

2021

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BANGLADESH

IFRC COUNTRY OFFICE

Appeal number
MAABD001

Funding requirement in Swiss francs
3.45 million



National Society
Branches

68



National Society Staff

3,400



National Society
Volunteers

536,000



People to be reached

3.1 million

This document details the IFRC's support in areas agreed upon with the relevant National Society. The IFRC seeks resources to carry out this country/cluster plan listed here as funding requirements.



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Population

161.4 million

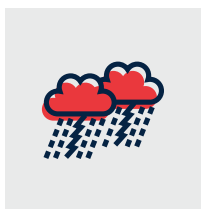
2019 Human Development Index Ranking

135

Vulnerabilities



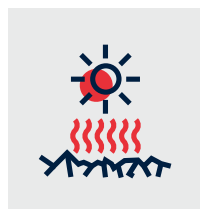
Floods



Tropical storms



Earthquakes



Extreme heat



COVID-19



Migration

Bangladesh is home to 161.4 million people and is one of the world's **most densely populated countries**. The national poverty rate rose to 35 per cent in 2020 from 24.3 per cent in 2016 due to the adverse impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

There are more than 230 rivers and tributaries across the country, making it highly vulnerable to water and weather-related disasters such as cyclones and floods. The northern and eastern regions are also vulnerable to earthquakes, while the south-east is particularly susceptible to all major disasters.

In May 2020, a severe cyclonic storm killed 26 people, injured seven and damaged 353,385 houses. **2.4 million people moved into 14,636 permanent and temporary shelters** in 19 coastal districts before the cyclone hit the country's coast.

Flooding in June then affected around one third of the country, aggravating the impact of COVID-19 and **disrupting people's livelihoods and income generating activities**. The country also saw some of the **heaviest rains in almost a decade which displaced more than 1.5 million people** and washed away tens of thousands of hectares of paddy fields.

Cox's Bazar, the southeast coastal district of the country, now has the world's largest refugee camp where roughly 850,000 people from the Rakhine state of Myanmar take refuge.

COVID-19 has created a number of challenges for the people of Bangladesh too. From 7 March – 18 October 2020 there were 388,569 confirmed cases and 5,660 deaths reported.



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ROLE OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY



Established

1973

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) was constituted in 1973 and has its national headquarters in Dhaka. The National Society has 68 branches across the country, 3,432 staff and 535,654 volunteers, and aims to prevent and reduce human suffering and the save lives of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups in Bangladesh. The National Society works to reduce the impacts of disasters, emergencies and other humanitarian consequences, help communities to become resilient to hazards, and improve health services for people in critical need.

The National Society's new strategy covering 2021–2025 will address the COVID-19 pandemic, the population movement crisis in the Cox's Bazar area as well as the recurrent disasters in the country.

The Bangladesh National Society has a strong volunteer network, and a number of hospital services and training institutes for medical staff around the country.

In 2019, the National Society in Bangladesh reached **1.1 million people through disaster response and early recovery programmes**, and 2 million people through long-term services and development programmes. The National Society also provided training to 77,917 people.

Since the influx of people from Myanmar to Bangladesh began in August 2017, Cox's Bazar has grown to become the **world's largest refugee settlement** and the National Society continues to support people who seek shelter there through its Population Movement Operation and Myanmar Refugee Relief Operation.

The National Society also runs a Cyclone Preparedness Programme together with the Government of Bangladesh to mitigate the challenges of catastrophic cyclones that frequently hit the coast of Bangladesh. As an auxiliary to the public authority, the National Society also complements the government's efforts in case of emergency and promotes disaster preparedness plan development.



MEMBERSHIP COORDINATION AND MOVEMENT FOOTPRINT

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) role in Bangladesh is to provide technical and financial support, and strengthen the capacity of the National Society, in collaboration with other partners.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) also works closely with the Bangladesh National Society in implementing various preparedness and emergency response programmes to reduce loss of life and livelihoods of people, while building resilient communities in Bangladesh.

The IFRC network supports the National Society to position itself as an important player in national disaster and emergency management.

There are 11 National Societies in Bangladesh, while yet more provide support through the IFRC.

- **American Red Cross:** supports the National Society with the impact of climate change, specifically in a coastal disaster risk reduction programme, and migration and displacement.
- **British Red Cross:** the focus is on managing disasters, migration and displacement, and helping to provide communities with life-saving information.
- **Canadian Red Cross:** priority areas are health and emergency, maternity and child healthcare issues.
- **Danish Red Cross:** supports the National Society by delivering water, sanitation and hygiene programmes for refugees in Cox's Bazar and the institutionalisation of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support.
- **German Red Cross:** supports the National Society with forecast-based financing which anticipates disasters and to prevent or reduce their impact.
- **Italian Red Cross:** the main areas of focus are migration, and young people and volunteers' development.
- **Japanese Red Cross:** supports community-based health and first aid, and community outreach activities in Cox's Bazar.
- **Qatar Red Crescent:** supports the National Society to provide communities in Cox's Bazar with humanitarian assistance including health services, shelter and food security.
- **Swedish Red Cross:** helps to develop water, sanitation and hygiene strategic programmes for people in Cox's Bazar, and supporting longterm resilience programming.
- **Swiss Red Cross:** will support a comprehensive review of the Bangladesh National Society's health strategy and support response and recovery measures in the face of disasters and crises.
- **Turkish Red Crescent:** is developing a project to strengthen the capacity of Bangladesh's blood donation facilities.



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CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRISES

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

470,000

People to be reached

100,000



Bangladesh's geographic location, frequent natural disasters, high population density and low resilience to economic shocks have made the country **highly vulnerable to climate change**. The Global Climate Risk Index has placed Bangladesh in the seventh position among countries most vulnerable to climate change in 2020.

Most parts of the country experience high water levels during the monsoon season and lack of water in the dry season. Lack of rain often causes severe droughts, while floods, river erosions and landslides rampage during the monsoon season. **Climate-induced heatwaves are likely to increase by five times** over the next few decades and this could potentially **increase the number of deaths** in the summer, especially in densely populated cities and among the elderly, children and outdoor workers.

The IFRC will support the National Society to undertake urgent action to reduce and adapt to the rising and evolving risks from the climate and environmental crises. Different small-scale activities that consider communities' specific needs will be put in place to reduce their vulnerability to the impact of climate change. The IFRC will also support the National Society to improve awareness of climate change risks among stakeholders and communities. The communities' capacities to respond to climate change will be strengthened through climate change interventions, including promoting ideas about sustainable activities using the country's natural resources.



1-1.5°C

expected rise in
temperature by 2050
after preventative
measures



7th

ranking of Bangladesh
vulnerability to
climate change

➔ ACTIVITIES

- **Take** urgent action to reduce and adapt to the rising and evolving risks from the climate and environmental crises.
- **Develop** early warning and heatwave action plans and systems, with a focus on urban areas.
- **Facilitate** climate discussions with key government organisations to scale up climate action initiatives.
- **Run** climate change campaigns to raise awareness among young people.



EVOLVING CRISES AND DISASTERS

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

1 million

People to be reached

200,000



Bangladesh is **one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world** where high numbers of cyclones, floods, river erosion, landslide and other hazards occur every year.

In 2020, the heaviest rains in almost a decade lasted more than two months. **1.5 million people were displaced** as a result and the rain washed away tens of thousands of hectares of paddy fields.

The IFRC will support the National Society in priority areas such strengthening the country's **response to and recovery from disaster**. The IFRC will also support the National Society to improve its preparation and **anticipation of disaster programmes** and to **reduce the impact of disasters**.

The conventional approach to disaster risk reduction is not sufficient enough to reduce the impact of the multi-hazards that a disaster-prone country like Bangladesh faces. The IFRC will therefore focus on forming more resilient communities and protecting the lives and livelihoods of people, especially the poorest and most vulnerable families, including women and children. The IFRC will also support the National Society to **train staff in cash transfers**, which means giving cash or vouchers to vulnerable people so they can choose which goods and services they want to buy directly from local markets. The IFRC will also support the National Society to **raise the awareness** of everyday risks related to people's homes and foster **safe shelter** and settlement practices.

The IFRC leads the Global Shelter Cluster, which is a network of organisations that provide shelter to people affected by humanitarian disaster. The IFRC will support the National Society to strengthen its position in coordinating shelters for communities in need in Bangladesh and become a stronger local partner of choice for other partners in the system.

The IFRC will also support the Bangladesh National Society to **install community-based early warning systems** in areas that are prone to floods and cyclones. It will train people within the communities to monitor the situation so that information about potential future hazards can be shared and communities can prepare themselves.

🎯 TARGET 1

Communities able to take action to increase their resilience to evolving disasters.

🎯 TARGET 2

People affected by crises and disasters will have their needs met through urgent assistance.

🎯 TARGET 3

Make available multipurpose cash assistance for 5,000 of the most vulnerable households to meet one month of emergency needs.

➡️ ACTIVITIES

- **Establish** community-based early warning systems in both flood- and cyclone-prone communities.
- **Maintain** a contingency stock of non-food household items for 5,000 families in emergencies.



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GROWING GAPS IN HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

640,000

People to be reached

300,000



The impact of cyclone Amphan and monsoon floods in 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic brought a triple burden to Bangladesh's health system.

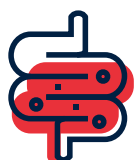
Diarrheal diseases are one of the leading causes of child deaths in Bangladesh and most of those are directly connected to **contaminated water, lack of sanitation, or inadequate hygiene**. 97 per cent of people rely on groundwater for drinking, but **the groundwater in 95 per cent of districts is contaminated with arsenic**.

Hygiene practice is very poor. Only 5.7 per cent of households in the lowest wealth quintile use soap for hand washing, and 90 per cent of menstruating girls and women use old, dirty rags.

Bangladesh's maternal mortality rate is **196 deaths per 100,000 live births** – this hasn't changed since 2010. 13 per cent of all female deaths aged between 15 and 49 are due to maternal causes, related to pregnancy or childbirth.

The IFRC will support the National Society to take part in discussions with the government about planning and policy-making in epidemics and pandemics. People who live in urban poor communities have very little knowledge about sanitation and safe hygiene practices. They are not very aware of how to protect themselves from COVID-19. So spreading awareness of hand washing and proper sanitation are important to protect people and to prevent the disease.

The IFRC will also support the National Society to raise awareness of non-communicable diseases in communities and strengthen the capacities of midwives and frontline volunteers on emergency response in epidemics and pandemics.



90%

of child deaths
are from diarrheal
diseases



95%

of groundwater, relied
upon for drinking,
is contaminated
with arsenic

ACTIVITIES

- **Increase** access to disease preventive services for pregnant women and children.
- **Install** sustainable water points, promote arsenic removal SONO filters and water quality testing.
- **Construct** toilets for families living in poverty.
- **Develop** a guideline for mobile medical teams for emergencies.
- **Develop** the National Society's Health Strategy in 2021 and finalise it by 2022.
- **Increase** the Extended Programme of Immunization coverage and the National Society's capacity to scale-up vaccination programmes.



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MIGRATION AND IDENTITY

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

210,000

People to be reached

2,000



While every year, around 500,000 people leave the country to work abroad, there are **more than 1 million migrants that enter Bangladesh**. The migration of people fleeing violence in Myanmar to come to Bangladesh has created one of the **most complex and challenging displacement crises** in the region.

Natural hazards and disasters are also leading to migration and internal displacement within Bangladesh. Migration is a priority area that the National Society needs to work on. The National Society will prioritise the **reuniting of families** that lost contact during displacement or migration, and raise awareness among migrants of the **potential risks and vulnerabilities** posed by migration.

The IFRC will support the National Society to raise awareness among government decision-makers and the general public of xenophobia, discrimination and advocate for the protection of migrants. It will do this through strategic workshops, high-level deliberations with government officials on contemporary humanitarian challenges and the best approaches to address and improve migration and displacement issues.

In addition, the IFRC will support the National Society to raise awareness of Bangladeshi overseas migrant workers in partnership with the recipient country's National Society. For example, the Bangladesh National Society will work with the Maldivian Red Crescent on issues related to migrant workers in the Maldives to ensure those people are protected.



860,000
refugees in Cox's Bazar,
the world's largest refugee camp

➔ ACTIVITIES

- **Provide** migrants and displaced people with humanitarian assistance and protection through the National Society's engagement with local and national authorities.
- **Continue** to provide support to people sheltering in Cox's Bazar through the IFRC emergency appeal.
- **Negotiate** agreements and legal provisions through strategic workshops to refine the National Society's role and approach to migration and displacement.



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VALUES, POWER, AND INCLUSION

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

340,000

People to be reached

20,000



Goal 3 of the IFRC's Strategy 2030 aims to promote and support more inclusive, equal and cohesive societies, where all people are socially-included, treated with compassion, and diversity is celebrated through positive humanitarian values. The National Society's values are aligned with this, in terms of **respecting human dignity**, focusing on **reducing inequalities** and ensuring **no one is left behind**. It achieves this through the response and development programmes for people in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is the region's top performer in the Political Empowerment sub index (2018), which measures the gap between genders in political decision-making. This rank records a remarkable progress on closing its political gender gap, despite a widening employment gender gap.

In spite of increased national attention, **child marriage** is still prevalent in Bangladesh and during the COVID-19 pandemic, when families faced the difficulties in terms of earning, there were reports of **increased child marriage and gender-based violence**.

The National Society has a commitment that in all of its programmes and services it will apply the IFRC's global minimum standard for protection, gender and inclusion.

The IFRC will support the National Society to **reduce inequalities and empower vulnerable people** in Bangladesh.

The National Society is running a women empower programme at Nilphamari district with support from Kuwait Red Crescent Society and the IFRC to build resilience and increase the livelihood options of marginalised and underprivileged women to earn their own money.

🎯 TARGET 1

IFRC emergency appeals support the quick return of students to classrooms.

➡ ACTIVITIES

- **Strengthen** the existing youth co-curriculum programme to ensure it teaches humanitarian values.
- **Prepare** an emergency education toolkit to be adopted in every emergency appeal.
- **Arrange** safe spaces for children in emergencies.
- **Scale up** humanitarian education.
- **Champion** child protection in laws, regulations and policies on disaster risk management.



Bangladesh Red Crescent Society

ENABLER 1

ENGAGED WITH RENEWED INFLUENCE, INNOVATIVE AND DIGITALLY TRANSFORMED WITH GREATER EMPHASIS ON NATIONAL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

180,000

The IFRC will support the National Society to **strengthen its communications and engagement** with internal and external partners. In addition, the IFRC will provide support to make strong connections for urban resilience through city-wide coalitions, shared commitments with city emergency management systems, alignment with local, national, regional and global levels and advocacy to **strengthen community resilience**.

The IFRC will support the Bangladesh National Society to develop a strategic partnership plan highlighting the engagement priorities and partnership principles. This will include more engagement with joint initiatives and partnering on programmes with other stakeholders, including the government. This will **help to maximise the collective impact, increase efficiencies and to scale up in quality and reach**.

The IFRC will support the National Society to commission studies and research on climate risk, health in emergency, displacement and other pertinent issues in partnership with academic and research institutions. As a member of the global humanitarian and development community, the IFRC and the Bangladesh National Society, together with other stakeholders, will continue to **help communities reduce their vulnerabilities** through the One Billion Coalition initiative.

The IFRC will also support the National Society to strengthen its public profile in Bangladesh and strengthen its auxiliary role to actively engage with local stakeholders.

The IFRC will prioritise support for the continual **innovation of services, tools, and approaches** to tackle likely complex, costly, and unpredictable crises and development challenges.

In addition, the IFRC will support National Society to strengthen its data protection and information security measures, and to explore funding and resourcing opportunities to ensure sustainability for implementing digital technologies within the Bangladesh National Society.

ACTIVITIES

- **Developing** relationships with key media editors and journalists to increase its impact, public trust and understanding of its role and activities.
- **Developing** communications and public advocacy resources and advice by commissioning a perception study on the National Society.
- **Supporting** the National Society in developing public advocacy and awareness materials on crises and disasters.
- **Strengthen** engagement with partners within and outside the network to work collectively on the key challenges facing communities.
- **Influence** people's behaviour and encourage policy change at domestic, regional and global levels.
- **Use** innovative and transformative approaches to better anticipate complex challenges and opportunities.
- **Improve** systems, equipment and processes through integration of digital tools.



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ENABLER 2

ACCOUNTABLE WITH AN AGILE MANAGEMENT AND A RENEWED FINANCING MODEL WITH GREATER EMPHASIS ON NATIONAL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

100,000

To have a greater impact with a more harmonised and consistent approach, the IFRC will invest in systems that enable it to work as one organisation globally. The IFRC will work in particular on developing the skills of the National Society's staff, gender parity and ensuring diversity at all levels, zero tolerance on fraud and corruption, sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse. It will also ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct for humanitarian relief.

The IFRC will support the National Society to segregate duties among team members to ensure **financial resources are safeguarded** and managed effectively, efficiently and transparently. The IFRC will also support the Bangladesh National Society to have integrated **risk management practices** and cultures across all programmes, operations and support teams so it can continue its vital humanitarian work with people in need.

The IFRC will offer more targeted support to the Bangladesh National Society, which is dependent on a small number of income sources and on project funding. The IFRC's support will target the National Society's **long-term financial sustainability, diversification of income bases** and increased access to unearmarked funding. The IFRC will also continue to provide technical support to the National Society for fundraising for emergency operations and long-term programmes.

The IFRC will support the National Society to develop and update policies, strategies, tools and systems with a focus on quality assurance, ensuring high standards of integrity and accountability of the National Society delivering humanitarian assistance to vulnerable communities in Bangladesh.

ACTIVITIES

- **Ensure** all staff complete mandatory security training so that they can work with communities as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- **Motivate** staff to develop their skills and set examples for women in leadership positions.
- **Continue** addressing risk management by identifying, mitigating and monitoring all risks.
- **Develop** the talent of staff at all levels.
- **Monitor** and improve gender, diversity and inclusion.
- **Safeguard** and manage financial resources.
- **Develop** a new finance structure to increase financial resources.



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ENABLER 3

TRUSTED BY COMMUNITIES, OWNED AND VALUED BY THE MEMBERSHIP WITH GREATER EMPHASIS ON NATIONAL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

510,00

The IFRC will build on the strength of the National Society in Bangladesh and scale up investment to enhance capacities. It will place stronger emphasis on different forms of leadership initiatives, a sound legal base and efficient systems and structures to operate with efficiency and accountability in its auxiliary role.

The IFRC will also support the National Society to shift to a more domestic fundraising approach to ensure **longer-term financial sustainability**.

The IFRC will support the National Society to **prevent, manage and address integrity and reputational risks** through adopting policies, guidelines, tools and mechanisms.

The National Society has a good supporter base, so the IFRC will harness innovation from young people and volunteers, and will further support the National Society to launch annual innovation contests.

The IFRC will nurture a new generation of Bangladesh National Society leaders to embark on a journey of learning, **engaging in leadership discussions** and coaching to prepare them for the future. As part of this, the IFRC will support the National Society to promote better discussions with young people to renew ideas, **promote innovation** and better adapt to young people's ambitions and expectations.

As membership coordination is a core area for the IFRC, it will support the National Society to update the existing cooperation agreement to promote collaboration between partners.

The IFRC will also support the Bangladesh National Society to **measure the satisfaction and trust** of the communities it is helping.

🎯 TARGET 1

National Society to become the trusted partner of choice for local humanitarian action.

➡️ ACTIVITIES

- **Launch** an annual innovation contest among youth groups.
- **Introduce** a youth talent hunt programme across the country.
- **Encourage** youths and volunteers to contribute to decision-making and innovation.
- **Put together** a talent management strategy to identify and promote gender equality, diversity and cultural and geographic inclusion.
- **Develop** a community engagement and accountability measurement framework with clear targets and standards.



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network, with **192 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** and around **14 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.

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