforcement capacity.

Migration governance in Eswatini is evolving, with efforts to strengthen institutional coordination and data systems. The government, supported by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), has developed its first Migration Profile, which highlights gaps in migration data and policy coherence. The Migration Governance Indicators (MGI) assessment shows that Eswatini has made progress in areas such as migrant rights and partnerships but still needs to improve its whole-of-government approach and crisis mobility planning.

Migration is increasingly recognized as a development issue, with remittances and diaspora engagement seen as potential drivers of national growth. However, the lack of disaggregated and timely data remains a barrier to effective policymaking.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society will focus on supporting migrants and displaced persons and ensure that they receive dignified services and access to assistance and protection. The National Society will continue to assist with Restoring Family Links activities such as providing telephonic service to migrants in the camp, which enables people to communicate with their families back home on quarterly basis. The National Society aims to ensure that essential needs of displaced persons are met through assistance and protection services, including through humanitarian service points (HSPs).

in training of trainers in non-communicable diseases, mental health and psychosocial support, and pandemic and epidemic preparedness. The IFRC will also support the National Society in strengthening community action to reduce risks and respond to health emergencies arising from disasters, epidemics, technological accidents or population movement.

Planned activities in 2026

- Collaborate with Ministry of Home Affairs and UN agencies in provision of essential services to asylum seekers and migrant workers in vulnerable situations
- Strengthen the capacity of National Society staff and volunteers to respond effectively to the needs of migrants and displaced people

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC is committed to providing longer-term support to migrants and displaced people in Eswatini and will assist in addressing the existing challenges to improve their lives. The IFRC will support the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society to strengthen the implementation of the integrated approach in responding to the needs of the migrants and displaced populations. It will support the National Society in advocating for the rights of migrants and displaced people through strengthening collaborations and working with governments and other stakeholders to ensure that their rights are respected and protected. It will also work to strengthen the capacity of the National Society to respond to the needs of migrants and displaced people through training, technical assistance, and funding.

The **British Red Cross** will be supporting the National Society to ensure that migrants and displaced people are given the necessary support by restoring family links (RFL) and that their other needs are met.

Under wider Movement support **the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC)** will provide support to the National Society in providing RFL services.



Values, power and inclusion

Eswatini has made progress in its efforts towards 'education for all' by introducing free primary education in 2010, which was reinforced in the Free Primary Education Act of 2010. Primary school attendance is 95 per cent with no gender, rural and urban differences. However, school completion rate declines as the level of education increases. The primary school completion rate stands at 80 per cent, the lower secondary school completion rate is 57 per cent, and the completion rate for higher secondary school is 37 per cent. On the other hand, less than half (46 per cent) of children 3-6 years are developmentally on track in Eswatini.

In Eswatini, 1.16 million people live with disabilities, with women making up 58 per cent and men 42 per cent. Vision impairment is the most common disability, affecting 32.6 per cent of persons with disabilities, followed by mobility challenges. Difficulties in communication are the least prevalent, affecting 4.7 per cent. The vast majority—82 per cent—of persons with disabilities reside in rural areas, reflecting the country's predominantly rural population, while 18 per cent live in urban areas. Rural women have the highest prevalence of disability, at 17.4 per cent.

Women and girls with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, often due to both their heightened vulnerability and the perception that perpetrators are unlikely to face prosecution. Access to justice remains a significant challenge for women with disabilities, who encounter systemic barriers in seeking legal redress. Additionally, women with disabilities are often marginalized in both gender-focused and disability advocacy initiatives, limiting their representation and participation in critical programs and policies.

Violence in Eswatini affects people across all demographics and can occur in homes, communities and workplaces. The 2022 Eswatini Violence Against Children and Youth Survey found that 25.5 per cent of females and 31.7 per cent of males aged 13-24 have experienced some form of violence in their lifetime. Sexual violence disproportionately affects females, with 8.1 per cent reporting lifetime experiences compared to 3.3 per cent of males. Among them, 5.5 per cent of females and 2.1 per cent of males experienced sexual violence during childhood. While sexual violence is more prevalent among females, males are significantly more affected by physical violence, with 23.2 per cent reporting experiences compared to 10.5 per cent of females. Physical violence by peers is nearly five times more common among males than females.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society seeks to foster positive change in communities by promoting a deeper understanding, ownership and practical application of

humanitarian values and fundamental principles, with a particular focus on improving young people's knowledge, skills and behaviour. It aims to ensure equitable access to quality education and healthcare for all boys and girls affected by disasters, crises or displacement. The National Society also aims to implement a comprehensive strategy on Protection, Gender and Inclusion. It will continue to advocate for the collection of disaggregated data on persons with disabilities across all programmes.

Additionally, the National Society will focus on implementing interventions for the creation of a violence-free environment in Eswatini, with the overall goal to reduce all forms of violence in the country by 50 per cent by 2027.

Planned activities in 2026

- Engage and collaborate with education authorities and other relevant stakeholders
- Develop and implement quality humanitarian education programmes, ensuring safeguarding and Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) considerations are included
- Conduct PGI organizational assessments using the revised PGI organizational assessment toolkit
- Conduct training on Red Cross humanitarian values and fundamental principles for volunteers and communities
- Strengthen and adapt referral systems to ensure safe support for all gender identities, including survivors of sexual and gender-based violence
- Roll out and monitor the use of PGI minimum standards emergencies toolkit
- Establish a mechanism to develop and deploy PGI rapid responders

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society to adopt and implement Community Engagement and Accountability and Protection, Gender and Inclusion minimum standards in emergencies, ensuring participatory approaches that align humanitarian assistance with community preferences, prioritize safety and target those most in need based on vulnerability analysis. It will also support the development and implementation of procedures for investigating and addressing concerns related to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and child safeguarding, including enhancing investigation capacity, clarifying and promoting reporting mechanisms and strengthening referral systems. Support for these interventions will also be provided by the British Red Cross.

ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS

The Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society is committed to pursue its institutional strengthening and has carried out the self-assessment part of the Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) process in 2017. The self-assessment part of the process is intended to capture the strengths and weaknesses of National Societies as a whole in relation to a wide range of organizational capacities. The National Society is also committed to the preparedness for effective response (PER) process and is at 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 its preparedness and response mechanism, and ultimately take necessary action to improve it. The IFRC is committed to support the National Society's institutional strengthening in line with its priorities.



Key Institutional Indicators

The National Society has put in place the following:

- Strategy to strengthen its auxiliary role
- National Society development plan
- Youth engagement strategies
- Health, accident and death compensation for volunteers
- Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) policy
- PSEA Action Plan
- Digital transformation roadmap
- Data management system



Strategic and operational coordination

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Strengthen its coordination and collaboration with key national and sub-national stakeholders including authorities, civil society, the private sector and research institutions
- Strategically position itself through strengthened engagements with partners to work collectively on the key challenges facing communities

- Develop a resource mobilization plan of action
- Continue to leverage partnerships to advocate and explore funding opportunities to undertake emergency and development interventions in Eswatini

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will work with the National Society to build its capacity to develop deeper, more diverse, and innovative strategic partnerships which could lead to funding opportunities.



National Society development

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Strengthen its financial sustainability through investment and leadership engagement in the three pillars of financial sustainability
- Focus on strengthening its commercial first aid and ambulance services

- Focus on the development of a branch development framework
- Implement its core cost policy
- Strengthen volunteer learning and peer-to-peer exchange opportunities
- Develop standards for volunteer safety, security and wellbeing

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will continue to provide technical and financial support to the National Society to encourage financial sustainability initiatives and will support components such as the youth programming, volunteering and core cost policies

and Statutes review along with transformational leadership. The IFRC will work with the National Society to identify development priorities and help with branch development and ensure that financial resources are used effectively by ensuring adherence to the budget.



Humanitarian diplomacy

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Develop a perception survey of its activities and impact
- Organize regular meetings at a senior level with relevant ministries and governmental departments, both for advocacy and profiling purposes

- Map critical stakeholders to build relationships with and influence

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will provide the National Society with technical support to work closely with public authorities in executing its auxiliary role. It will also work with the National Society to enhance its visibility and influence policy.



Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Review and strengthen safeguarding mechanisms
- Develop a Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) strategy and create a CEA performance measurement framework
- Adopt, implement and monitor strategies and action plans to prevent fraud and corruption
- Rollout its risk management policy through an implementation plan for risk management policy and framework

- Focus on digital transformation

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC support to the National Society to undertake planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) initiatives that encompass innovative monitoring and evaluation of projects, along with advocacy for information management capacity and digitalization of monitoring and evaluation systems. It will also support the National Society to enhance digital transformation initiatives throughout its programmes and operations.



Teams of the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society overseeing the solar-powered water solutions project in Gamula, which provides reliable water for homes, agriculture and livestock (Photo: IFRC)

THE IFRC NETWORK

The IFRC

The IFRC's Southern Africa country cluster delegation, with an office based in South Africa since 2010, currently works with five National Societies in the region, namely, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa. The IFRC support to the

Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society centres on strategic and operational coordination, National Society development and humanitarian diplomacy, including strengthening its auxiliary role. It also supports accountability as a cross-cutting theme.

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 National Society is working closely with the following in-country participating National Societies in the following thematic areas:

The **British Red Cross** provides support to the National Society with forecast-based financing, food security and livelihoods, water, sanitation and hygiene and National Society development.

The **Finnish Red Cross** maintains an office at the National Society's headquarters in Mbabane and has been providing support in food security, health, community resilience and organizational development since 2001. The support has had a strong focus on food security and HIV/AIDS projects funded by DG DEVCO, drought relief, and livelihoods, nutrition and organizational development funded by Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Movement coordination

The Baphalali Eswatini 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 provides support to the National Society in restoring family links, addressing civil unrest and volunteer and staff capacity building. It also provides support to the National Society with [Safer Access](#) training to address civil unrest.

Coordination with other actors

In line with its auxiliary role, all humanitarian interventions of the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society are coordinated with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister through the Disaster Management Department and National Drought Management Authority. In times of emergencies, the National Drought Management Authority coordinates all interventions by humanitarian agencies with support from other UN agencies through the Command-and-Control Centre.

The National Drought Management Authority has several sectoral technical working groups focused on specific areas, and the National Society has a representation in the following: food security, agriculture and livelihoods, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, social protection, security and education. Close coordination with relevant authorities is ensured at all levels, from constituency to regional and national levels. The National Society has a permanent seat on local disaster management committees. At regional level, the National Drought Management Authority and the National Society's technical officers work together in assessments, response and other support areas. In addition, the National Society engages traditional leadership systems at community level.

Epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response activities are closely coordinated with the Ministry of Health and development partners such as the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

For food security and livelihoods, the National Society sustains a constant operational dialogue with the World Food Programme, which has implemented a significant assistance intervention in Eswatini. Coordination in terms of geographical locations, delivery approaches, feedback and complaint mechanisms, and joint targeting and monitoring tools between the Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society and World Food Programme have been ongoing since 2016.

Another key organization with which the National Society will continue close coordination is World Vision, which plays an important role across the country – particularly in Shiselweni – in supporting longer-term livelihood protection and water, sanitation and hygiene initiatives for communities affected by drought.

The Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society is also working in partnership with Africa Centre for Diseases Control (CDC) and LAF (LARS Amundsen Foundation), local corporates, individuals and the government of the Kingdom of Eswatini. Some of these partners provide both financial and technical support to the National Society. The National Society is also part of the food security cluster and the disaster risk management cluster, under the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), where plans and updates are shared.



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 16 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.

About the plan

This plan reflects the priorities of the host National Society, the IFRC and National Societies providing international support, for 2026 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.

Explanatory note on funding requirements and definitions

- The total funding requirements show what the IFRC network seeks to raise for the given year through different channels: funding through the IFRC, through participating National Societies as bilateral support, and through the host National Society from non-IFRC network sources. All figures should include the administrative and operational costs of the different entities
- Host National Society funding requirements not coming from IFRC network sources can comprise a variety of sources, as demonstrated when reporting on income in the [IFRC network databank](#)
- Participating National Society funding requirements for bilateral support are those validated by respective headquarters, and often represent mainly secured funding
- IFRC funding requirements comprise both what is sourced from the IFRC core budget and what is sought through emergency and thematic funding. This includes participating National Societies' multilateral support through IFRC, and all other IFRC sources of funding
- Figures for the years beyond 2026 most often represent partial requirements that are known at time of publication. Many National Societies have annual internal approval processes for funding requirements, and lower figures do not mean a decrease in funding requirements in future years
- Missing data and breakdowns: data may not be available from all IFRC network members for funding requirements. This may lead to inconsistencies across different reporting tools as well as potential under-estimation of the efforts led by all
- Reporting bias: the data informing this Federation-wide overview is self-reported by each National Society (or its designated support entity) which is the owner and gatekeeper, and responsible for accuracy and updating. IFRC tries to triangulate the data provided by the National Societies with previous data and other data in the public domain
- **Definitions:**
 - » **Local units:** ALL subdivisions of a National Society that coordinate and deliver services to people. These include ALL levels (provincial, state, city, district branches, sections or chapters, headquarters, and regional and intermediate offices, as well as community-based units)
 - » **Branches:** A Branch has its roles, responsibilities and relationship with the National Headquarters defined through the National Society's Statutes, including the level of autonomy given, especially in the area of its legal status, mobilising local resources and building local partnerships, and the decisions it makes. It has a local-level decision-making mechanism through its Branch members, board and volunteers, equally defined through the National Society's Statutes

Additional information

- [IFRC network country plans](#) • [All plans and reports](#)
- Data on National Societies on [IFRC Network Databank](#)
- Live data on active emergency operations on [IFRC GO platform](#)
- Live data on [IFRC-Disaster Response Emergency Fund Response and Anticipatory pillars](#)
- [Evaluations and research bank](#) • [Donor response reports](#)

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