

2022



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AFGHANISTAN

IFRC COUNTRY PLAN

2022 funding requirement in Swiss francs

19.3 million



National Society
branches

34



National Society
staff

2,000



National Society
volunteers

30,000



People to be reached

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 plan, listed here as funding requirements. For information on the IFRC's emergency operations, please visit [ifrc.org/appeals](https://www.ifrc.org/appeals).



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

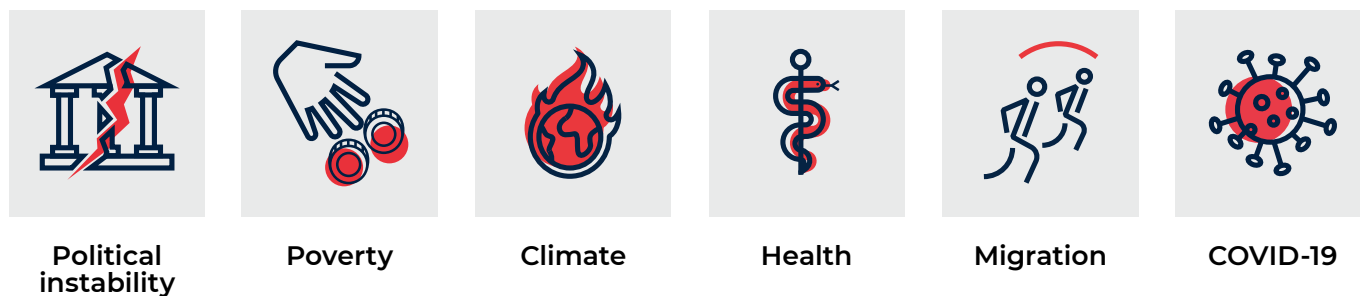
Population

38 million

Human Development Index Ranking

169/189

Vulnerability to disasters



In August 2021, the political context in Afghanistan¹ changed dramatically against the backdrop of a complex humanitarian crisis resulting from years of conflict, severe drought, acute food insecurity, displacement, COVID-19, widespread poverty, and socio-economic challenges. The humanitarian context has deteriorated further due to the near collapse of services, economic hardship, and human rights concerns.

Limited circulation of money from sanctions after the political changes in August 2021 has affected people's ability to meet the most basic needs and led to rising prices of food and essential goods.

Another major concern is food insecurity. Between November 2021 and March 2022, nearly two-thirds of the population will face crisis levels of food insecurity and require some form of humanitarian assistance².

Many donors, including the World Bank, froze financial support to Afghanistan. This disruption has affected health facilities across the country, leaving most of them unable to provide essential medical supplies or to pay health workers' salaries.

Since the pandemic began in 2020, Afghanistan has experienced four waves of COVID-19. Official statistics capture only a fraction of the impact of the pandemic, as testing capacity remains limited and there is no death register. With the already-fragile health system further weakened, the vaccination rate low and economic hardship biting hard, new wave(s) of COVID-19 would have severe consequences.

¹ Following changes in the political context during August 2021, the new authorities are referring to it as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA). In this plan, Afghanistan is used for brevity.

² According to a Post-Harvest analysis conducted by the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) in October 2021.



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ROLE OF THE NATIONAL SOCIETY

The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) responds to crises and facilitates disaster preparedness activities. Its presence and local networks are exceptionally well established, enabling the National Society to reach vulnerable people not served by other humanitarian actors.

The National Society is also well respected within Afghanistan. It consistently negotiates its humanitarian space with all parties and stakeholders to ensure continuous services for people most in need. It also closely coordinates and consults with the relevant authorities, UN agencies, and other humanitarian actors at national and local levels.

The National Society provides healthcare services through facilities in all 34 provinces. It has 46 fixed clinics, one district hospital, 22 health sub-centres and 70 mobile health teams. The National Society is also the main organization in Afghanistan providing or facilitating treatment for congenital heart defects.

The National Society implements large-scale and long-term disaster preparedness and response programmes in close coordination with public authorities and across conflict lines. It has also enhanced its capacity to provide cash-based interventions and livelihoods support to those affected by crises and disasters.

The National Society manages five social welfare centres (local name: marastoons) that provide temporary asylum for widows, underprivileged families, and people with mental disabilities. Through these centres, the National Society has launched a programme to improve the socio-economic inclusion of underprivileged women.

In 2022, the IFRC will support the National Society to prioritize humanitarian action in maternal and child health, including routine immunization; COVID-19 vaccination; economic security for female-headed households; water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools and communities; and disaster and humanitarian crisis response.

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATION AND MOVEMENT FOOTPRINT

Name of Partner National Society	Climate	Crises	Health	Migration	Inclusion	Engaged	Accountable	Trusted
British Red Cross		✓		✓				
Canadian Red Cross		✓	✓					
Red Cross Society of China			✓					
Danish Red Cross			✓					
Finnish Red Cross			✓					
Italian Red Cross								✓
Japanese Red Cross								✓
Netherlands Red Cross		✓						
Norwegian Red Cross			✓					
Qatar Red Crescent		✓	✓					
Swedish Red Cross			✓					
Turkish Red Crescent			✓	✓				



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GLOBAL FLAGSHIPS

Local action – stronger National societies

In 2021, the National Society focused on enhancing effective leadership. In the last quarter, the National Society improved its financial management and initiated work to update its legal processes and enhanced its digital presence through the roll-out of a new digitalization framework.

Going to scale on humanitarian action and risk reduction

In 2022, the National Society will continue to contribute to IFRC flagship initiatives by entering Phase 2 of the Red Ready Project, enhancing its disaster management and cash transfer capacities. The IFRC will support the National Society to leverage mobile health teams and strengthen maternal and child health care to ensure access to the most difficult to reach and vulnerable populations.

Global health security – epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response

The National Society will also work with the IFRC to strengthen resilience and the nationwide vaccination programme as the world responds and recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. Routine immunization programme will continue, with the aim of eradicating vaccine-preventable diseases such as polio and measles.



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CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRISES

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

700,000

People to be reached

500,000



The climate is already changing faster than the global average in Afghanistan. Since 1950, Afghanistan's mean annual temperature has risen by 1.8C³. This has led to severe climatic phenomena, including the complete disappearance of some of the country's glaciers and an increase of 25 per cent in heavy rainfall events over the past 30 years⁴.

Climate change is expected to worsen poverty, undermine job creation, imperil food and water insecurity, and lead to population displacement.

Afghanistan is highly vulnerable to disasters, including floods, earthquakes, droughts, avalanches, and landslides. In 2021, Afghanistan ranked 17th on the Climate Risk Index of the most vulnerable countries.

Flooding is the most common naturally occurring hazard in Afghanistan and affects at least 100,000 people a year. In 2021, the IFRC supported the National Society to launch two flood-related disaster response emergency funding operations across six provinces and a 36 million Swiss franc emergency appeal to address drought impacts.



17th

most vulnerable
country on the 2021
Climate Risk Index



100,000

people affected by
floods every year

🎯 TARGETS

- 500,000 people to be reached with climate and environmental activities.

➡ SUPPORT

- Mainstream climate-smart operations across all programmes.
- Engage volunteers to lead awareness-raising sessions in schools and communities.
- Develop partnerships with government, local and international agencies with a focus on climate programming, forecast-based and early action mechanisms,
- Scale-up climate resilience programming.

³ NEPA, 2017

⁴ WFP, UNEP and NEPA, 2016.

EVOLVING CRISES AND DISASTERS

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

1.8 million

People to be reached

500,000



Afghanistan is one of the most fragile countries in the world. The cumulative impacts of decades of war, displacement and poverty have eroded people's resilience and capacity to cope with recurrent shocks. The situation has been made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impact.

In 2021, UNDP declared Afghanistan on the brink of universal poverty, with as much as 97 per cent of the Afghan population at risk of falling below the poverty line by mid-2022.

Afghanistan is also highly prone to intense and recurring natural hazards, including droughts, floods, landslides, earthquakes and avalanches.

The IFRC will support the National Society to strengthen its capacity to prepare for and respond to evolving disasters and crises by meeting the needs of those facing emergencies. The National Society will also strengthen coping mechanisms and enhance the resilience of the most exposed communities in line with the IFRC's Strategy 2030 and the Manila Call for Action.

In 2022, The IFRC will support the National Society to implement longer-term community resilience programming to enable vulnerable people to protect their livelihoods while providing access to safer, healthier and sustainable coping mechanisms and improved living standards.

The IFRC will support the National Society to make risk-informed decisions and develop recovery programming for disaster-affected communities. These programmes will integrate multisectoral approaches and focus on disaster risk reduction and livelihoods while increasing cash-based interventions. Engagement and coordination with key stakeholders will enable piloting and eventually institutionalizing forecast-based and early action mechanisms.

The IFRC will also support the National Society to disseminate disaster and health risk reduction information through school and community-based activities through partnership with the Ministry of Education, stakeholders such as Save the Children and UNICEF, and the mobilization of youth volunteers.

TARGETS

- Government adopts new legal instruments related to disaster risk management.



97%

of Afghan population at risk
of falling below the poverty line
by mid-2022

SUPPORT

- Review disaster risk management strategy and multi-hazard contingency planning.
- Implement resilience programming.
- Develop partnerships on resilience programming and early warning mechanisms.
- Engage youth and volunteers on disaster risk awareness messaging.
- Provide cash grants and in-kind support to vulnerable households.

GROWING GAPS IN HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

4.7 million

People to be reached

1.0 million



The pandemic has affected all elements of life in Afghanistan and has exacerbated the complex challenges that predated the outbreak of the virus. It is widely recognized that the COVID-19 figures represent a fraction of cases, due to limited testing capacity and societal reluctance, and the absence of a death register may not reflect the actual human toll.

Afghanistan's health care system further deteriorated following changes in the country's political and administrative authority and as major donors froze support. This affected more than 2,300 health facilities, leaving most unable to obtain essential medicines or pay salaries. Continued investment is crucial to prevent a total collapse of the system.

Vaccine-preventable diseases are a leading cause of infant and child mortality in Afghanistan. Polio remains endemic, while outbreaks of measles are common. Gaps in immunization programming, most severely affects areas with high numbers of internally displaced people and high levels of poverty.

Access to sufficient and affordable safe water, adequate sanitation, solid waste management and hygiene supplies remains a challenge for much of the Afghan population. While significant gains have been made in recent years, many communities still lack access.

Significant work must be done to bridge gaps in health and well-being in Afghanistan while working towards health-related targets in the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2022, the National Society will prioritize access to health care, maternal and child health, malnutrition, mental health, health and climate change, and WASH needs. The IFRC and the National Society will continue to support the Ministry of Public Health to strengthen health system activities and programmes.

🎯 TARGETS

- 4.7 million people to be reached with contextually appropriate health services.
- 433,000 people to be reached with contextually appropriate water sanitation and hygiene services.
- 90,000 people to be reached with psychosocial and mental health services.
- 700 people trained in first aid.

➡ SUPPORT

- Renew a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Public Health.
- Strengthen routine infant immunization in remote areas.
- Support Ministry of Public Health COVID-19 vaccination and Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) efforts.
- Integrate COVID-19 prevention efforts into community health services.
- Implement WASH programming in schools and through community projects.
- Enhance data management and context and evidence-based analyses.



3.7 million

people in need of emergency health services



63%

of deaths among children under five caused by infectious diseases



3.1 million

children under five face acute malnutrition

MIGRATION AND IDENTITY

Funding requirement in Swiss francs
10.2 million

People to be reached
200,000



Migration and displacement in Afghanistan are driven by a mix of conflict, environmental and economic issues, such as chronic poverty, limited coping capacity and underinvestment in rural communities and agricultural industries.

The change of political landscape in August 2021 may increase the rate of population movement, as people seek better opportunities in other countries or other locations within Afghanistan. At the same time, harsher stances on migrants and a lack of safe conditions in destination countries may prompt an increase in the number of returnees to Afghanistan.

Internally displaced people in Afghanistan have consistently reported low intentions to return to their original locations, indicating their displacement will likely be protracted with ongoing, multisectoral humanitarian needs that require an integrated response. Internally displaced people and returnees often face stigma and exclusion in host communities, mainly due to increased competition for resources and jobs.

Disasters brought on by natural hazards cause many to flee their homes, including some who were already displaced by conflict and violence. Drought occurs with increasing frequency, and in 2021 led to poor harvests and a spike in food insecurity across Afghanistan which pushed many internally displaced people into poverty and led to a rise in acute malnutrition.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also exacerbated the vulnerability of internally displaced people and returnees, especially women and people with disabilities.

As part of its strategic planning process, the National Society is calling for more integrated knowledge, skills, and intervention modalities to provide care and essential services for people on the move.

TARGETS

- 200,000 migrants, displaced people, returnees and host community members to be supported, including in hard-to-reach areas.

SUPPORT

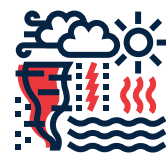
- Integrate the needs of migrants, internally displaced people and returnees in strategic and programme plans.
- Develop a cross-sectoral action plan on displacement.
- Expand cash and voucher assistance to displaced people and returnees.
- Integrate community engagement and accountability into strategic plans.



5.5 million
internally displaced people



72%
of displaced households
affected by conflict



250,000
people affected annually
by disasters brought on by
natural hazards

VALUES, POWER AND INCLUSION

Funding requirement in Swiss francs
700,000

People to be reached
110,000



Afghanistan was already facing a protection crisis before the pandemic and ahead of the political changes in 2021. It is estimated that some 12.9 million people across the country currently need some form of protection.

According to the UN Humanitarian Response Plan for 2020, children comprise 56 per cent of people in need of protection, often face persistent violence, discrimination, and are denied access to health care and education. UNICEF determined that 3.7 million children (2.2 million of whom are girls) have no access to quality learning.

Women and girls in Afghanistan continue to experience high rates of gender-based violence. Despite a lack of overall reliable data, the 2016 Demographic Health Survey found that 53 per cent of women in Afghanistan had experienced physical violence since the age of 15. The 2019 Women, Peace and Security Index found that Afghanistan was the second-worst place in the world to be a woman due to restrictions on women's involvement in society.

The changes in Afghanistan's political landscape since August 2021 point to a need to build more social inclusiveness, equity, and peace in communities. The National Society – through its widespread local presence in communities via volunteers, youth members, and local relevant services based on needs – will mobilize Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC). It will aim to expand the number of youth and volunteers engaged in service delivery and awareness (on issues such as prevention of drug use and promoting a culture of peace) to build the trust, understanding, and support of local communities.

In 2020, the National Society piloted a Women Empowerment Programme, which provided 841 widows and underprivileged women services to improve their socio-economic conditions. In 2021, this programme reached 10,000 women and girls. In 2022, the IFRC will support the National Society to reach even more women through a programme on economic security for female-headed households.

The National Society has prioritized youth and volunteer engagement, education, and women's empowerment as critical areas for development in 2022.

TARGETS

- 110,000 people to be reached with Values, Power and Inclusion activities.
- 340 people to be reached with Red Cross Red Crescent educational programmes.



12.9 million
people in need of
protection



2nd
worst country in the
world to be a woman

SUPPORT

- Roll out Protection Gender and Inclusion Minimum Standard across all operations.
- Integrate Community Engagement and Accountability into policies and strategic guidance.
- Provide WASH facilities and hygiene items for students, including girls, to attend school, ensuring the inclusion of all groups.
- Expand support for women-headed households.
- Mobilize Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change.



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ENABLER 1 – ENGAGED

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

760,000

The IFRC will support the National Society to work collectively on key challenges facing Afghan communities. To address key drivers of fragility – conflict, climate change, migration and displacement – the IFRC will support the National Society to enhance services to better respond to protracted crises. It will also develop programmes that strengthen community resilience.

The National Society works with partner organizations, government ministries and local authorities. Through these connections, it has engaged in policy discussions to address health and disaster-related issues. In 2022, the IFRC will support the National Society to continue humanitarian diplomacy with all parties at national and local levels.

The IFRC will support the National Society to pursue Coalition for Resilience with civil society organizations, community groups and NGOs. Through the coalition, the National Society would contribute to achieving common goals, implementing measurable targets and expanding collective impact while supporting communities in need.

Subject to available funding and technical support, the National Society will undergo a digital transformation that will overhaul all critical organizational aspects, including governance, management and accountability systems, planning, management, evaluation and reporting activities, branch development, youth and volunteer deployment communications and resource mobilization. The IFRC and the National Society will enhance basic digital capacity and tackle critical power supply and connectivity gaps while aiming to advance data and system management capabilities across the network.

The IFRC will also support the National Society to implement its revised communication strategy and enhanced digital communication and media relations to achieve greater outreach.

SUPPORT

- Engage with diplomatic representatives, humanitarian and development agencies.
- Leverage status as an independent auxiliary to public authorities.
- Develop external-facing content to support humanitarian diplomacy, communication, and resource mobilization activities.
- Extend National Society digital transformation efforts.



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ENABLER 2 – ACCOUNTABLE

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

40,000

In an effort to reach more people in need and support communities across Afghanistan in an accountable and agile manner, the IFRC will continue to act as a resource mobilization platform to support the National Society in expanding its reach.

The IFRC will also facilitate introductions between international partners – including financial institutions and international donor agencies – and the National Society to develop longer-term partnership-based income streams.

Financial resources will be safeguarded and managed effectively, efficiently and transparently by supporting the National Society in submitting externally audited annual financial statements.

In 2022, the National Society will integrate systematic components on fraud and corruption and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse into programme design and implementation, including in training for its staff.

The IFRC will support the National Society to deliver timely reports to donors to ensure quality and accountability. The National Society will strengthen program implementation and impact documentation through enhanced data management, the production of marketing materials, and case studies. This will foster stronger relationships with partners and donors, tied to the National Society's funding cycle while demonstrating impact and value for money.

TARGETS

- 100% of emergency operations mainstream Federation-wide risk management system to increase collective quality and accountability.
- 44 staff trained on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.
- 44 staff complete the fraud and corruption training.

SUPPORT

- Develop local staff capacity, including through technical training for financial staff.
- Integrate fraud and corruption and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse in programmes.
- Train staff to mitigate risks of fraud and corruption, sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse.
- Enhance capacity to build and maintain relationships with donors.
- Improve quality assurance and accountability measures in programmes and projects.



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ENABLER 3 – TRUSTED

Funding requirement in Swiss francs

360,000

In 2021, the National Society continued to demonstrate that it is the emergency response and health service partner of choice in Afghanistan. It has received special recognition for its access to and acceptance in hard-to-reach-areas.

In 2022, the IFRC will support the National Society to strengthen this position for local humanitarian action, leveraging its nationwide network of volunteers, members, staff and global network.

The prevention of fraud and corruption remains a top priority for the National Society. In 2022, building on its gender policy, the IFRC will support the National Society to develop and roll out a complementary prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse policy. It will support the National Society to translate critical components of these policies in training for all staff and volunteers and strengthen mechanisms to protect National Society volunteers while promoting their psychosocial well-being.

Youth volunteers are critical catalysts of behavioural change and local action and form the backbone of the Afghan National Society. The IFRC will support the National Society to strengthen youth engagement by improving its youth and volunteer management platform. This will enable youth to have greater involvement in co-designing volunteer strategies, plans and programmes, and engaging in flagship initiatives.

The IFRC will streamline support to the National Society to strengthen membership coordination mechanisms, including shared leadership initiatives implemented during its COVID-19 response in 2021. This will lead to greater trust by the membership and greater efficiency and effectiveness in humanitarian actions.

SUPPORT

- Strengthen membership coordination.
- Enhance youth participation in decision-making and planning processes.
- Organize a nationwide youth and volunteer summit.
- Complete and roll-out youth and volunteer strategy.



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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International Federation of Red Cross
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