



UGANDA

2026-2028 IFRC network country plan



27 January 2026

In support of the Uganda Red Cross Society



51

National Society branches



1

National Society local units



244

National Society staff



16,687

National Society volunteers

People to be reached in 2026



600,000

Ongoing emergency operations



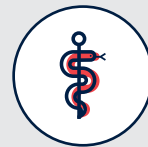
700,000

Climate and environment



900,000

Disasters and crises



1.1M

Health and wellbeing



1M

Migration and displacement



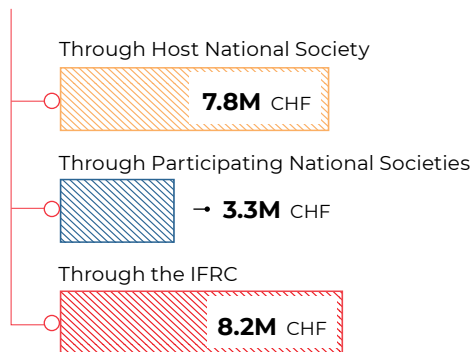
550,000

Values, power and inclusion

IFRC network Funding Requirements

2026

Total 19.3M CHF



2027

Total 1.6M CHF

2028

395,000 CHF

Projected funding requirements

Participating National Societies

- Austrian Red Cross
- Belgian Red Cross
- Canadian Red Cross*
- German Red Cross
- Japanese Red Cross Society*
- Red Cross of Monaco*
- The Netherlands Red Cross
- Norwegian Red Cross*

IFRC Appeal codes

Emergency Appeals:

MDRS1001 (MDRUG051)

Sudan Crisis Regional Population Movement

MDRS1003 (MDRUG052)

African Regional Mpox Epidemic

MDRUG055

Uganda: Ebola Virus Disease

Longer-term needs:

MAAUG002

*National Societies which have contributed only multilaterally through the IFRC in 2025.

Hazards



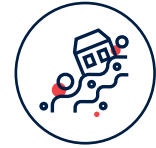
Disease outbreak



Population Movement



Floods



Landslides

IFRC network multi-year focus

Emergency response

- Population movement
- Disease outbreak

Longer term needs

- Disaster risk management
- Protracted displacement
- Epidemic preparedness and response
- Climate change adaptation

Capacity development

- Branch development
- Volunteer management
- Internal system strengthening
- Digital transformation

Key country data links

INFORM Severity rating

High

INFORM Climate Change Risk Index

High

Human Development Index rank

157

World Bank Population figure

50M

World Bank Population below poverty line

20%



Volunteers of the Uganda Red Cross Society administering rabies vaccine to dogs under the Community Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness Programme (Photo: IFRC)

Detailed funding requirements

2026

IFRC

HNS

Ongoing emergencies

NA *The funding requirements for MDRS1001 (MDRUG051), MDRS1003 (MDRUG052) and MDRUG055 are not available*

Longer-term needs

Climate and environment	1.3M	1M
Disasters & crises	571,000	1M
Health & wellbeing	710,000	2.5M
Migration & displacement	3.3M	1M
Values, power & inclusion	100,000	300,000

Enabling local actors

2.3M 2M

Total

8.2M

7.8M

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
Austrian Red Cross	2026	500,000	500,000			-	200,000	300,000	-
	2027	300,000	300,000					300,000	
	2028	200,000	200,000					200,000	
Belgian Red Cross	2026	786,000	786,000		-			-	
	2027	686,000	686,000						
German Red Cross	2026	857,000				507,000	350,000		
Netherlands Red Cross	2026	1.1M		-	439,000	-	-		697,000
	2027	590,000							590,000
	2028	195,000							195,000

See back page for explanatory note on funding requirements

NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

The **Uganda Red Cross Society** was established in 1964 and was admitted to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1965. The National Society's auxiliary role to public authorities is enshrined in the 'National Policy for Disaster Preparedness and Management' of 2010. The National Society has a total of 51 branches across the country which covers at least two districts, 16,687 volunteers and 244 National Society staff.

The scope of the National Society's activities has significantly increased over time. The National Society works with the Government of Uganda, and partners with members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, private and civil society organizations, including corporate entities, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations.

The Uganda Red Cross Society has defined governance and management structures at national and branch levels. Departments cover its main programmatic areas of disaster risk management, and health and social services, as well as organizational development. It has various support units for planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER), finance and accounts, supply chain management, internal audit, human resources and administration, IT, public relations and resource mobilization.

The National Society's Strategic Plan 2021-2025 focused on four main objectives:

- To be a well-functioning and responsive National Society
- To build sustainable volunteer, membership and branch structures
- To create sustainable partnerships and adequate resources for core services and institutional sustainability
- To improve the resilience and well-being of communities

The Strategic Plan provided a platform for implementing the international development agenda in Uganda – including sustainable development goals (SDGs)– along with other priorities of the National Society. The Uganda Red Cross Society is preparing to commence the implementation of its new Strategic Plan for the period 2026–2030. This upcoming plan builds on the achievements of the Strategic Plan (2021–2025).

The Uganda Red Cross Society continues to enhance its preparedness and response capacity to respond to ongoing and new emergencies. It seeks to develop a more strategic and planned approach to ensure effective planning and engagement with communities, followed up by a well-designed response supported by enhanced internal systems and processes.

In 2024, the National Society reached 97,000 people with its disaster response and early recovery programmes.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION

JOINT SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Uganda is a landlocked country in east Africa that is bordered to the east by Kenya, to the north by South Sudan, to the west by the Democratic Republic of Congo, to the southwest by Rwanda and to the south by Tanzania. The southern part of the country includes a substantial portion of Lake Victoria, shared with Kenya and Tanzania. Uganda is in the African Great Lakes region and lies within the Nile basin. The country has a varied but generally modified equatorial climate. The population of Uganda as of 2025 is 51.4 million, an increase of 2.8 per cent from 2024.

The country's north and northeast lag behind developmentally than the rest of the country because of long-term conflict (the Ugandan Bush War 1981-1986 and more than 20 years of fighting between the Lord's Resistance Army and Ugandan government forces), ongoing inter-communal violence and periodic natural disasters.

According to the World Bank, Uganda's economy grew by 6.3 per cent in FY2024/2025, up from 6.1 per cent the previous year, driven by strong household consumption, accelerated government spending, and robust investment growth. This performance reflects resilience despite global economic headwinds, geopolitical tensions, and regional conflicts. Inflation remained low at 3.5 per cent, supported by favourable food supply conditions, stable commodity prices and prudent monetary policy.

Food crop price growth continued to moderate and overall food inflation was contained at around 3.5 per cent by December 2025, compared to sharp spikes in previous years.

Uganda is exposed to a range of natural hazards aggravated by climate change and recurring disasters and disease outbreaks present significant threats to the population. Uganda also hosts approximately 1.97 million refugees and asylum seekers as of December 2025, making it the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa and among the top globally. The majority originate from South Sudan (around 55 per cent) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (about 31 per cent), with smaller numbers from Sudan, Burundi, Somalia and Eritrea. Uganda continues to receive new arrivals due

to ongoing conflicts in neighbouring countries. Since January 2022, cumulative arrivals have exceeded 335,000, and in 2025 alone, tens of thousands more entered, primarily from South Sudan, DRC and Sudan. Women and children constitute nearly 78 per cent of the refugee population and most refugees live in settlements across northern and western Uganda.

The Fourth National Development Plan (NDP IV, 2025/26 –2029/30) outlines Uganda's approach to advancing socio-economic transformation through priorities such as industrialization, value addition, export growth, and inclusive development, aligning with the country's long-term Vision 2040.

ONGOING EMERGENCY RESPONSE

For real-time information on emergencies, see [IFRC Go page: Uganda](#)

1.

Emergency Appeal name	Africa Regional Mpox Epidemic
IFRC Emergency Appeal code	MDRS1003 (MGRUG052)
People affected	People affected/at risk: 300 million people
People to be assisted	30 million people
Duration	16 months (20 August 2024 to 31 March 2026)
Funding requirements	Total IFRC funding requirement through the Appeal: CHF 30 million Total Federation-wide funding requirements: CHF 40 million
Link to Emergency Appeal	Africa – Regional Mpox Epidemic
Link to Operational Strategy	Operational Strategy
Link to Operational update	Operational Update No. 4

In 2024, Mpox cases and deaths surged significantly in Africa, with over 17,000 cases and 500 deaths reported across 12 countries, marking a sharp increase from 2023. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) remains the epicentre, contributing 92 per cent of cases, with transmission spreading across all its provinces and into neighbouring Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya. Non-endemic countries such as South Africa have also reported cases, while endemic regions, including Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire, continue to see expanding outbreaks. The emergence of Clades 1a, 1b and 2 in disparate areas highlights the heightened risk, prompting organizations such as the Africa CDC, WHO and the IFRC to declare the outbreak a public emergency. Red Cross Red Crescent Societies are working closely with governments to provide community-based surveillance, risk communication and community engagement and vaccination support to mitigate the spread and reduce mortality.

Short description of the emergency operational strategy

The regional Mpox emergency appeal aims to assist National Societies in preparing for and responding to the Mpox epidemic. The strategy includes scaling up health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, community engagement and accountability (CEA) and addressing socio-economic impacts. The operation will be guided by a risk-based approach and regional coordination, prioritizing preparedness, readiness and response. The Uganda Red Cross Society will receive support to develop country-specific response plan, enhance community-based advocacy and mitigate the spread of the virus, particularly in areas with imported cases or established transmission. The operation will also target vulnerable populations, including marginalized and immunocompromised groups, with a focus on protection, gender and inclusion. The highlights of the assistance are:

Integrated assistance

Affected people and families are provided with a safety net scheme, including multipurpose cash to meet immediate needs and cover basic necessities while recovering from Mpox infections. Affected people who have lost their livelihoods due to Mpox are aided in reintegrating into the labour market through skills enhancement and diversification.

Health and care, including water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)

Affected people are provided with community-based surveillance to detect and actively find suspected Mpox cases, feeding into existing surveillance systems. Clinical care pathways for screening, triage, isolation, testing and assessment are identified through national plans and guidelines, ensuring awareness among clinical facilities. Communities are engaged on Mpox transmission, symptoms and preventive actions. Health services ensure individuals with Mpox symptoms seek care, with support for isolation and referral. Vaccination efforts are supported through community engagement. WASH facilities are improved in health centres, with ongoing hygiene promotion to reduce transmission.

Cross-cutting approaches: the operational strategy integrates **community engagement and accountability (CEA)** and **protection, gender and inclusion (PGI)** as pivotal elements,

in an approach that recognizes and values all community members as equal partners, with their diverse needs shaping the response. Activities includes the provision of dignity kits and establishment of two-way feedback mechanisms. The strategy emphasizes local voice amplification, collaborative engagement and transparent communication, extending into **long-term resilience building** through initiatives such as the IFRC Pan-Africa Zero Hunger Initiative.

For the period [22 August 2024 to 21 August 2025](#), the following assistance was provided by the Uganda Red Cross Society:

The Uganda Red Cross Society responded concurrently to Mpox and Marburg Virus Disease outbreaks by implementing targeted interventions in high-risk areas. The National Society strengthened coordination, risk communication and community engagement and community-based surveillance in Wakiso and Mayuge districts to improve early case detection and promote health-seeking behaviours. Along the Uganda–Rwanda border, it conducted traveller screening and referred suspected cases at seven key points of entry. The National Society also raised awareness about disease prevention through direct engagement, empowering communities with knowledge on symptoms, transmission and protective measures. Through these actions, the Uganda Red Cross Society contributed to enhanced surveillance, early detection and containment of both outbreaks.

2.

Emergency Appeal name	Sudan Regional Population Movement
IFRC Emergency Appeal code	MDRS1001 (MDRUG051)
People affected	People affected/at risk: 5.4 million people
People to be assisted	1.3 million people
Duration	31 months (30 May 2023 to 31 December 2026)
Funding requirements	Total IFRC funding requirement through the Appeal: CHF 38 million Total Federation-wide funding requirements: CHF 47.5 million
Link to Revised Emergency Appeal	Sudan Crisis Regional Population Movement
Link to Revised Operational Strategy	Revised Operational Strategy
Link to Operational update	Operational Update No. 5

Since the outbreak of conflict in Sudan in April 2023, over 11 million people have been displaced, triggering the world's largest displacement crisis. Many have endured repeated displacements, limited access to basic services and heightened protection risks before crossing into neighbouring countries. Uganda, now included in the revised Emergency Appeal due to increased secondary displacement, continues to receive refugees, primarily from South Sudan, who arrive in extremely vulnerable conditions. In response, the Uganda Red Cross Society has reached 63,797 people through the IFRC Disaster

Response Emergency Fund and is scaling up its support to reach 161,000 people in 2025.

Short description of the emergency operational strategy

The Uganda Red Cross Society plays an auxiliary role to the Government of Uganda in disaster preparedness, response and recovery, working closely with the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Health, UNHCR and other key

actors to coordinate humanitarian assistance for refugees and host communities. It has implemented a multisectoral response under the IFRC Emergency Appeal in Kiryandongo Refugee Settlement, including mobile emergency health services, improved sanitation and water systems, hygiene promotion, epidemic preparedness, protection (including child safeguarding and prevention of sexual and gender-based violence) and [Restoring Family Links](#). The National Society has also mobilized and trained community-based volunteers, including Village Health Teams, to extend health promotion, disease surveillance and early warning messaging at the community level, thereby strengthening community resilience and ensuring lifesaving services reach the most vulnerable. The highlights of the assistance are:

Shelter, housing and settlements

Installation of sleeping tents in affected areas and distribution of shelter kits, including tarpaulins, rope, spade, hand hoe, Panga, saw axe, nails, hammer and poles, to targeted communities.

Livelihoods

Food parcel containing essential items, including cooking oil, dates, wheat flour, rice, sugar and salt are delivered to affected communities.

Multi-purpose cash

Cash transfers were made to impacted households with children at risk, women at risk, chronically ill individuals and people whose shelters were damaged by rain.

Health and care

An ambulance for emergency referrals is deployed and on-site first aid is provided, addressing acute injuries and medical emergencies. Outpatient services are delivered through mobile disaster clinics and aqua tabs are provided in identified cholera hotspot areas.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Affected people are provided with hygiene supplies such as latrine digging kits and plastic waste bins, alongside menstrual hygiene management kits. Water sources are rehabilitated and sanitation facilities are constructed.

Cross-cutting approaches

The operational strategy integrates **Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA)** and **Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI)** as pivotal elements, in an approach that recognizes and values all community members as equal partners, with their diverse needs shaping the response. Activities include the provision of dignity kits and establishment of two-way feedback mechanisms.

For the period from [30 May 2023](#) to [30 June 2025](#), the Uganda Red Cross Society reached over 92,000 people with mobile health clinics, sanitation upgrades, hygiene promotion, protection and Restoring Family Links (RFL) services. The response was shaped by targeted interventions such as menstrual hygiene management, gender-sensitive shelter design and child safeguarding. Protection, Gender and Inclusion training was provided to all volunteers and connectivity centres helped displaced individuals reconnect with family. Health services included emergency care, mobile clinics, mental health support and disease outbreak response (cholera, Mpox, measles), supported by trained community health workers and volunteers. In shelter and cash assistance, the National Society supported 2,300 people with shelter repairs and essential household items, including 71 persons with disabilities. Two large tents were installed at the reception centre to improve comfort and privacy for displaced individuals. Additionally, 600 shelter kits were distributed to households affected by rain and poor housing conditions. The Uganda Red Cross Society also provided multi-purpose cash assistance to 291 households (1,436 people), preceded by financial literacy sessions. During Ramadan, 600 food parcels were distributed to vulnerable Muslim households, feeding 1,800 people. These efforts addressed immediate needs while promoting dignity, recovery and inclusion for the most vulnerable.

3.

Emergency Appeal name	Uganda Ebola Virus Disease
IFRC Emergency Appeal code	MDRUG055
People affected	People affected/at risk: 1.3 million people
People to be assisted	520,000 people
Duration	10 months (14 February 2025 to 31 December 2025) <i>(Discussions ongoing to extend operation)</i>
Funding requirements	Total IFRC funding requirement through the Appeal: CHF 4.5 million Total Federation-wide funding requirements: CHF 6 million
Link to Emergency Appeal	Emergency Appeal
Link to Operational Strategy	Operational Strategy
Link to Operational update	Operational Update No. 3

On 30 January 2025, Uganda's Ministry of Health declared a Sudan Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak in Kampala District, with the index case, a 32-year-old nurse, confirmed by three national labs. The outbreak quickly spread across ten high-risk districts, prompting the activation of rapid response teams and contact tracing, with 265 contacts identified by 10 February, 62% of whom were health workers. The Uganda Red Cross Society, a key partner in epidemic response, was tasked with community-based surveillance, contact tracing, risk communication, ambulance support and safe burials. Through an Emergency Appeal, the National Society aims to reach 520,000 people directly and 1.3 million indirectly, focusing on confirmed and at-risk districts, frontline workers, mobile populations and communities resistant to health interventions. The response prioritises infection prevention, PPE provision, safe burial practices and community engagement to contain the outbreak.

Short description of the emergency operational strategy

Through this Emergency Appeal, the IFRC aims to support the Uganda Red Cross Society in responding to the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak by strengthening community-based surveillance, risk communication, psychosocial support,

ambulance service and safe and dignified burials. The response also prioritizes protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, gender inclusion, staff and volunteer safety and community-led solutions. Given the risk of cross-border spread, the Uganda Red Cross Society and the IFRC will coordinate with neighbouring National Societies to enhance readiness and if the outbreak ends early, the National Society will assist the Ministry of Health in building epidemic preparedness in high-risk districts, especially in Eastern Uganda. The highlights of the assistance are as follows:

Health and care

Pre-hospital care through ambulance support is provided, along with psychosocial support to affected communities.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

Handwashing stations are placed in high-risk areas, to help community members prevent the spread of infection through contact.

Protection, Gender and Inclusion

Continuous support is provided to groups most at-risk and the collected data is disaggregated based on sex, age and disability (SADDD) to better inform the emergency response.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Climate and environment

Climate change is increasing the intensity and frequency of natural hazards that Uganda is regularly exposed to. Extreme weather events that lead to flooding, mudslides, landslides and droughts have increased over the last 30 years. In particular, the increased intensity of heavy rainfall has led to flooding, which has had a significant impact on communities.

Uganda's vulnerability to climate change is exacerbated by its high level of poverty and its high dependence on the climate-sensitive sectors of agriculture, water, fisheries, tourism and forestry. Other stressors, such as inadequate infrastructure for handling a growing population, also increase the country's vulnerability to natural hazards and climate change.

With an urbanization rate of 4.5 per cent, the increasing number of people living in urban areas puts pressure on existing infrastructure and land – a diminishing natural resource. Economic efforts and the development of industry has put additional pressure on the exploitation of forests, lake fisheries, inner-city development and agriculture lands. This has contributed to deforestation, overfishing, the degradation of agricultural areas and forest environments, as well as pollution and the unsustainable use of water resources.

Deforestation is a major environmental challenge in Uganda. There were 3,632 deforestation alerts reported in Uganda between 31 December 2024 and 7 January 2025, covering a total of 45 hectares. From 2002 to 2024, Uganda lost 80 kilo hectares of humid primary forest, accounting for 7.0 per cent of its total tree cover loss during this period. The total area of humid primary forest in Uganda decreased by 16 per cent. Likewise, the country lost 1.2 million hectares of tree cover, equivalent to a 15 per cent decrease since 2000, and emitted approximately 540 million tonnes of CO₂. In 2024 alone, Uganda lost 32 kilo hectares of natural forest, resulting in 15.8 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions. In Northern Uganda, large-scale charcoal production remains a major driver of deforestation, degrading wildlife habitats and creating hardships for local farmers. Despite government interventions, such as the ban on commercial charcoal production in 2023, enforcement challenges persist, and forest loss continues to threaten biodiversity and rural livelihoods.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Uganda Red Cross Society is a signatory to the Climate Charter. It is also part of the IFRC's 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. This holistic, multi-year programmatic approach consists of four operational pillars: (1) scaling up climate-smart disaster risk reduction and anticipatory action and preparedness; (2) reducing the public health impacts of climate change; (3) addressing climate displacement; (4) enabling climate-resilient livelihoods and ecosystem services.

The National Society is engaged in the Water at the Heart of Climate Action (W@H), an ambitious partnership between the IFRC, the Netherlands Red Cross, the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the World Meteorological Organization and the Systematic Observations Financing Facility, which combines local knowledge and global technology to help communities understand and reduce the water-related risks they face - before they become disasters. The five-year partnership is supported by financial contributions from the Government of the Netherlands.

This initiative promotes a combination of early warning and early action measures that support integrated water management in vulnerable communities through five technical areas:

- Water-related risk knowledge and governance
- Observations, monitoring and forecasting of weather and water-related events
- Water specific early warning systems dissemination and communication
- Anticipatory action and locally led adaptation
- Crosscutting activities

The Uganda Red Cross Society aims to embed climate resilience into its humanitarian mission by aligning with the IFRC Strategy 2030 and prioritizing sustainability across all operations. It seeks to strengthen institutional systems through the implementation of the 'Policy, Strategy and Operational Framework on Climate Crisis and Environment', ensuring that environmental safeguarding becomes integral to programme design and delivery.

The Uganda Red Cross Society will focus on reducing its carbon footprint by promoting eco-friendly procurement and logistics and by mainstreaming emission tracking across all

interventions. It plans to empower communities to become proactive agents of change through anticipatory action, climate-smart practices and inclusive engagement that fosters local ownership.

The Uganda Red Cross Society also aims to build organizational capacity by equipping staff and volunteers with knowledge and tools to champion climate action, while leveraging partnerships and digital platforms to scale education and advocacy. Furthermore, it seeks to integrate environmental risk management into emergency preparedness and response, ensuring that all interventions minimize harm and contribute to long-term sustainability.

Planned activities in 2026

- Disseminate the institutional [Going Green Policy](#) to governing bodies, staff and volunteers
- Roll out emission tracking systems and adopt eco-friendly procurement and logistics
- Promote tree planting and care campaigns alongside climate-smart agriculture initiatives
- Operationalize anticipatory action through impact-based forecasting and early warning systems

- Integrate environmental impact assessments, renewable energy solutions and waste management systems into emergency operations
- Conduct community sensitization sessions in collaboration with district-level environmental authorities
- Equip staff and volunteers with climate and environmental knowledge via training and digital platforms
- Integrate environmental impact assessments, renewable energy solutions and waste management systems into emergency operations

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC is facilitating thematic training sessions for the National Society staff on the causes and challenges of climate change in the context of health and humanitarian work. Additionally, it will support the Uganda Red Cross Society in anticipatory action system building including forecast analysis, readiness (contingency planning) and early warning and early actions. Other support provided comprises Uganda Red Cross Society training of staff and volunteers in risk mapping and risk profiling, [enhanced vulnerability and capacity assessments \(eVCA\)](#), based on available climate information and analysis, to support disaster risk-informed planning and implementation.



Disasters and crises

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

Uganda has experienced numerous [natural hazards and human-induced disasters](#), resulting in loss of life, property and displacement. These include displacement caused by civil strife and natural disasters, famine due to drought, transport accidents, earthquakes, epidemics, flooding, landslides, environmental degradation, technological accidents and outbreaks of crop pests, livestock and wildlife diseases, as well as transport and technological accidents. Recent crises, including [severe flooding](#) across multiple regions and the [Ebola outbreak](#), have further disrupted livelihoods and highlighted the urgent need for resilient systems.

Displacement of communities has occurred due to both civil strife and disasters, leading to migration within the country in search of better and safer areas. In extreme cases, particularly in the [Karamoja region](#), the frequent failure of the rainy seasons leads to starvation. Severe drought results in human and livestock deaths and is also exemplified by the reduced water table, diminishing water levels in the major lakes and crop failure.

Uganda also experiences [flooding](#). The areas prone to floods in Uganda are Kampala, northern and eastern parts of Uganda which are mostly urban areas, low-lying areas and areas along riverbanks and close to swamps. Besides causing death due to drowning, floods destroy public health facilities such as water sources and sanitation facilities. Floods also trigger outbreaks of water-borne diseases and malaria, hence compounding community vulnerability to health hazards. They also cause physical damage by washing away structures, crops and animals and submerging human settlements.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Uganda Red Cross Society aims to strengthen anticipatory action and community-level preparedness by ensuring that at-risk populations have access to timely and actionable risk information in formats they understand. It seeks to reinforce early warning systems and disaster committees at the grassroots level, enabling communities to act before hazards escalate.

The Uganda Red Cross Society will focus on mainstreaming climate-smart disaster risk reduction across all programmes, with particular emphasis on ecosystem restoration, urban risk management and anticipatory early action. It plans to enhance organizational readiness through scalable and flexible response mechanisms, including improved [cash and voucher assistance](#) systems and pre-positioned relief stocks for rapid deployment.

The National Society aims to build institutional capacity for effective disaster management through updated preparedness plans, leadership development and technical tools aligned with its auxiliary role to government. Additionally, it seeks to expand emergency medical services and first aid capacity, while promoting policy and legal frameworks that facilitate efficient humanitarian action.

The Uganda Red Cross Society will also maintain preparedness for responding to all types of crises and disasters, whether sudden-onset, slow-onset, time-bound or protracted, with strengthened capacity to analyze and address the needs of those affected.

Planned activities in 2026

- Re-establish community disaster committees and deploy community-based early warning systems
- Strengthen feedback platforms and ensure last-mile delivery of risk information
- Integrate climate-smart disaster risk reduction measures into all programmes

- Enhance cash and voucher assistance systems and maintain pre-positioned relief stocks
- Update and implement the [Preparedness for Effective Response \(PER\) Plan of Action](#)
- Scale up mobile emergency clinics, ambulance services and blended learning first aid tools
- Advance plans for a Paramedical School and collaborate with government on [disaster law](#) frameworks

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

IFRC mechanisms such as the [Disaster Response Emergency Fund \(IFRC-DREF\)](#) and Emergency Appeals will continue to be drawn on as needed for the National Society to respond to disasters and crises.

The IFRC will provide comprehensive technical and operational support to the Uganda Red Cross Society in strategy, policy, planning, coordination and capacity building. The IFRC aims to enable the Uganda Red Cross Society to reinforce anticipatory action systems, develop robust contingency planning and operationalize early warning and early action measures. It will also ensure surge capacity is available when needed and promote standardization of planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes. In addition, the IFRC will work closely with the Uganda Red Cross Society to advance a Federation-wide response architecture, improve situational awareness and maintain disaster response capacity that is fit for purpose.



The Uganda Red Cross Society raising awareness about measles in local communities (Photo: IFRC)



All districts in Uganda have a hospital or a level four primary care facility and about 86 per cent of the population lives within five kilometres of a health facility providing basic health services. As of 2024, the life expectancy for Uganda was 64.67 years.

Disease outbreaks in Uganda over the last five years include Ebola virus disease, Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever, Marburg virus disease, Rift Valley fever, measles, cholera, meningitis and rubella. The effect of environmental changes, deforestation, the draining of swamps, climate change, poverty and humans being in contact with animals contribute to the frequent occurrence of disease outbreaks in Uganda. The ratio of physicians to 100,000 people in Uganda is 0.1. The country faces a significant disease burden, with an HIV prevalence of 6.2 per cent and malaria affecting 19 per cent of the population, among other diseases. On 30 January 2025, the Ministry of Health declared an outbreak of Sudan Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in Kampala District. A total of 14 cases (12 confirmed and two probable cases) including four deaths (two confirmed and two probable) were reported.

The leading causes of death in Uganda are sexually transmitted infections at 13.2 per cent, respiratory infections and tuberculosis at 12.6 per cent, maternal and neonatal disorders at 12.1 per cent and malaria and cardiovascular diseases at 9.8 per cent each. Preventable health issues also continue to increase and comprise more than 75 per cent of the disease burden in Uganda. In addition, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes make up 40 per cent of the disease burden.

The Ministry of Health in Uganda has established a roadmap towards universal health coverage in the country from 2020-21 to 2029-30. There is also a shift towards incorporating the private sector into healthcare, alongside the public sector. This shift fosters a spirit of entrepreneurship, competition and market values. However, it might undermine efforts to ensure fairness and equity in the delivery of health services.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Uganda Red Cross Society seeks to strengthen Uganda's health system through targeted capacity-building initiatives, particularly at the community level. It aims to collaborate with the national government to enhance national, subnational and local-level responses, including initiatives such as raising community awareness on pandemics and epidemics through Village Health Teams. These teams, central to the National Society's strategy, will play a pivotal role in fostering community engagement and enabling locally led solutions to unmet health needs.

The National Society will develop a comprehensive health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) strategy to guide its operations. It seeks to deliver evidence-based, impactful and effective health promotion, disease prevention and community-based care activities.

The Uganda Red Cross Society will empower communities to identify and mitigate health risks through Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) and behaviour change approaches. It seeks to promote locally driven solutions to address health challenges and aims to reduce health risks sustainably by applying lessons learned from recent outbreaks such as Ebola.

Planned activities in 2026

- Mobilize and retain voluntary non-remunerated blood donors
- Expand First Aid and ambulance services for emergency response
- Strengthen interventions for communicable and non-communicable diseases including malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS, hypertension, diabetes and cancer
- Integrate mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) into health programmes
- Enhance epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response
- Promote innovative and inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) initiatives

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC is supporting the National Society in the development of a robust health and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) strategy, benchmarking it against other international guidelines. It offers technical guidance to the National Society on preparedness and response to epidemics and pandemics, immunization operations, development of risk communication messages about pandemics and epidemics.

The Uganda Red Cross Society will be supported to train and equip Village Health Teams in high-risk districts for epidemic preparedness, community-based surveillance and response, including procuring Personal Protective Equipment for volunteers. Activities will align with the National Community Engagement Strategy and the One Health approach, fostering collaboration among health, veterinary and environmental sectors to address outbreaks and promote awareness in affected communities.



As a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, Uganda has been hailed for accepting and treating refugees humanely. Uganda has the [highest number of refugees in Africa and fifth highest globally](#). Most of these refugees have fled from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, Burundi, Eritrea and, more recently, from the Sudan crisis. According to [UNHCR's September 2025 report](#), Uganda is hosting approximately 1.93 million refugees. About 57 per cent are from South Sudan and around 31 per cent are from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Settlements are concentrated primarily in the northern and western regions of the country, with large populations in areas such as Adjumani, Bidi bidi, Nakivale, Kyangwali and Kyaka II. Women and children make up [80 per cent](#) of the refugee population.

While many [refugees](#) find a sense of home in Uganda as they await the opportunity to return to their countries, for others, Uganda serves as a [transit country](#) as they seek relocation, often towards the West. The majority of migrants, however, tend to stay within the region.

Unlike many host countries, Uganda [integrates refugees into national systems](#) rather than confining them to isolated camps. The 2006 Refugees Act and the 2010 Refugee Regulations grant freedom of movement, access to education, healthcare, land and the right to work, in line with the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and the Global Compact on Refugees. However, it is heavily dependent on predictable international solidarity and coordinated humanitarian-development cooperation. For years, the country's inclusive approach has been lauded as a model of generosity and resilience. But this model is under increasing strain. In 2024, [less than 40 per cent](#) of the Uganda Refugee Response Plan was funded. The result is a growing disconnect between policy and actual conditions, which can impact protection, resilience and social cohesion.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Uganda Red Cross Society aims to strengthen displacement and migration responses by moving beyond immediate aid to restore dignity and rebuild social fabrics. It seeks to prioritize lifesaving assistance while laying the groundwork for sustainable solutions that empower refugees, returnees and migrants. The Uganda Red Cross Society will focus on promoting

social cohesion through community dialogues, advancing climate-smart livelihoods to reduce dependency and ensuring gender-responsive and child-centred protection services. It also plans to leverage digital platforms for transparent, data-driven programming and enhance coordination through strong partnerships with government, UN agencies and Movement actors.

Planned activities in 2026

- Engage local authorities and other stakeholders in a concerted effort to ensure the protection of immigrants and internally displaced persons
- Develop a strategy on migration and displacement programming
- Develop tools and methodologies in preparedness, response and recovery of immigrants
- Run perception surveys and strengthen community feedback mechanisms
- Share life-saving information with refugees and displaced persons through trusted channels of communication
- Provide [Restoring Family Links](#) service for family reunification and strengthen tracing systems
- Support reintegration of returnees and safe pathways for migration with dignity
- Promote social cohesion dialogues to foster peaceful coexistence in host communities
- Implement climate-smart livelihood programmes to empower displaced populations

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC provides support to the Uganda Red Cross Society in implementing its [Protection, Gender and Inclusion \(PGI\)](#) policy in its migration programmes. It helps the National Society Uganda Red Cross Society develop tools and methodologies relating to population movement and mixed flows, in the preparedness, response and recovery phases.



Values, power and inclusion

Uganda is characterized by its variety of cultures, languages, social traditions and religious affiliations. After extended periods of violent conflict, the country has not experienced any internal armed conflicts for more than a decade. However, the region as a whole remains volatile and Uganda sometimes feels the effects of conflicts in neighbouring countries such as South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

More than half (56 per cent) of the women in Uganda aged 15–49 have experienced physical violence, sexual violence or both. In 2018, a four-year United Nations programme called 2gether 4 SRHR (sexual and reproductive health and rights) was launched to improve sexual and reproductive health across East and Southern Africa, including Uganda. The programme entered its second phase in 2023, running until 2027, with a focus on integrating SRHR, HIV and gender-based violence services and prioritizing adolescents and young people. In Uganda, [Phase II began in 2024](#) with targeted interventions in districts such as Kamuli and Namayingo to strengthen access to comprehensive health services and rights. The Government of Uganda continues to address [gender-based violence](#) by strengthening health sector responses. This includes implementing WHO's survivor-centred clinical guidelines, training health workers nationwide and integrating gender-based violence care into national health systems and protocols. Uganda's [National Policy on the Elimination of Gender Based Violence](#), revised in 2019, provides the legal and policy framework for preventing and responding to violence against women and girls and guides coordinated action across sectors.

In Uganda, approximately [12 per cent](#) of the population live with a disability, yet they make up 22 per cent of the unemployed workforce. Approximately [2.5 million children](#) (13 per cent) in Uganda are living with some form of disability and only 15 per cent of these have access to education. The laws governing disability in Uganda include the Persons with Disability Act 2020, which recognizes disability as a cross-cutting issue that transcends all sectors. It requires all stakeholders to use the legislation as a framework to guide planning, resource allocation and the implementation of interventions in an inclusive manner.

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

The Uganda Red Cross Society aims to develop mechanisms for preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based

violence during emergencies. It seeks to provide referral pathways for holistic care to survivors, including clinical management of rape, clinical response, protective care and necessary referrals. The National Society will also ensure the provision of psychosocial support for survivors to address their mental health and emotional needs. The Uganda Red Cross Society aims to promote humanitarian values and [fundamental principles](#) by engaging [youth as agents of change](#) in programme implementation. It seeks to create community-level awareness of human rights, focusing on empowerment, access to services and participation of young people and key populations. Additionally, it will advocate for humanitarian issues through international events and campaigns, such as the 16 Days of Activism and the Day of the African Child.

Planned activities in 2026

- Mainstream [Community Engagement and Accountability](#) in new and existing policies, guidelines and toolkits such as the PSEA policy
- Include feedback mechanisms in programmes and operations
- Advocate for [Protection, Gender and Inclusion](#) issues with key stakeholders to ensure the needs of vulnerable populations are addressed
- Link boys and girls affected by disaster to services such as education and child safeguarding services
- Create awareness on children rights and disseminate child safeguarding policy and referral mechanisms

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the National Society by providing technical support to the National Society on child safeguarding and the dissemination of policies on the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse. It supports the National Society in ensuring the standard disaggregation of the people targeted, using the sex, age and disability disaggregated data (SADDD), implementation of its protection, gender and inclusion action plan, establishing links with regional protection working groups. IFRC also provides technical support in the development and implementation of the National Society's Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) strategy.

ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS

The Uganda Red Cross Society is committed to pursuing its institutional strengthening and carried out the self-assessment part of the Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) process in 2016. The self-assessment part of the OCAC 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 Uganda Red Cross 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 the necessary action to improve it.



Key Institutional Indicators

The National Society has put in place the following:

- Strategy to strengthen its auxiliary role
- National Society development plan
- Youth engagement strategy
- 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

- Engage with both existing and new partners to create partnerships of lasting value
- Strengthen mechanisms for the mobilization of resources from external partnerships
- Improve financial sustainability by creating lasting partnerships and securing adequate resources for core services
- Implement and revise the Resource Mobilization Strategy based on market survey findings and align with the Strategic Plan 2026–2030

- Strengthen mechanisms for mobilizing resources from external partnerships and enhance financial management systems
- Diversify financing through internal revenue generation, new and existing partnerships, and Movement coordination forums
- Establish and institutionalize its Humanitarian Response Fund as a ring-fenced mechanism for rapid emergency funding

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports Uganda Red Cross Society in building partnerships as well as in the implementation of its resource mobilization goals.



National Society development

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Strengthen governance, leadership and management capacity at national and branch levels
- Enhance membership and volunteer systems and invest in youth engagement for improved service delivery
- Conduct regular Branch Organizational Capacity Assessments to identify gaps and guide capacity building
- Undertake Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification in 2026
- Continue Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) activities to improve disaster readiness and coordination

- Sequence activities annually to prioritize core programmes and maintain accountability across all branches
- Operationalize Uganda Red Cross Society Investments Limited and Company Limited to generate sustainable income through social enterprises such as first aid schools, ambulance services and paramedical training

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the Uganda Red Cross Society in strengthening governance, branch development and youth engagement. It also provides support to the National Society in financial sustainability



Humanitarian diplomacy

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Leverage humanitarian diplomacy and auxiliary role to build strong partnerships with government and stakeholders
- Advocate for protection of humanitarian space and integration of Red Cross protocols into national disaster and emergency laws
- Engage decision-makers and opinion leaders to safeguard access for vulnerable communities and ensure safety of humanitarian workers and facilities
- Participate in regional and African Union policy dialogues and inter-agency forums to influence collective humanitarian positions

- Contribute evidence-based reporting and lessons learned to global platforms to shape policy on climate resilience, migration, gender and humanitarian financing
- Build internal capacity for humanitarian diplomacy through training in negotiation, advocacy and communication and strengthening knowledge management systems
- Align communication and advocacy efforts with IFRC's 10 steps for practising humanitarian diplomacy

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC supports the Uganda Red Cross Society in building strong partnerships and conducting advocacy to shape policies.



Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

Multi-year high level objectives of the National Society

- Strengthen transparency and accountability through improved operational coordination with partners and participation in movement coordination forums
- Automate critical financial and management operations
- Promote transparent financial management and strengthen resource mobilization mechanisms
- Improve research and Planning Monitoring Evaluation Reporting and Learning (PMERL) functions for evidence-based planning, monitoring and reporting
- Deploy integrated digital platforms to streamline operations, improve data management and enhance coordination across all levels

- Fully digitalize critical business processes and humanitarian services to ensure speed, accuracy and efficiency
- Invest in robust cybersecurity measures and data protection frameworks to safeguard sensitive information

Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will provide the National Society with technical and financial support to implement its initiatives to increase accountability. It will continue to conduct systems assessment for the Uganda Red Cross Society and develop a clear roadmap for the realization of the digital transformation journey. provide the National Society with technical and financial support to facilitate its initiatives to increase the National Society's accountability.



Uganda Red Cross Society ambulance attendants sanitizing ambulances in Mbale with PPE and disinfectants as part of daily emergency and outbreak response routines (Photo: Uganda Red Cross Society)

THE IFRC NETWORK

The IFRC

The IFRC provides technical and financial support to the Uganda Red Cross Society through the IFRC Juba Country Cluster Delegation, which plays an essential role in providing coordination within and outside the Movement. IFRC operations in Uganda are focused on supporting the National Society financially and technically in emergency operations. During emergencies, the IFRC plays a significant role in

ensuring effective coordination within and outside the IFRC membership and provides logistical, technical and financial support. In recent years, the IFRC has supported the National Society through several Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) and Emergency Appeal operations in relation to disease outbreaks, population movement and floods, flash floods, landslides and hailstorms.

IFRC membership coordination

IFRC membership coordination involves working with National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, agree on common priorities and jointly develop common strategies. This includes addressing issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian acceptance and access, mobilizing funding and other resources, clarifying consistent public messaging and monitoring progress. It also entails ensuring that strategies and programmes in support of people in need incorporate clarity of humanitarian action while linking with development assistance and contribute to reinforcing National Societies in their respective countries, including through their auxiliary role.

The Uganda Red Cross Society is part of the four IFRC Pan-African initiatives focusing on Tree Planting and Care, Zero Hunger, Red Ready and National Society development. These initiatives are reflected under the relevant sections of this plan.

The **Austrian Red Cross** focuses on emergency response, recovery and long-term development. It partnered with the Uganda Red Cross Society in 2017 during an Emergency Response Unit project. Over the years, the collaboration has expanded, encompassing projects to enhance emergency response capacities, develop water and sanitation structures,

manage waste and promote gender and inclusion themes within programming.

The **Belgian Red Cross (Flanders)** offers nationwide support in Uganda, with a focus on disaster-prone areas and initiatives in disaster risk management, health and migration.

The **German Red Cross** provides support to the National Society in the areas of climate change, disaster risk management, health and migration.

The **Netherlands Red Cross** has been collaborating with the Uganda Red Cross Society since 2005. With a presence in the country, it is supporting the National Society in the development of data products to strengthen early warning early action mechanisms. This includes trigger development and the integration of forecast-based action into multi-hazard district contingency plans. Other support provided comprises community health and water, sanitation and hygiene for refugees and host communities, as well as epidemic and cash preparedness. This partnership meets the realities of extended crises with longer-term predictable funding, facilitating actions and processes with the potential for greater, longer-term impact.

Movement coordination

The Uganda 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](#).

In Uganda, **the ICRC** contributes to addressing the humanitarian needs of people who have fled situations of violence in neighbouring countries and detainees. It also supports the integration and promotion of international humanitarian law, notably for troops deployed in operations abroad.

Coordination with other actors

The Uganda Red Cross Society has a well-established role as auxiliary to the government and is therefore part of national-level emergency and disaster planning and response. During national and regional emergencies, the Uganda Red Cross Society receives support from non-movement actors (UN, private corporations and business) and the government of Uganda.

The National Society participates in national partnership meetings and those called for by the Government. It has an agreement with the Ministry of Health (MoH) allowing the

National Society to benefit from 15 donated ambulances from the government. During disease outbreaks and the recent Ebola outbreak, the MoH established daily national task force meetings for partners in the response, including the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement. Uganda Red Cross Society The National Society's actions are well coordinated with the MoH and key international actors including Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), World Health Organization (WHO), United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).



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

The 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 the IFRC membership, and is the result of a joint planning process and will serve for joint monitoring and reporting. It will be revised on an annual basis to adjust priorities and funding requirements to the needs in-country.

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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