



# SOUTH AFRICA

## 2025-2027 IFRC network country plan



Multi-Year Funding Requirement **CHF 65.7M**

2 April 2025

### In support of the South African Red Cross Society



**51**

National Society  
branches



**51**

National Society  
local units



**268**

National Society  
staff



**10,700**

National Society  
volunteers

### People to be reached



**600,000**

Ongoing  
emergency  
operations



**7M**

Climate and  
environment



**6M**

Disasters  
and crises



**9M**

Health and  
wellbeing



**60,000**

Migration and  
displacement



**800,000**

Values, power  
and inclusion

### IFRC network multi-year focus

#### Emergency Response

- Disease outbreak

#### Longer-term needs

- Disaster risk reduction • Health and care
- Community resilience • Protection, gender and inclusion

#### Capacity development

- Humanitarian diplomacy • Digital transformation • Financial sustainability
- Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting • Youth and volunteer development

### Key country data links

**INFORM Climate Change Risk Index** **Medium**

**Human Development Index rank** **110**

**World Bank Population figure** **63.2M**

**World Bank Population below poverty line** **55.5%**

IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for South Africa, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho & Namibia, based in Pretoria

# Funding requirements

2025

2026\*\*

2027\*\*

\*\*Projected funding requirements

**Total 23.1M CHF**

**Total 17.9M CHF**

**Total 24.7M CHF**

Through the Host National Society

**18M CHF**

Through the IFRC

**5.1M CHF**

Through the Host National Society

**13.1M CHF**

Through the IFRC

**4.8M CHF**

Through the Host National Society

**13.1M CHF**

Through the IFRC

**11.6M CHF**

**HNS Breakdown**

**IFRC Breakdown**

**HNS Breakdown**

**IFRC Breakdown**

**HNS Breakdown**

**IFRC Breakdown**

**Longer term needs**

**Longer term needs**

**Longer term needs**

**Longer term needs**

**Longer term needs**

**Longer term needs**

**2M CHF**

Climate & environment

**1M CHF**

Climate & environment

**2M CHF**

Climate & environment

**1M CHF**

Climate & environment

**2M CHF**

Climate & environment

**1.8M CHF**

Climate & environment

**7M CHF**

Disasters & crises

**1M CHF**

Disasters & crises

**7M CHF**

Disasters & crises

**1M CHF**

Disasters & crises

**7M CHF**

Disasters & crises

**6.8M CHF**

Disasters & crises

**5M CHF**

Health & wellbeing

**95,000 CHF**

Health & wellbeing

**100,000 CHF**

Health & wellbeing

**100,000 CHF**

Health & wellbeing

**1M CHF**

Health & wellbeing

**150,000 CHF**

Health & wellbeing

**2M CHF**

Migration & displacement

**1M CHF**

Migration & displacement

**2M CHF**

Migration & displacement

**1M CHF**

Migration & displacement

**100,000 CHF**

Migration & displacement

**1.8M CHF**

Migration & displacement

**1M CHF**

Values, power & inclusion

**1M CHF**

Values, power & inclusion

**1M CHF**

Values, power & inclusion

**1M CHF**

Values, power & inclusion

**2M CHF**

Values, power & inclusion

**750,000 CHF**

Values, power & inclusion

**1M CHF**

Enabling local actors

**1M CHF**

Enabling local actors

**1M CHF**

Enabling local actors

**750,000 CHF**

Enabling local actors

**1M CHF**

Enabling local actors

**500,000 CHF**

Enabling local actors

See back page for explanatory note on funding requirements

## Hazards



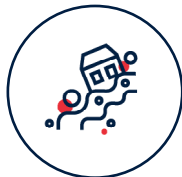
Disease outbreak



Floods



Tropical storms



Landslides



Civil unrest

## IFRC Appeal codes

Emergency appeal:

**MDRS1003\*** African Regional Mpox Epidemic

Long-term needs:

**MAAZA003**

*\*Due to the evolving situation and the regional scope of the appeal, country-specific funding requirements are not reflected on the cover page*



Volunteers of the South African Red Cross Society distributing vital necessities among communities affected by devastating fires in Durban  
(Photo: IFRC)

# NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

The **South African Red Cross Society** was admitted to the IFRC in 1919. It was established in 1921 by the Parliament of South Africa as a voluntary humanitarian relief and development organization, and an auxiliary to the public authorities in the humanitarian field.

The South African Red Cross Society is a key partner of the Government of South Africa, in times of peace and crisis, and seeks to complement the Government's efforts by executing its auxiliary role to address humanitarian needs and issues in South Africa. The National Society is known for the capacities of its first responders, who act in coordination with the Government's disaster management committee. As a result, the South African Red Cross Society has earned the trust of the communities it works with, enabling its continued access to and ability to reach vulnerable groups.

The South African Red Cross Society works with local authorities and other humanitarian partners in line with the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, paying special attention to the neutrality, impartiality, independence and sustainability of its interventions.

The South African Red Cross Society operates 43 branches across the nine provinces of South Africa, with a database of 4,220 volunteers and 268 staff members. The National Society Secretary General's office is supported by a senior management team comprising managers from different departments, including disaster management, health and care, branch development, finance, and organizational development. The team supports its decentralized provincial and branch offices with the implementation of activities and community engagements.

## IFRC NETWORK ACTION

### JOINT SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

South Africa, situated at the southernmost point of the African continent, shares borders with Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Eswatini while encompassing the enclave country of Lesotho. Covering an area of approximately 1.22 million square kilometres, it stands among the most significant nations in Africa by landmass. With the Indian Ocean to its east and the Atlantic Ocean to its west, South Africa experiences a diverse climate, from arid landscapes to subtropical coastal zones. As of 2024, the country's population is estimated at around 60 million, marked by a predominantly young demographic with a median age of 28. The annual population growth rate is approximately 1.2 per cent, though this has slowed recently due to lower fertility rates and significant emigration. About 67 per cent of the population resides in urban areas, particularly within major metropolitan hubs such as Johannesburg, Cape Town, and Durban.

South Africa is grappling with a growing crisis driven by the adverse effects of climate change, which has exposed vulnerable populations and communities to a range of severe

hazards, including floods, cyclones, prolonged droughts and uncontrollable fires. These climate-related challenges have resulted in significant human displacement, posing a pressing concern for the nation.

Recent occurrences highlighted the urgency of the situation. Between April and September 2024, extreme weather events, including storm surges and severe thunderstorms, ravaged KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, North-West, and Eastern Cape. These storms led to devastating floods, displacing thousands and leaving them needing urgent support. SARCS quickly mobilized response teams across these affected provinces to aid recovery and provide critical relief to displaced populations. In addition to storm-related crises, ongoing drought in regions such as Eastern Cape, Limpopo, Gauteng, Northern Cape, and Western Cape has severely undermined food security and economic stability, threatening water resources, community cohesion, health infrastructure, and essential services. These climate patterns have also intensified gender-specific vulnerabilities, particularly within at-risk communities.

Disasters continue to jeopardize human lives and exacerbate food insecurity. Parts of Eastern Cape have witnessed a surge in cases of malnutrition, particularly among rural communities

and children. Tragically, malnutrition has emerged as a leading cause of death among young children.

South Africa currently faces a convergence of complex challenges spanning political, social, demographic and economic dimensions, reflecting a critical juncture in the nation's history. Politically, the country is grappling with heightened social unrest and protests. These incidents often involve tensions between local citizens and foreign nationals, occasionally escalating to hostile takeovers of settlements and mining towns. The root causes are multifaceted, with a prominent factor being the economic hardships faced by the citizens coupled with elevated rates of youth unemployment.

A notable development is the emergence of mobilization groups such as '[Operation Dudula](#)', which have targeted undocumented foreign nationals across South Africa. This has exacerbated social instability, particularly in regions primarily situated in Gauteng townships and peri-urban settings, namely Alexandra, Diepsloot, Johannesburg and Soweto. These areas have witnessed incidents of social unrest directly linked to the activities of 'Operation Dudula'. Consequently, migrant communities have occasionally hesitated to seek refuge in community shelters, as observed during recent floods in KwaZulu Natal. The prevailing situation underscores the imperative for a comprehensive and harmonized approach to migration, protection and management policies.

## ONGOING EMERGENCY RESPONSE

For real-time information on emergencies, see [IFRC GO South Africa](#)

1.

Emergency Operation	Africa Regional Mpox Epidemic
Appeal number	MDRS1003
People affected	People affected/at risk: 300 million people
People to be assisted	30 million people
Duration	20 August 2024 to 30 June 2025
Funding requirement	Total IFRC funding requirement through the Appeal: CHF 30 million Total Federation-wide funding requirements: CHF 40 million
Emergency Appeal	<a href="#">Africa – Regional Mpox Epidemic</a>
Link to Operational Strategy	<a href="#">Operational Strategy</a>
Link to Operational Update	<a href="#">Operational Update No. 2</a>

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 South African 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.

For the period 20 August 2024 to 28 October 2024, the following assistance was provided by the South African Red Cross Society:

The South African Red Cross Society focused on volunteer training, community engagement and accountability and public health interventions, focusing on KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. The National Society trained community-based volunteers to support Mpox surveillance, health education and outreach. It reached individuals through community meetings, peer education and targeted engagement. The South African Red Cross Society also conducted rapid qualitative assessments, including focus groups and interviews with diverse stakeholders such as LGBTQ+ individuals, traditional healers and healthcare workers for inclusive interventions. The South African Red Cross Society continued to collaborate with health authorities and community stakeholders to ensure an effective and sustainable Mpox response.



## Climate and environment

Climate change presents a palpable and growing reality, bringing forth substantial social, economic, and environmental risks and challenges on a global scale. South Africa, like many other developing nations, finds itself particularly susceptible to the far-reaching impacts of [climate change](#).

South Africa is already exposed to a high degree of risk from [natural hazards and disasters](#), including droughts, floods, and storm-related events such as high winds, coastal storm surges and hail. These extreme weather events are likely to be exacerbated by climate change. Extreme rainfall has already resulted in costly infrastructure damage, road closures and reduced access to electricity. It has also overwhelmed sewage and stormwater systems, causing flooding and pollution.

Temperature anomalies are already affecting South Africa's critical infrastructure such as roads and rail lines. Rainfall and temperature changes will continue to have a negative impact on agriculture and food security. Additionally, extreme weather events pose a potential threat to the [tourism sector](#), thereby impacting the livelihoods dependent on this industry. Notably, previous instances of flooding have already resulted in the contamination of water supplies. Reduction in rainfall and higher temperatures, including heatwaves, have led to significant water restrictions and an increased demand for water and energy for cooling systems across all sectors. Concurrently, extreme rainfall had led to soil erosion, land degradation, and placed ecosystems and their associated services in jeopardy. Moreover, heightened sedimentation rates resulting from more intense rainfall events pose a threat the storage capacity of dams, further exacerbating water resource challenges.

The [South Africa National Development Plan \(NDP\) 2030](#) recognizes that the preservation of ecosystems, particularly those essential for providing food and clean water, regulating climate and disease, supporting crop pollination and nutrient cycles, and delivering cultural benefits such as recreational opportunities, is fundamental to the realization of South Africa's social and economic development objectives.

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and Environment is responsible for the greening strategy in South Africa. The work takes place at a local government level, in partnership with local government institutions, non-governmental and community-based organizations. [Greening activities](#) are undertaken in line with chapter four of the National Forest Act of 1996 and South Africa's National Greening Strategy. In addition, the [National Arbor Month](#) campaign aims to sensitize

South African communities to the need to conserve, protect and plant trees for environmental and humanitarian purposes.

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

The South African Red Cross Society is part of the [IFRC Global Climate Resilience Programme](#), which aims to foster an unprecedented scale-up in locally led climate-smart disaster risk reduction and adaptation efforts to prevent and reduce climate-related disaster impacts and build community-level climate resilience. The programme aims to support 500 million people in 100 of the most climate-vulnerable countries, focusing on the least supported and marginalized communities. This holistic, multi-year programmatic approach consists of four operational pillars: (1) scaling up climate-smart disaster risk reduction, anticipatory action and preparedness; (2) reducing the public health impacts of climate change; (3) addressing climate displacement; and (4) enabling climate-resilient livelihoods and ecosystem services.

The South African Red Cross Society is fully committed to taking swift action to mitigate and adapt to the escalating and evolving risks posed by climate and environmental crises. Its high-level objectives include to:

- Strengthen community capacities, equipping them with the tools needed to confront the ever-changing impacts of climate change
- Empower communities to lead climate change mitigation efforts and embrace [sustainable environmental practices](#)
- Ensure that its staff and volunteers possess the knowledge and capacity to act as catalysts for change

### Planned activities in 2025

- Develop information, education and communication (IEC) materials with key messages on climate change which are context-specific by province
- Establish working groups that focus on climate change and environmental crisis
- Establish youth volunteer ambassadors to lead climate change initiatives
- Forge partnerships with higher education institutions specializing in climate change and adaptation studies
- Organize a national workshop on climate change and adaptation, convening key stakeholders for a roundtable discussion to strategize and share insights on effective climate change education and adaptation efforts

- Enhance the integration of indigenous knowledge into operations

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the South African Red Cross Society in designing programmes and projects to adopt environmentally friendly sustainable practices and contribute to climate

change mitigation as well as capacity building for sustainable livelihoods. It will provide support in the implementation of climate-friendly policies and practices thus strengthening the resilience of communities to the impacts of climate change. Additionally, the IFRC will support the National Society in implementation of [IFRC's Pan-African Tree Planting and Care initiative](#) by raising community awareness and enabling them to plant and care for trees.



## Disasters and crises

For real-time information on emergencies, see [IFRC GO South Africa](#)

[South Africa](#) is susceptible to a variety of natural and man-made hazards, including floods, landslides, tropical storms, storm surges, thunderstorms, civil unrest and urban violence. It is particularly prone to disasters and hazards that result in substantial damage to infrastructure, loss of human lives and impact on livestock, directly affecting the economy. The heightened intensity of these disasters is aggravated by rapid urbanization and the impacts of climate.

On [7 January 2024](#), storm surges and flooding in the Ladysmith area of KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State province affected 1,226 households and caused 41 fatalities. Severe damage and displacements were reported, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal's uThukela, uMzinyathi and Amajuba districts. Between 15 and 17 April 2024, violent storms and heavy rains hit KwaZulu-Natal's Ugu District and Northwest Province's Moshana Village, affecting an additional 279 families (1,395 people). This coupled with El Niño's influence heightened vulnerabilities and necessitated continued intervention. Additionally, in [June 2024](#), severe weather events struck South Africa, leaving 46,565 people affected across Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provinces. Heavy rainfall in the Eastern Cape breached dam walls and canals, causing flash floods that displaced 2,500 people and claimed seven lives, with 10 others missing. On 3 June, two tornadoes devastated KwaZulu-Natal, destroying over 7,000 houses in Tongaat and displacing more than 5,000 individuals.

South Africa also faces [heightened political tensions during elections](#). The country held its seventh general elections on 29 May 2024 to select a new National Assembly and provincial legislatures. These elections, anticipated to be the most contested since 1994, saw a surge in protests and unrest. From January, at least nine protests were recorded, some marked by violence and disruption. Surveys predicted the ruling party might lose its outright majority, potentially leading to a hung government, coalitions and challenges to its dominance in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal. Tensions escalated further following a Constitutional Court appeal regarding a former

president's candidacy under the newly established uMkhonto weSizwe Party. The legal uncertainty and intense campaigning raised fears of further violence, recalling the unrest of July 2021, one of the worst since the end of apartheid.

South Africa has a well-established [disaster management framework](#), which promotes engagement in disaster risk reduction across the three levels of government: national, provincial, and municipal. Institutions such as the Inter-Governmental Committee on Disaster Management, the National Disaster Management Advisory Forum and the National Disaster Management Centre are responsible for the overall coordination of disaster management across the country.

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

The South African Red Cross Society will position itself as a key player in preparing for and responding to a wide spectrum of crises and disasters, by analyzing and addressing the diverse needs of individuals and communities affected by these events. Its high-level objectives include to:

- Focus on disaster risk reduction and mitigation interventions, aiming to decrease community vulnerability through mobilizing community-based adaptations and promoting indigenous knowledge systems
- Build community resilience to evolving and multiple shocks and hazards by empowering at risk individuals with actionable risk information

### Planned activities in 2025

- Mobilize local disaster management fora, village representatives, civil society and private sector partners for responding to disasters and crises
- Provide disaster mitigation assets such as smoke detectors, firefighting equipment, gabion check dams, clearing of debris in drainage systems and sandbags, to at-risk communities



- Provide timely support for vulnerable households in disasters and crises through cash and voucher assistance
- Provide emergency relief material for early recovery
- Provide individuals in need with basic emergency shelter that is safe and adequate to enable essential household and livelihoods activities to be undertaken in a dignified manner

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will provide the National Society technical support in disaster law training as well as in designing programmes such as livelihood support, distribution of food and non-food items to those affected by drought, floods, conflicts and other disasters in South Africa. Additionally, the IFRC will work with the South African Red Cross Society in reducing the risk of disasters through implementation of the preparedness for early response (PER) approach. It will also provide support in conducting training and workshops on disaster preparedness including contingency planning as well as improving early warning early action systems to save lives and property.

IFRC mechanisms such as the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (IFRC-DREF) and Emergency Appeals will be drawn on as needed for the National Society to respond to disasters and crises. In 2024, IFRC provided DREF allocations for three separate emergencies in South Africa.

- **South Africa Storm Surge:** the DREF allocation of CHF 353,285 in January 2024 supported the South African Red Cross Society to assist 3,357 people impacted by flooding resulting from a storm surge in the Free State, Kwazulu-natal, North-west regions of South Africa. The National Society supported the targeted people over a six-month period through interventions such as distribution of essential items including mattresses,

blankets and kitchen sets, as well as provision of hot meals and multi-purpose cash assistance. Support also included provision of psychological first aid to affected communities and distribution of hygiene kits comprising sanitary pads, bleach, toothbrush sets, bath soap, body lotions and washing powder. This was complemented with awareness sessions focused on health and hygiene.

- **South Africa Election Readiness:** the DREF allocation of CHF 167,795 in May 2024 supported the South African Red Cross Society to assist 30,000 people impacted by civil unrest and protests caused by heightened political tensions linked to the general elections, in the Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, Kwazulu-natal, Mpumalanga, North-west and Western Cape regions. The National Society supported the targeted people over a two-month period through interventions such as first aid and pre-hospital care. Staff and volunteers were trained in prevention and protection of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and child safeguarding, and community members were engaged and sensitized.
- **South Africa Thunderstorms and Floods:** the DREF allocation of CHF 499,776 in June 2024 supported the South African Red Cross Society to assist 10,000 people impacted by severe flooding in the Eastern Cape and Kwazulu-natal regions. The National Society supported the targeted people over a four-month period through interventions such as distribution of kitchen sets, blankets and mattresses, and awareness-raising around safe shelter initiatives. Support also included establishment of mobile kitchens and distribution of hot meals, as well as provision of multi-purpose cash to affected communities. Additionally, assistance was also provided through psychological first aid, distribution of hygiene kits and promotion of health and hygiene through sessions.



## Health and wellbeing

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Health disparities in South Africa are deeply rooted in the social determinants of health, influenced by the broader social and economic conditions to which individuals are exposed over the course of their lives. These determinants encompass the circumstances of one's birth, the environment they live in, the work they engage in, and the conditions one faces as one ages. What has become evident is the presence of a social gradient across many of these determinants, whereby individuals with lower socioeconomic status experience more pronounced health disparities.

Recurring disasters exacerbate health vulnerabilities in South Africa. Many people are struggling to access healthcare due to the extensive infrastructural damage and the demands of daily survival. The trauma experienced by affected families coupled with the distress stemming from the concerns about the loss of their assets, has resulted in a significant need for psychosocial support among these individuals.

As of 2023, South Africa continues to grapple with a significant HIV epidemic. Approximately 7.8 million people are living with HIV, representing about 12.6 per cent of the population. The adult HIV prevalence rate stands at 17.8 per cent, with 160,000

new HIV infections reported in 2022. Additionally, there were 45,000 AIDS-related deaths in 2022. Notably, South Africa has the highest number of individuals enrolled in antiretroviral therapy globally, with 5.7 million people receiving treatment.

Another notable challenge in South Africa is the insufficient access to proper sanitation facilities. Despite improvements, a significant number of households still lack access to adequate sanitation, as revealed by the General Household Survey (GHS) of 2018. Inadequate sanitation facilities contribute to a range of health issues, including the spread of waterborne diseases and gastrointestinal infections. Ensuring access to clean and safe sanitation facilities is a critical step in promoting public health and mitigating health disparities. The quality of water and access to clean water are closely intertwined with sanitation concerns.

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

The South African Red Cross Society seeks to address health disparities exacerbated by social determinants through a community-based approach. It aims to provide access to essential healthcare in underserved areas, especially in rural provinces such as Eastern Cape, Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal. The South African Red Cross Society will continue to enhance its efforts in epidemic control, primarily through its Epidemic Control for Volunteers programme. This initiative provides community education and outbreak management, empowering local volunteers to respond effectively to health threats such as Mpox, measles, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

Reducing preventable diseases and health inequalities is a key focus for the South African Red Cross Society. It seeks to address immunization gaps, particularly for zero-dose and under-immunized children, by working with the Department of Health (DoH) and UNICEF to expand immunization outreach in underserved areas and reduce the risks of vaccine-preventable diseases, particularly in rural and informal settlements where coverage remains low.

The South African Red Cross Society also focuses on addressing malnutrition, which contributes to high rates of stunting and undernutrition among children through food security programmes which emphasize sustainable practices. The National Society also aims to reduce the prevalence of non-communicable diseases and improve public health outcomes, particularly for young and at-risk individuals.

The South African Red Cross Society is also dedicated to improving water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) conditions, especially in areas with limited access to clean water and

proper sanitation. Through partnerships with WHO/UNICEF's Joint Monitoring Programme and the Global WASH Cluster, the National Society works to strengthen WASH infrastructure and hygiene education. This will help prevent waterborne diseases and mitigate the impacts of climate change, which exacerbates water and food insecurity and increases disease risks.

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### Planned activities in 2025

- Improve access to healthcare services in underserved rural areas through mobile clinics and community health programmes
- Work on preventive health campaigns and conduct health screenings
- Strengthen epidemic control by expanding the Epidemic Control for Volunteers programme to more communities.
- Reduce malnutrition and stunting rates through sustainable food security programmes, including eco-friendly waste management and nutrition education
- Conduct public awareness to reduce the health risks using community engagement and accountability (CEA) approaches
- Train staff and volunteers in psychosocial support
- Conduct a comprehensive assessment to map existing referral systems addressing sexual and gender-based violence in the contexts of emergencies
- Enhance WASH infrastructure and hygiene education in rural and peri-urban areas to prevent waterborne and gastrointestinal diseases
- Build capacity of volunteers to enable them to undertake community-based health activities

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the National Society to broaden its capacity to ensure that it is positioned as the partner of choice for major national projects in community and emergency health. It will provide the South African Red Cross Society with technical support and build its capacity through training on key concepts such as One Health, community-based initiatives in health, First Aid, and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS). The IFRC will also support the National Society with successful integration of disaster risk reduction approaches that impact health and well-being.



Throughout Southern Africa, migration is predominantly motivated by the quest for economic opportunities, political instability and, increasingly, environmental hazards. Because of its strong economic position in the continent, South Africa receives a high volume of migrants seeking work opportunities in the mining, manufacturing and agricultural sectors. It is the most industrialized economy in the region and a particularly attractive destination for those in search of better education and opportunities.

As of 31 March 2024, the South Africa Multi-Country Office (SAMCO) hosts 167,495 forcibly displaced individuals, including 92,258 asylum-seekers and 75,093 refugees, primarily from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and Ethiopia. Of this population, 71 per cent are male, 29 per cent are female and 10 per cent are children under the age of 18.

South Africa is a host country for refugees and asylum seekers. Currently, around 250,000 refugees and asylum seekers live in the country. Refugees and asylum seekers in South Africa have access to similar legal rights as South African citizens. However, many struggle to exercise their rights in practice. Barriers to obtaining documentation disproportionately affect new arrivals and individuals seeking to renew their documentation, particularly women and children, which may hinder the accuracy of available statistics. Additionally, xenophobia is a daily reality and growing concern for refugee communities. Between 1994 and August 2024, xenophobic violence in South Africa resulted in 679 deaths, over 5,000 shops looted and around 128,000 displacements. This violence has occurred in the form of riots or smaller, more targeted, attacks. Violence is so extreme that it has resulted in locals burning refugees and migrants alive.

South Africa has implemented various policies to manage migration and displacement, aiming to regularize undocumented migrants and manage economic migration flows. Nonetheless, enforcement and resource limitations continue to hinder progress. Organizations such as the Department of Home Affairs, the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC), UNHCR, IOM and various NGOs work to support displaced individuals. However, limited resources often constrain their efforts.

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

The South African Red Cross Society seeks to support the government in addressing migration challenges by offering

essential services to migrants, including restoring family links (RFL), psychological and social support, and health and care services. It aims to enhance the well-being and protection of migrants, ensuring they receive necessary assistance in navigating the difficulties faced within South Africa's borders. Through these initiatives, it will focus on supporting migrants in times of crisis and providing them with opportunities for integration and resilience. The National Society will also raise awareness regarding potential risks, rights and self-protection measures associated with migration, especially in the context of mixed migration. Additionally, it aims to develop national migration and displacement strategy in collaboration with relevant government authorities and humanitarian actors.

### Planned activities in 2025

- Map migration services and establish coordination teams for assistance of these services for migrants
- Implement activities that foster social cohesion and interaction between migrants and host community members
- Effectively engage with migrants and displaced persons by giving due priority to their needs and concerns
- Strengthen referral systems that deal with migration
- Train staff and volunteers in RFL

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the National Society to strengthen the implementation of the integrated approach in responding to the needs of migrants and displaced populations and in advocating for the rights of migrants and displaced persons. It will assist the National Society to enhance its capacity to address the needs of migrants and displaced individuals. This encompasses delivering training, technical assistance and securing funding through collaborative partnership with relevant donors. Additionally, the IFRC will support the South African Red Cross Society in the establishment of humanitarian service points (HSPs) at neutral locations where vulnerable groups can safely access basic services.



## Values, power and inclusion

South Africa has a history of exclusion and discrimination on the grounds of race and gender, among others. As a result, the Government has developed one of the most inclusive constitutions globally, incorporating a bill of rights that expressly advocates for equal treatment for all irrespective of race, age, disability, socio-economic status and gender.

Other forms of legislation, such as the [Employment Equity Act of 1998](#), have facilitated access to formal employment for women. As a result, employers are legally required to work towards a more equitable workforce representation based on gender, race and disability. While great strides have been made towards equality for women, many challenges remain. There is a need for continued measurement, policy changes and programmatic interventions. Beyond monitoring the country's progress towards gender equality, a deeper understanding of gender gaps will advance the agenda of ensuring that no one is left behind.

[Poverty levels](#) have consistently been highest among female-headed households, black South African communities and children under the age of 15. These groups also tend to be at a higher risk of getting pushed into poverty. Members of female-headed households face up to a 10 per cent higher likelihood of falling into [poverty](#) and are two per cent less likely to uplift themselves from poverty compared with those of male-headed households. In South Africa, race strongly correlates with the risk of living in poverty, with black Africans at the [highest](#) risk. Large families, children and individuals residing in rural areas are especially susceptible to experiencing prolonged poverty.

Protection issues in South Africa are also exacerbated due to recurring disasters, leading to a breakdown in community structures, law and order and a lack of physical protection. This frequently culminates in instances of gender-based violence.

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

The National Society will aim to ensure that its programmes promote the dignity, access, participation and safety of everyone it supports, regardless of their race, sex, language, nationality, disability and age. Its high-level objectives include to:

- Provide improved access to equitable and quality education to boys and girls affected by disasters
- Use the [community engagement and accountability](#) (CEA) approach to engage communities in conflict resolutions and promote peaceful local level advocacy

- Use existing community structures to implement the response operation, ensuring the involvement of key stakeholders such as community leaders, while prioritizing the involvement of individuals with special needs
- Focus on improving the understanding, ownership and concrete application of humanitarian values and the [Fundamental Principles](#) among the youth in communities
- Continue to support the youth by funding projects for their ideas and innovations through its youth empowerment activities

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### Planned activities in 2025

- Support women youth enterprises to apply for funding opportunities with Government and private sector
- Support youth enterprises to form linkages based on identified market opportunities
- Enhance access to and support for equitable and high-quality education for both boys and girls affected by disasters
- Conduct needs assessments to ensure that out of school children are provided access to relevant educational materials to facilitate their return to school
- Facilitate forums to bring together duty bearers and discuss improved processes for [protection, gender and inclusion](#) (PGI) in emergency response
- Sensitize communities on inclusiveness and protection

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### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support the South African Red Cross Society in consistently adopting and implementing to [PGI](#) and [CEA minimum actions for emergencies](#), using participatory approaches and in drafting prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) and child safeguarding policies. It will support the National Society in developing referral systems to ensure secure and sensitive handling of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) cases, taking into account and all gender identities and addressing the specific needs of individuals living with disabilities. The IFRC will also provide assistance in setting up community feedback systems capable of handling investigations of sensitive complaints. Additionally, it will build the capacity of the South African Red Cross Society to sort, analyze and report qualitative and quantitative data points collected through community feedback.

## ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS

The South African Red Cross Society is committed to its institutional strengthening and is engaged in the [IFRC Preparedness for Effective Response \(PER\)](#) process. It is currently at the orientation phase. The approach is a

continuous and flexible process that enables National Societies to assess, measure and analyze the strengths and gaps of their preparedness and response mechanism, and ultimately take necessary action to improve it.



### Strategic and operational coordination

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

- Strengthen engagement with partners within and outside the network to work collectively on the key challenges facing communities
- Focus on resource mobilization

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

**The IFRC** will support the National Society in its efforts to build additional self-generating revenue streams with the aim of becoming more self-sufficient.



### National Society development

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

- Promote good governance in all its structures
- Expand its presence in additional communities and targeted focus areas
- Promote volunteerism among the youth

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

**The IFRC** will provide continuous support to the National Society with transformational leadership approaches. It will encourage and support the review of [statutes](#) and promote [youth programming and engagement](#) within the National Society. It will also provide technical support for reviewing and developing National Society development plans and its strategic plan, as well as ongoing operations, while ensuring that the National Society's capacity is strengthened. Additionally, the IFRC will support the South African Red Cross Society with financial sustainability approaches such as its core cost policy.





## Humanitarian diplomacy

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

- Strengthen relations with authorities and decision makers in the country by establishing relationships at local, provincial and national levels
- Strengthen its public profile to influence both public behaviour and policy at domestic, regional and global levels
- Enhance humanitarian efforts in alignment with governmental key priorities

- Intensify collaboration and partnerships with key partners and stakeholders in upholding its auxiliary role

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will support and encourage engagement of the South African Red Cross Society with public authorities. It will also support the National Society's leadership in diplomatic engagements and connect it with strategic partners. Additionally, it will support the National Society in strengthening its auxiliary role by meeting key stakeholders at government level on a regular basis.



## Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

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

- Conduct regular audits to demonstrate transparency, ensure compliance and spotlight areas for improvement
- Ensure that human resource guidelines and practices align with the IFRC code of conduct and in-country guidance
- Refine and develop data collection tools to streamline data compilation, allowing for concurrent data input and improved accessibility

- Organize comprehensive training sessions for programme teams at branch and provincial levels to enhance their proficiency in utilizing planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) tools

### Longer-term support from the IFRC network

The IFRC will encourage the South African Red Cross Society to promote understanding among staff and volunteers of anti-fraud and corruption measures and culture. It will support the National Society in innovating its monitoring, evaluation and reporting structure. It will also support the National Society in enhancing its information management capacity through digital transformation.



South African Red Cross Society volunteers conducting a health education session among students to address stigma and help prevent further spread of Mpox, in October 2024 (Photo: South African Red Cross Society)

# THE IFRC NETWORK

## The IFRC

The IFRC supports the South African Red Cross Society through its country cluster delegation based in Pretoria, South Africa, which covers South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and the Kingdom of Eswatini. The IFRC supports the South African Red Cross Society with strategic and operational coordination, National Society development and humanitarian diplomacy. It also supports accountability as a

cross-cutting theme. The country cluster delegation is also very instrumental in supporting the South African Red Cross Society to mobilize resources through IFRC disaster response funding mechanisms such as the Emergency Appeal and [DREF](#), as well as the [IFRC](#), Capacity Building Fund (CBF), and the ICRC-IFRC National Society Investment Alliance ([NSIA](#)).

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## 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 South African 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 South African Red Cross Society does not have in-country presence of any participating National Societies. However, it receives support from the **Australian Red Cross**, **Belgian Red Cross** and the **Netherlands Red Cross**.

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## Movement coordination

The South African Red Cross Society ensures regular exchanges with the IFRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) 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's** Pretoria Regional Delegation carries out humanitarian activities in Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi,

Namibia, South Africa, Eswatini, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Using innovative tools, its humanitarian action aims to address the humanitarian consequences of armed violence and migration; to support authorities to trace missing persons, to reconnect separated families; to strengthen respect for and compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and international standards of policing; and to improve the capacity of National Red Cross Societies in the region to be first responders to natural and man-made disasters. Through humanitarian diplomacy, the ICRC in Southern Africa builds support for humanitarian action, norms and values amongst policy and decision-makers.

## Coordination with other actors

In line with its auxiliary role, the South African Red Cross Society collaborates closely with the public authorities. During emergencies, the National Disaster Management Centre coordinates the interventions from all humanitarian agencies, with support from UN agencies, through the Command-and-Control Centre. During episodes of urban violence, the South African Red Cross Society also works closely with the Cooperative of Governance and Traditional Affairs. The South African Red Cross Society partners with the government to build its capacity in climate change adaptation, disaster management and health.

It also partners with UN agencies and other national and international organizations to deliver its programmes and operations. UNICEF supports the National Society in disaster relief and capacity building, while the UNDP supports disaster relief and gender integration programming. Santam supports disaster relief and capacity building across disaster management, first aid and communications. Old Mutual supports disaster relief and capacity building in the areas of cash and voucher assistance, small, medium and micro-sized enterprises, and life skills. Nedbank collaborates with the National Society to deliver disaster relief and capacity-building for the information management of cash and voucher assistance.

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## 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 2025 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 Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)
- 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 2025 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 Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)
- 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 databank](#)
- [Donor response reports](#)

### Contact information

**South African Red Cross**  
[redcross.org.za/](https://redcross.org.za/)

#### Kopano Masilo

Head of Delegation  
IFRC Country Cluster Delegation  
for South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho,  
Namibia & Kingdom of Eswatini,  
based in Pretoria  
**T** +276 632 03886  
[kopano.masilo@ifrc.org](mailto:kopano.masilo@ifrc.org)

#### Louise Daintrey

Head of Strategic Partnerships  
& Resource Mobilization  
IFRC Regional Office for Africa,  
Nairobi  
**T** +254 110 843978  
[louise.daintrey@ifrc.org](mailto:louise.daintrey@ifrc.org)

#### Sumitha Martin

Lead  
IFRC Global Strategic Planning  
& Reporting Centre  
New Delhi  
[sumitha.martin@ifrc.org](mailto:sumitha.martin@ifrc.org)