



# BANGLADESH

2023 IFRC network country plan

Funding Requirement **CHF 110.7M**

Appeal number **MAABD001**

## In support of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society



**68**

National Society branches



**2,934**

National Society staff



**122,617**

National Society volunteers

## People to be reached



**1.1M**

Ongoing emergency operations



**180,000**

Climate and environment



**400,000**

Disasters and crises



**220,000**

Health and wellbeing



**3,000**

Migration and displacement



**32,000**

Values, power and inclusion

## IFRC network multiyear focus

### Emergency response

- Population movement in Cox's Bazar
  - Floods in northeastern region

### Longer term needs

- Disaster resilience and response
  - Health programming
- Support to the displaced population from Myanmar

### Capacity development

- Humanitarian diplomacy
- Innovation and digitalization

## Key country data

**Population** **166.3**

**INFORM severity rating** **high**

**Climate ND-GAIN Index rank** **98**

**Human Development Index rank** **133**

**Population below poverty level** **24.3%**

## Hazards



Climate change



Rising sea levels



Floods



Cyclones



Cross-border  
population movement



Technological  
hazards

## Funding requirements

**Total 110.7M** CHF

Through the IFRC

**44.3M** CHF

Through Participating National Societies

→ **13M** CHF

Host National Society

**53.4 M** CHF

### IFRC Breakdown

**32.7M** CHF

Ongoing emergency operations

### Longer term needs

**2.5M** CHF

Climate and environment

**3M** CHF

Disasters and crises

**1.2M** CHF

Health and wellbeing

**500,000** CHF

Migration and displacement

**263,000** CHF

Values, power and inclusion

**4.1M** CHF

Enabling local actors

## Ongoing emergencies

**MDRBD018**

Bangladesh Population Movement

**MDRBD028**

Bangladesh Flash Flood 2022

## Participating National Societies

American Red Cross

Australian Red Cross\*

British Red Cross

The Canadian Red Cross Society

Red Cross Society of China\*

Danish Red Cross

German Red Cross

Japanese Red Cross Society

The Republic of Korea National  
Red Cross\*

Kuwait Red Crescent Society\*

Red Cross of Monaco\*

The Netherlands Red Cross\*

New Zealand Red Cross\*

Qatar Red Crescent Society

Swedish Red Cross

Swiss Red Cross

Turkish Red Crescent Society



# NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

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**The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society** has its headquarters in Dhaka. The National Society has 68 branches across the country, with one in each of the districts and one in each of the cities of Dhaka, Chattogram, Rajshahi and Khulna. A network of 82,500 life members, 8,100 Red Crescent youth volunteers and 74,000 Cyclone Preparedness Programme volunteers helps the National Society act as a first responder to disasters, crises or pandemics.

In line with its mission and vision, the National Society has identified three strategic goals in its [Strategic Plan 2021–2025](#):

- Enhance capacity to contribute towards saving lives from disasters and crises, with a view to reducing adverse impacts through building resilient communities
- Improve access to quality health services for safe, dignified and healthy living
- Transform into a strong National Society

Its national mandate is to complement the Government's emergency response efforts, particularly disaster preparedness plans and programmes. The National Society is mandated to work with the most vulnerable communities, aiming to proactively incorporate measures to reduce the impacts of climate change in

all their programmes, ranging from disaster risk reduction, health, water sanitation and hygiene, shelter and livelihoods.

The globally recognized community-based disaster preparedness programme, the [Cyclone Preparedness Programme \(CPP\)](#), is a flagship programme jointly run by the National Society and the Government of Bangladesh in the field of disaster management. It covers early warning systems, search and rescue, evacuation, sheltering, first aid, relief distribution and rehabilitation activities. The National Society has been a pioneer in forecast-based actions for floods, cyclones and heatwaves.

The Bangladesh Red Crescent has eight blood centres, five general hospitals providing comprehensive health-care services, 56 mother and child health care centres providing primary and maternity healthcare services, three outdoor clinics, two Red Crescent nursing institutes, and two Red Crescent midwifery institutes.

With the support of the IFRC and network partners, the National Society has assisted more than eight million people affected by different disasters in the country in the last 15 years. It has mobilized more than US\$120 million through 17 IFRC Emergency Appeals and 11 Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) operations.

## IFRC NETWORK ACTION IN 2023

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### Joint situational analysis

Bangladesh has a population of 165 million people, with one of the highest population densities in the world (an average of 1,119 people per square kilometre living in the country). Two-thirds of the population of this low-lying country live within five metres of sea level, many of them in rapidly expanding informal settlements and on marginal agricultural land. Long-term internal migration is dominated by economic forces, often linked to natural hazards such as riverbank erosion, which drive people to cities in search of better livelihood opportunities and services. There is also a risk of a severe earthquake hitting the country, due to its geographical location in a seismically active region. The northern and eastern regions, as well as overcrowded urban areas of the country, are particularly susceptible to earthquakes.

Apart from natural and climate-induced disasters, and population movement crises, Bangladesh suffers from industrial disasters and fires, and health and economic crises triggered by COVID-19 and the conflict in Ukraine. Bangladesh's inflation was recorded at 7.56 per cent in June 2022, the highest in nine years. Bangladesh is also home to the world's largest refugee camp, Cox's Bazar. The camp is located in the southeast coastal district of the country and provides refuge to some 870,000 people from the Rakhine state of Myanmar.

Bangladesh is highly vulnerable to disasters and climatic variability due to its geographical location. Disasters such as cyclones, floods, river erosion and landslides occur annually, jeopardizing the lives and livelihoods of millions of people across affected communities, due to the country's high population density.

Considering the significant disaster risks, Bangladesh has made rapid progress in reducing the death toll of extreme weather events through the development of early warning systems and storm shelters, as well as the reduction of poverty and improved education rates.

Bangladesh's health care has improved remarkably in the last two decades. However, less than half of the population is covered by essential health services. Inequitable access to those services is one of the main issues, with wide differences in coverage between districts and economic groups. The country faces a triple burden of communicable diseases, non-communicable diseases and injuries, as the country becomes more urbanized and industrialized. Poor water and sanitation issues create extreme vulnerability to illness and disease, mainly affecting populations living in urban poor areas. Hygiene practices, especially in rural areas, are very poor.

Bangladesh experiences both internal and external migration, which is driven by overpopulation, high rates of unemployment, low wages, lack of access to education and health care, and environmental degradation. The country has one of the highest figures for disaster-related internal displacements in the world. Since 2017, Bangladesh has also become host to hundreds of thousands of people fleeing violence in the Rakhine state of Myanmar, one of the biggest population movement crises in the world.

The benefits of economic growth, technological progress and digitalization are not shared equally in society, with millions of vulnerable people falling behind on key development indicators, which has implications on the overall growth and prosperity of the country.

## Ongoing emergency response: Bangladesh Population Movement

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

- Appeal number: [MDRBD018](#)
- Appeal launch date: 18 March 2017  
Appeal end date: 31 December 2024
- People affected: 927,000
- People to be assisted: 1 million (camp: 884,000; host community: 100,000; Bhashan Char: 18,000)

## Short description of the emergency operational strategy

The population movement crisis that unfolded in 2016, with the greatest influx in August 2017, resulted in the displacement of people from the Rakhine state of Myanmar, who crossed the border into Bangladesh. The situation continues as a protracted crisis because of the colossal number of displaced people who are completely reliant on humanitarian assistance to meet their everyday needs, against a backdrop of uncertainty about their future, including the possibility of voluntary return. Approximately 927,000 people need food and access to health services and safe water, shelter and protection services. They need support with preparation for seasonal cyclones and monsoon rains, health disasters such as pandemics, and protection against the impacts of environmental and ecosystem degradation. The evolving crisis is also manifested in the continuing challenges faced by the local community in terms of livelihoods and the local economy, brought about by the presence of the huge number of displaced people from Rakhine.

The Government of Bangladesh called on the Bangladesh Red Crescent to respond to the emergency in December 2016, in line with the National Society's mandate to provide humanitarian services as auxiliary to the public authorities. Accordingly, an international operation was launched with the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF), followed by an Emergency Appeal in March 2017. The appeal has been revised on seven occasions, with the last revision covering the period from January 2022 to 31 December 2024. The seventh revision marks a new phase of the IFRC's support to the National Society in its continued response to the protracted crisis, and in compliance with the request of the Government to continue providing humanitarian services as an auxiliary.

The Bangladesh Red Crescent's Population Movement Operation in Cox's Bazar was established in 2017. Today, it has a team of 282 staff members. The Cox's Bazar unit of the National Society has been supporting the operation from the beginning of the crisis, particularly through its 300 Red Crescent youth volunteers.

## Areas of emergency response by sector

### Risk reduction, climate adaptation and recovery

Up to one million people will indirectly benefit from the cyclone early warning system extension in all 34 camps. Up to 40,000 households (approximately 200,000

people) in camps and host families will directly benefit from livelihood support and disaster risk reduction training, as well as the provision of equipment to reduce the risks and enhance their resilience to disasters.

A large number of Cyclone Preparedness Programme (CPP) volunteers are working in this initiative from host communities. Opportunities can be strengthened for a wider community resilience initiative within and beyond camps.

### Strengthening health facilities

165,000 people of the targeted population are being provided with rapid medical management of injuries and diseases, disease prevention and preparedness programmes, including community-based health and first aid training. Assistance will be inclusive of local communities, to ensure the cohesiveness of the health services provided.

### Community health

The Epidemic Control for Volunteers' Toolkit is disseminated to the key volunteers of host communities and people living in camps, in order to reduce the basic risk factors at local level and connect with health service providers, including the National Society at the local level.

### Shelter, housing and settlements

The Appeal response will provide 200,000 families in camps and host communities with essential household and emergency shelter items, and will provide access to a shelter awareness programme. Out of 40,000 families, at least 7,558 will be assisted with transitional shelter assistance, including capacity building for shelter improvements. Durable mid-term shelter assistance in the camps will be provided to 2,500 families, and more than 750 households in host communities (Palong Khali Union) will be supported with shelter assistance, capacity building on shelter and settlements, cash, propane gas and other relief items.

### Water and sanitation

Approximately 105,000 people are targeted to receive water, sanitation and hygiene services in camps, including:

- Increasing access to clean water using piped water and hand pumps
- Upgrading latrines and bathing facilities to ensure protection and dignity for women, girls and vulnerable populations in camps

- Operation and maintenance of water and sanitation facilities in camps, including water and faecal sludge quality monitoring in the camps
- Access to improve water and sanitation facilities in host communities
- Rolling out the solid waste management pilot in camp and host communities
- Management and care of environmental and safe sanitation disposal
- Participatory hygiene sessions, especially on menstrual hygiene management and acute watery diarrhoea prevention in camps, host communities and host community schools

### Livelihoods

4,000 households in host communities will be provided with skills-based training and unconditional cash grants. 6,000 households in camp communities will be provided with unconditional cash grants. Livelihoods is one of the key areas in this crisis which can link mutual learning opportunities for both communities and can provide opportunities for social cohesion. An integrated approach will be adopted to select the geographical location.

### Protection, gender and inclusion / community engagement and accountability

Approximately 260,000 people are targeted to receive protection, gender and inclusion services in camps and host communities in Ukhia Upazila, with potential expansion to other camps and Teknaf Upazila. These centres can also be used as venues for events to share information on risk reduction of violence between host and guest communities.

## Ongoing emergency response: Bangladesh Flash Flood 2022

- Appeal number: [MDRBD028](#)
- Appeal launch date: 24 June 2022
- Appeal end date: 30 June 2023
- People affected: more than 7 million
- People to be assisted: 300,000

### Short description of the emergency operational strategy

Torrential rain and incessant downpours from upstream regions since 15 June 2021 have resulted in the worst flooding in living memory in the northeastern



districts of Bangladesh. Cherrapunji and Mawsynram in India's Meghalaya district, bordering the northeast part of Bangladesh, have registered record-breaking rainfall which has resulted in the overflowing of the Surma-Kushiyara river basin. 80 per cent of the northeastern region of Bangladesh was flooded. An estimated 7.2 million people have been affected by the flood in the nine northeastern districts of Sylhet, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Kishorganj, Netrokona, Brahmanbaria, Mymensingh and Sherpur. Among these nine districts, the most severely affected are Sylhet, Sunamganj, Netrokona and Habiganj. The affected people have been forced to leave their inundated, or nearly inundated, houses to take refuge elsewhere as the water level in nearby rivers continues to rise. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief reported that more than 482,000 people had been evacuated to 1,600 flood centres as of 21 June 2022. The Government called in army troops, the navy, the coastguard and air force to assist the civil administration in evacuating people or reaching affected people, particularly in the hardest-hit Sylhet region.

The IFRC membership supports the Bangladesh Red Crescent in ensuring its response addresses the needs of the most vulnerable, focusing on immediate assistance in the initial phase, and recovery assistance later. Throughout the operation, cash and voucher assistance provides the major part of the plan.

In the initial response phase, the plan is to reach to more than 300,000 people with multi-purpose cash grants, emergency shelter assistance, safe drinking water, hygiene promotion, emergency sanitation facilities and emergency health services, addressing protection issues by ensuring the full integration of community engagement and accountability, and protection, gender and inclusion considerations. For recovery assistance, conditional cash grants will be distributed for restoring livelihoods – linking up with the local market, and construction of flood-resilient latrines and houses, with technical assistance. There is a gender-sensitive approach, so that both men and women have access to humanitarian aid, and socio-cultural barriers limiting access to services are considered. A gender-sensitive selection process, along with an accessible accountability mechanism and a gender-balanced field team ensure easy access by men and women.

This emergency operation also contributes to capacity strengthening of the National Society, including branch

offices, with a greater focus on the readiness and preparedness initiatives as prioritized in the Strategic Plan 2021-2025 and in the membership-wide National Society development support direction paper.

## Areas of emergency response by sector

### Integrated assistance – livelihoods and multi-purpose cash

The operation takes an integrated approach to meet the needs of the population. This includes multi-purpose cash assistance, emergency shelter support by providing tarpaulins, shelter toolkits and technical guidance, conditional cash support and technical support for restoring livelihoods and reconstructing shelters.

### Health and care – including water, sanitation and hygiene

Emergency health services are being deployed using mobile medical teams to provide immediate life-saving interventions. The renovation and equipping of the National Society's mother and child health centres ensure access to community health facilities. This Appeal focuses on primary health care services in the catchment areas of the centres, including community health, psychosocial support and first aid programming. Safe drinking water is provided by mobilizing water purification units, disinfecting, and repairing water points. The installation of emergency communal latrines and construction of household latrines helps to improve access to sanitation, combined with hygiene promotion and the distribution of hygiene parcels. The Appeal promotes menstrual hygiene in communities and supports diarrhoea case management in selected areas.

### Protection and prevention

The operation ensures protection, gender and inclusion, as well as community engagement and accountability, in all activities and sectors. The operation emphasizes social inclusion and ensures that all members of communities can access support as needed. This includes actions such as cash or in-kind assistance to meet the needs of people living with disabilities. Targeted population selection criteria are set to address the needs of the most vulnerable. Community residents are consulted to finalize this selection.

Climate adaptation is being incorporated to reduce the vulnerability of communities, combined with the inclusion of risk reduction activities.

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## Strategic priorities

### Climate and environment

Climate-induced challenges are responsible for frequent natural disasters and low resilience capabilities of communities in Bangladesh. Its geographical location in a major deltaic plain and low sea level, combined with a rise in temperature of 0.5 degrees Celsius from 1979 to 2019 and increasing rainfall, makes the country particularly vulnerable to climate change related disasters. The country is particularly vulnerable to riverine erosion and flooding, rising sea levels, and salinization of groundwater and littoral areas, and increasing extreme weather patterns, including cyclones and droughts.<sup>1</sup>

Climate change brings significant consequences to the country's economic prosperity and quality of life, with the negative effects disproportionately felt by the poorest and most marginalized. The impacts of climate change are seen both in rural and urban areas in different sectors, including safe drinking water resources, sustainable livelihoods and agriculture.

While part of Bangladesh's vulnerability to the effects of climate change comes from its dependence on agriculture, global warming and climate-related disasters are endangering food security, ecosystems, both rural and urban economies, transportation, culture and heritage, and natural resources. There are also internal disputes and conflict over the control of limited resources, due to the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation.

Climate change will bring additional challenges to Bangladesh, causing damage to the ecosystem and natural resources in the future. Unplanned urbanization and industrial growth have been leading to high environmental degradation and pollution. Bangladesh is also experiencing the migration of thousands of indigenous and marginalized people, who are losing their diverse livelihoods. The country will see climate-displaced people, especially from coastal regions, which will be a major challenge to overcome for the country in future. With such vulnerability to climate change, its humanitarian impact in Bangladesh is likely to be massive.

Climate-related work in Bangladesh cuts across several of the National Society's strategic priorities. An integrated approach will ensure that its programming is

climate-smart and responds to the growing challenge of climate change. The IFRC supports the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society in implementing projects and programmes on climate risk reduction and adaptation activities, focusing on priorities including community resilience, flood resilience and empowering women.

Through the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations of the European Commission Pilot Programmatic Partnership (ECHO PPP) in Bangladesh, an integrated and comprehensive approach to disaster preparedness, risk reduction and resilience will be practiced in four districts of Bangladesh: Dhaka, Sylhet, Rajshahi and Cox's Bazar.

The National Society is part of the IFRC's [Global Climate Resilience Programme](#), which aims to foster an unprecedented scale-up in locally led climate-smart disaster risk reduction and adaptation efforts to prevent and reduce climate-related disaster impacts, and build community-level climate resilience. 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.

### Main actions and areas of support

- Scale-up of climate-smart disaster risk reduction, early actions, and preparedness
- Innovative climate-resilient livelihoods and sustainable water resource management
- Reduction of public health impacts due to climate change
- Urban hazards and climate displacement
- Developing small and medium enterprise in rural and urban areas focusing on climate change
- Observing national and international days of climate change adaptation, environmental protection, community resilience and disaster risk reduction

<sup>1</sup> Analysis in this section supported by the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre: <https://www.climatecentre.org/>

- Policy and media advocacy at central and district level on climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and community resilience
- Implementing forecast-based financing programmes

## Statistics

Bangladesh ranks as the **seventh most vulnerable country to climate change** in the last three years, which has increased the susceptibility of communities and escalated environmental degradation.

## Disasters and Crises

### Natural and climate hazards

Bangladesh is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, affected by natural and climate-induced hazards including floods, cyclones, riverbank erosion, landslides and the threat of earthquakes. Floods and cyclones constitute the main disasters in Bangladesh. Annual flooding affects the country each year, with the extent and impact of monsoon floods being greater in terms of the loss of lives and livelihoods compared with flash floods. Cyclones in Bangladesh have brought catastrophic consequences in terms of deaths, loss and damage to infrastructure, and livelihoods.

Riverbank erosion is a key vulnerability in Bangladesh, forcing people to migrate to other areas of the country. Landslides are an emerging threat in the country, linked to deforestation and unplanned urbanization of hilly areas, as well as the increased frequency of precipitation. Although no major earthquakes have occurred in the country in recent history, there is the risk of a severe earthquake hitting the country due to its geographical location in a seismically active region.

### Industrial disasters and fires

Fire is a significant hazard in Bangladesh, mainly in urban and industrial areas. Fire incidents have increased four times over the last two decades due to population density, unplanned urbanization, the violation of rules for constructing buildings, increased use of gas cylinders, and limited oversight from the Government on the implementation of rules and regulations.

### The population movement crisis

One of the biggest population movement crises in the world has been the fleeing of people, including children, from the Rakhine state of Myanmar due to violence

in 2017, to overcrowded camps in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char (Noakhlai district). People living in the camps are particularly vulnerable to natural and man-made disasters. In the past, the camps have been affected by landslides, floods and fires. Due to their location, there is a high risk that the camps could be hit by a cyclone in the future. Within the camps, there is important work to be done to advance child protection, and to suppress sexual violence, trafficking and the exclusion of people living with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

Between 2017 and June 2022, there were at least 27 emergencies in Bangladesh. In the same period, the IFRC supported the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society through seven [Emergency Appeals](#), including one launched in 2017 to meet the needs of displaced people from the Rakhine state of Myanmar and host communities.

### Main actions and areas of support

- Investing in earthquake preparedness, and collaboration and coordination with the Government of Bangladesh and other actors
- Enhancing the response capacity of the National Society
- Enhancing collaboration and coordination with disaster risk reduction actors nationally and internationally
- Strengthening early warning dissemination mechanisms at community and organizational level
- Raising awareness of disaster risk reduction issues at community and organizational level
- Investing in structural and non-structural measures to enhance preparedness
- Investing in structural and non-structural mitigation options
- Integrating nature-based solutions and green response in response, recovery, preparedness and mitigation initiatives
- Building capacity of community-based organizations and local-level administrative tier of the Government
- Enhancing the capacity of community and unit volunteers so that they can work during emergencies
- Documenting best practices and sharing with different stakeholders



## Statistics

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From 2014 to 2020, **15 major disasters affected 42 million people**, displacing 9.4 million people and damaging 4.6 million houses. The disasters led to over 1,000 deaths and US\$4.6 billion in economic damages

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Between 2014 to 2020, **monsoon floods affected 28.4 million people**, temporarily displaced 2.86 million people, resulted in damages to 3.7 million houses and led to US\$1.4 billion in economic losses

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Between 2014 to 2020, **cyclones caused US\$2.3 billion in economic losses**, with the 2020 Cyclone Amphan accounting for US\$1.5 in billion economic losses

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Between 2015 to 2019, approximately **15,196 hectares of land had been eroded**, resulting in migration

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Between 2000 to 2018, there were **204 landslides** which caused 727 deaths and 1,017 injuries

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According to the fire service and civil defence, around **285,000 fires** occurred in the country between January 1999 and December 2020, causing death, injury and economic damage

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More than **769,000 people (including more than 400,000 children) from the Rakhine state of Myanmar** fled due to violence in 2017, and as of 31 July 2022, 936,733 people live in 33 overcrowded camps in Cox's Bazar and Bhasan Char (Noakhlai district)

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## Health and wellbeing

The major public health challenges in Bangladesh are caused by both communicable and non-communicable diseases. The country faces diseases such as diarrhoea, risk of cholera, as well as vector-borne diseases like malaria and dengue. Households with poor water and sanitation facilities increase the risk of outbreaks of such diseases. Mortality due to these diseases has been reduced, but morbidity remains a threat for the health system of the country. During and after disasters, access to water and sanitation facilities is very challenging and practicing hygiene norms are difficult due to fragile water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in rural and urban poor communities.

In addition, non-communicable diseases like cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer and chronic respiratory diseases are responsible for 67 per cent of all deaths in Bangladesh, many of which are premature.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on the health and well-being of millions of people in Bangladesh. The pandemic has also had a significant impact on the health system and livelihoods of the people, posing a serious threat to the growing economy of the country.

The other health challenges facing the country include insufficient maternal, newborn and child health, lack of awareness regarding sexual and reproductive health, and inadequate menstrual hygiene management and awareness. Mental health is also a concern, especially among those who are 60 years and older.

The incidence of road traffic accidents is growing in Bangladesh, with deaths and injuries resulting from these predominantly affecting young people and the working-age population more broadly. Public awareness to ensure road safety is very much needed for users of private vehicles.

Bangladesh's complex, multi-level primary health care system faces a shortage of qualified health care workers and vast disparities between urban and rural regions. Although the Government is working to improve service quality and provision, the availability of a qualified, formally educated health workforce is still less than 70 per cent of the necessary amount. The effect of this is especially felt at the community level. Bangladesh's hospitals also suffer from a chronic shortage of health workforce, hospital bed capacity, and proper information management and referral mechanisms.

There is a significant need for:

- Training of health professionals and volunteers for public health emergencies
- Community-based training
- Orientation sessions for epidemic and pandemic preparedness
- Strengthening immunization activities
- Enhancing mental health and psychosocial support
- Increasing voluntary blood donation
- Increasing oxygen and ambulance support
- First aid
- Capacity development of blood banks

Improving access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene is important in emergency and non-emergency situations to protect communities from water- and food-borne diseases.

With the support of the IFRC and participating National Societies, the Bangladesh Red Crescent will advocate for strategic and operational positioning of the National Society as the partner of choice for relevant public health services with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and other relevant ministries. The National Society will participate in developing and implementing key health strategies like the National Cholera Control Plan and National Action Plan for Health Security.

## **Main actions and areas of support**

### **Health institutions**

- Increasing the scope of the National Society's maternal and child health centres by adding components including non-communicable disease screening and oral rehydration therapy in some of the existing facilities
- Focusing on the quality assurance aspects of blood transfusion centres for safe and adequate blood supply
- Increasing support in promotion of voluntary non-remunerated blood donations – a vital support to national blood transfusion services

### **Community-based health programme**

- Implementing the community-based health programme within the catchment areas of mother and child health centres to provide comprehensive health care
- Capacity building of midwives, assistant midwives, health promoters and volunteers in mother and child health centres
- Strengthening national immunization activities through the National Society's health facilities
- In close coordination with the Global First Aid Reference Centre, harmonizing the National Society's first aid curriculum in line with the international first aid and resuscitation guidelines

### **Emergency health (epidemic and pandemic preparedness)**

- Scaling up epidemic and pandemic preparedness by increasing organizational capacity development at national and branch level, to prevent and respond to epidemics and pandemics

- Continuing implementation of the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations of the European Commission Pilot Programmatic Partnership (ECHO PPP) project, which will scale up and strengthen the countrywide community-based surveillance system, preparedness and response for disease by leveraging its unique access to vulnerable communities and strong community-based volunteer network
- Mainstreaming mental health and psychosocial support in emergency response and long-term programming to strengthen the National Society's capacity for psychological first aid as one of the main interventions during emergencies, and building a strong referral pathway for specialized care, including the mental health and psychosocial well-being of staff and volunteers

### **Developmental water, sanitation and hygiene**

- Developing independent water, sanitation and hygiene units and water, sanitation and hygiene strategy for both emergency and developmental interventions
- Enhancing long-term developmental water, sanitation and hygiene collaboration and coordination with national-level water, sanitation and hygiene actors
- Integrating water, sanitation and hygiene interventions into disaster risk reduction and resilience programmes
- Constructing gender- and disaster-sensitive water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructures, which can withstand disasters
- Enhancing participation of vulnerable groups in planning, implementation and monitoring of developmental water, sanitation and hygiene programmes
- Documenting best practices on developmental water, sanitation and hygiene interventions, and share with wider stakeholders
- Constructing and renovating water points, construction of sanitation facilities at household and community level, solid waste management, faecal sludge management, capacity development of communities and volunteers on hygiene promotion, school-level water, sanitation and hygiene interventions, menstrual hygiene management and sanitation marketing

## Emergency water, sanitation and hygiene

- Procuring and maintaining water purification units
- Replenishing water purification tablets, hygiene kits and dignity kits
- Replenishing contingency water, sanitation and hygiene materials
- Providing national disaster response team water, sanitation and hygiene training for volunteers and staff
- Developing capacity of unit volunteers in hygiene promotion and menstrual hygiene management
- Developing emergency information, education and communication materials

## Public health, water, sanitation and hygiene

- Building the capacity of volunteers on hygiene promotion, nutrition and other cross-cutting issues, so that they can disseminate preventive messages and provide rapid water, sanitation and hygiene support to people during any kind of epidemic and pandemic, as well as other emergencies and non-emergency situations

## Cholera country support platform

- Providing multi-sectoral operational support as well as advocacy, coordination and policy guidance necessary for the Government of Bangladesh to develop, fund, implement and monitor its National Cholera Control Plan effectively, ensuring consistency and alignment with the Global Roadmap

## Road safety

- Minimizing loss of human life through enhanced skills on road safety, first aid practices and post-crash response among public transport drivers, youth volunteers, students, teachers and guardians

## Statistics

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Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been more than 1.9 million COVID-19 cases and more than **29,000 COVID-related deaths** in the country

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Bangladesh scores **49 out of 100** on the Universal Health Care service coverage index

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According to the World Health Organization, **nearly 400 children die each day** from acute respiratory tract infections in Bangladesh

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Maternal health still is a leading issue due to a **high maternal death rate of 173 per 100,000 live births** between 2000 and 2017

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The Accidents Research Institute claims that **1,000 people die and 35,000 are injured in road crashes each year** in Bangladesh

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**68.3 million people are without access to safe drinking water** and 103 million have no access to improved sanitation

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Bangladesh has improved immunization, with the routine immunization coverage in the country above 80 per cent and the successful **COVID-19 vaccination of more than 76 per cent of the population**

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## Migration and displacement

Despite the Bangladesh Government's efforts to protect labour migrants, there are important challenges affecting the thousands of people that leave Bangladesh each year to work in other countries. Irregular migrants face many risks, including being misled, abused and put in dangerous situations by traffickers, as well as being detained or deported. Women, in particular, are at higher risk of being abused and exploited. Returnees also often find themselves in vulnerable conditions, with limited access to employment, health care and psychosocial support. Many migrants experience rejection from their communities, in particular female survivors of sexual violence and those returning with no money or savings.<sup>2</sup>

Those looking to migrate need better access to information through training and awareness raising, to highlight the risks and costs of migration and ensure informed decision-making. They need access to livelihood and educational opportunities as alternatives to migration. Returnees need a variety of services, including psychosocial support, livelihood opportunities, skills development and access to health care. In addition, communities need to increase their understanding of the challenges of migration to ensure acceptance of returnees, particularly women.

Large-scale internal migration is linked to poverty, seasonal and agricultural labour demand, disasters and climate change. It is dominated by economic forces

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2 Analysis in this section supported by the Red Cross Red Crescent Global Migration Lab: <https://www.redcross.org.au/globalmigrationlab/>

(often linked to natural hazards such as riverbank erosion) which drive people to cities in search of better livelihood opportunities and services. Internal migration and internal displacement are interlinked, and it is often difficult in the Bangladesh context to determine the extent to which mobility is voluntary or forced.

Internal migration has led to the rapid growth of urban slums, posing excessive pressure on the environment, health and the economy. As a result, internal migrants are exposed to new issues such as unsafe working and living environments, lack of basic services such as water and sanitation, vulnerability to flooding and waterlogging, health hazards linked to environmental degradation, and sexual and gender-based violence. Children of migrant families living in slums are particularly vulnerable.

Migration and displacement in Bangladesh are areas in need of support. According to its Strategic Plan 2021–2025, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society strives to effectively engage with migrants, displaced persons and host communities to assess and respond to their priority requirements, with an emphasis on migration and restoring family links activities, as well as raising awareness of migrants' risk and vulnerability.

The National Society, with the support of the IFRC and other partners, has responded to the humanitarian needs of displaced persons from Myanmar to Bangladesh, through the Population Movement Operation, since 2017. The National Society and its partners are playing a significant role by supporting preparedness activities for populations in camps and host community settings in Cox's Bazar. The National Society is also focusing on improving the quality of interventions as well as capacity building of human resources. The IFRC will support the National Society in establishing humanitarian service points along migratory routes like Cox's Bazar.

The National Society and the IFRC are working closely with the International Organization of Migration and the Displacement Management Cluster, led by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, to support the Government in implementing the Strategy for Management of Internal Displacement Induced by Disasters and Climate Impacts. Aligned with this, the National Society and the IFRC are working closely to track displacement and work with the Government and the broader humanitarian community to find solutions for displaced people before they become desperate to move to cities or consider other coping mechanisms, including migration.

## Main actions and areas of support

- Humanitarian response and assistance for migrants and internally displaced persons, including health, psychosocial support services, safe referrals, provision of relief items, shelter, cash and voucher assistance, information including risk communication and risk engagement, livelihoods, education and other sectors
- Protection services for migrants and internally displaced persons, in line with protection, gender and inclusion guidelines and the minimum protection approach, including legal assistance, safe referrals, border and detention monitoring, restoring family links, child protection and anti-trafficking initiatives
- Establishing and implementing humanitarian service points, in line with the IFRC Humanitarian Service Points Toolkit
- Building social cohesion between migrants and host communities, including activities to address stigma and xenophobia
- Supporting internally displaced people moving to urban slums to adapt to live in the city, by improving skills and connecting them to the urban employment market
- Further assessing the migration situation in Bangladesh
- Partnering within the IFRC network on international migrants
- Integrating and mainstreaming migration and displacement principles, practices and policies across the National Society's operations and programmes, including community engagement and accountability, protection, gender and inclusion, restoring family links, health, shelter, and cash and voucher assistance
- Supporting principled partnerships with other organizations in the field of migration and displacement
- Supporting cross-border and route-based cooperation between National Societies
- Supporting durable solutions for internally displaced persons, whether returning, resettling or relocating, in line with the Movement policy on internal displacement
- Preventing the conditions that lead to internal displacement in the context of disasters and climate change – disaster risk reduction, resilience building and climate change adaptation

- Strengthening the capacity of the National Society in the field of migration and displacement – needs assessments, development of migration policies and strategies, training, workshops and peer-to-peer support
- Supporting the establishment of digital platforms to facilitate access to all tools, guidance and other documents related to migration and displacement

## Statistics

In 2020, Bangladesh ranked as the **sixth country of origin of international migrants**, with 7.4 million Bangladeshis (4.49 per cent of the population) living abroad

Most migrants working abroad undertake low-skilled jobs, with **83.8 per cent of females employed as domestic workers and 77.4 per cent of males employed as unskilled workers**

In 2020, **4,510 Bangladeshi nationals arrived in Europe** as irregular migrants, using sea or land routes to reach Italy (the main destination), Malta, Spain and Greece, and a total of 8,844 Bangladeshi nationals were tracked transiting through the Western Balkans

A 2020 study by IOM reports that **70 per cent of returning migrants** to Bangladesh struggle to find employment

**Internal migration is three times larger** than international migration

## Values, power and inclusion

Despite an advancement in women's rights in Bangladesh over the past 20 years, there is still a wide gender gap in areas such as educational attainment and economic participation and opportunity. Women continue to be the poorest in the country and experience greater vulnerability due to poverty and precarious work conditions. Violence against women is prevalent.

The quality of education in Bangladesh is low and COVID-19 affected access to education for the poorest children, who had limited access to technology to continue their education. Bangladesh has one of the highest rates of child labour and child marriage in the world. The country still needs to make progress towards ensuring the rights of young people.

The Bangladesh Government ensures affirmative action for indigenous communities, people living with disabilities, LGBTIQ+ and the elderly population.

To guarantee that no one is left unsafe, behind or excluded, the mainstreaming of the IFRC's standards on protection, gender and inclusion will be increased. The IFRC, together with its partners, will help the Bangladesh Red Crescent to pay close attention to how to address the various capacities and vulnerabilities of certain populations, including women, children, the elderly and people living with disabilities. Community engagement and accountability approaches will be ensured throughout all five strategic priorities while implementing the activities.

## Main actions and areas of support

- Strengthening the protection, gender and inclusion programming of the National Society, along with capacity building of National Society staff
- Strengthening the safety and security of National Society staff and volunteers through systematic programming
- Strengthening Red Crescent youth curriculum programming at national and branch level for promoting humanitarian education, strengthening relationships with stakeholders (the Education Board and Ministry of Education), strengthening the volunteer base
- Enhancing quality access to education for all vulnerable groups and strengthening vocational training programmes
- Ensuring climate-resilient school infrastructure, with gender-segregated sanitation facilities to reduce schoolgirl drop-out and absenteeism rates
- Promoting women's empowerment and capacities, advocating for women's access to land, information, education and participation
- Engaging men and boys as allies to promote gender equality and engaging communities to prevent child marriage and gender-based violence
- Improving women's participation in economic activities, formalizing their employment and supporting women's entrepreneurship
- Responding to the psychosocial impact of poverty, disasters and death, which affect the mental health of children and adults, with particular focus on psychosocial support for children due to the consequences of trauma and stress on their development and future potential
- Improving feedback mechanisms, such as adding more channels or speeding up response times, and obtaining feedback on the National Society's accessibility and trustworthiness from various groups



## Statistics

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Bangladesh **ranks 65 out of 156 countries** in the Global Gender Gap Index

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Nearly **two-thirds of women in Bangladesh** have experienced sexual and gender-based violence in their lives

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**59 per cent of young girls marry before the age of 18**, which makes Bangladesh the fourth country in the world for rates of child marriage

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According to the Youth Development Index 2020, Bangladesh **ranks 126 out of 181 countries** in terms of youth development, 116 in terms of education, 172 in terms of employment and opportunities, and 174 in equality and inclusion

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## Enabling local actors

The IFRC and partners have scaled up the investment to enhance the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society's capacities with a consistent and principled approach to National Society development through an agreed membership-wide support direction paper. This paper was based on the National Society's strategic priorities, the context of the National Society and country, and the National Society development framework and compact of the IFRC.

### Engaged

In June 2022, the Bangladesh Red Crescent started a joint context and needs analysis as a part of the New Way of Working as defined in the IFRC Agenda for Renewal. This has contributed to the multi-year country support plan for 2023–25, which will help the IFRC and the membership to formulate unified planning and continue support at the implementation stage.

To make partnerships more effective, the shared leadership approach will be better defined among all IFRC partners in Bangladesh. The IFRC will coordinate this support for the National Society, both in development programmes and in emergencies. It will also enable the National Society to assign dedicated staff to the existing or emerging IFRC reference centres so that it is connected and can gain technical assistance. Renewed support will be extended for the Asia Pacific Branch Organizational Capacity Assessment (BOCA) hub, hosted by the Bangladesh Red Crescent since 2016. The aim will be to expand this hub to a wider branch development hub so that the branches of the National

Society become stronger, financially sustainable and the local partners of choice. The hub will also extend support to the National Societies in the Asia Pacific region, including through peer learning processes.

The National Society will be supported in strengthening its public profile in Bangladesh. A perception study was carried out in the country to establish a baseline scenario, and from this, the IFRC will support the National Society in developing a longer-term roadmap for strengthening its auxiliary role, including at the branch level. This will help to achieve widespread understanding, appreciation and trust by policy-makers, partners and the public. The focus here will be the National Society's role, achievements, ways of working, and the IFRC network as principled humanitarian and development actors in the country.

Partners will prioritize continual innovation in services, tools and approaches, recognizing that solutions are often best found closer to the problem, by technical staff, volunteers, branches, partners and, particularly, community members themselves. The National Society and the IFRC will establish a research cell so that they can support these innovations and create a system that is conducive to innovation, agility and transformation, challenging systems, cultures and practices when necessary. To achieve this requires leadership prioritization of innovation to make a cultural shift within the organization. This will be facilitated through the National Society's new strategic plan, as well as through the operational planning process both at headquarters and branches.

The National Society has recognized digital transformation as one of its top priority transformations. In 2022, a sub-working group has been formed, with representation from the National Society, the IFRC and IFRC membership. The National Society's IT policy has been finalized with support from this sub-working group. Partners will continue and strengthen the support for digital- and data-ready teams with systems, equipment and processes to support the delivery of programmes and services in the digital age. It is important to adopt new processes for youth and volunteer engagement, including the recruitment, management and recognition process. The IFRC will support the development of a registration application to engage and manage volunteers' relationship with the National Society and identify service opportunities.

The IFRC will be on standby for technical advice and introducing a security culture and security- and safety-related training if required for National Society staff and volunteers. The IFRC will extend support and guide the National Society on civil military relationships which could play a significant role in disaster crises.

## Accountable

The IFRC will invest in systems that enable it to work as one organization in Bangladesh, with all members in the country. This will allow it to have a greater impact with a more globally harmonized and consistent approach. In particular, this work will focus on talent management, gender parity and ensuring diversity at all levels, zero tolerance on fraud and corruption, sexual harassment, exploitation or abuse, and ensuring compliance with the Code of Conduct for humanitarian relief to ensure results. This plan will ensure staff and all individuals working with the IFRC network properly adhere to global standard policies, procedures and applicable standards, and maintain close follow-up on completion of the mandatory training to mitigate risks.

The IFRC will coordinate with regional and headquarters security units to implement IFRC-wide security management frameworks, ensuring compliance with minimum security regulations. The IFRC will support in-country membership and the National Society in addressing security risk management as part of organizational risk management culture, conduct security assessments in operational areas, and ensure security training is provided.

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society and partners will ensure strategic prioritization and investment in resource development through a joint resource

mobilization plan from 2023 to 2025. This will bring quality funding, including regular resources for the National Society as well as for the IFRC. Though the National Society has good revenue income at the headquarters level, this is insufficient to cover the core costs of the organization. The branches are still dependent on limited income sources and headquarter-driven project funding. The National Society and partners have therefore agreed to focus on long-term financial sustainability, diversification of income bases and increased access to unearmarked funding in line with the multi-year plan. The IFRC and its membership in Bangladesh will support the National Society to have a defined model for core cost recovery at the branch level so that the branches can be self-sustained for the long-term.

Logistics development is one of the main priorities in the National Society's Strategic Plan 2021–2025. Therefore, the Bangladesh Red Crescent will prepare and implement a holistic logistics development plan and strategy through a Movement approach, which the IFRC, in-country membership and the ICRC will contribute to and support.

## Trusted

The National Society development direction paper has placed a stronger emphasis on different forms of leadership initiatives, a sound legal base, and systems and structures to enable the Bangladesh Red Crescent to operate with agility, efficiency and accountability, and energetically perform its auxiliary role. The National Society now has its Strategic Plan 2021–25, multi-year country support plan 2023–25, and subsequent operational plans. It will be important to link up these strategic and operational aspects with the constitutional guidance of the National Society.

While harmonizing these strategic and operational aspects, the IFRC and partners will also support a shift to a more domestic fundraising approach to ensure ownership and longer-term financial sustainability. A business plan at the headquarters and branch levels will be developed to maximize local domestic resource mobilization. The IFRC will support the National Society in ensuring that Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) benchmarks related to financial sustainability are improved. The IFRC and membership will continue their support for building National Society capacity in resource mobilization and partnerships through ongoing support from the IFRC, the membership, the virtual fundraising hub and the IFRC's Asia Pacific fundraising network.

The National Society has a strong volunteer base at all branch levels, which is connected with the National Youth Commission. There is a good system of youth camps at the headquarters and branch levels. The IFRC will support the National Society on youth camps to increase effectiveness, harness innovation from youth and volunteers, and update the recruitment system so that overall youth management is inclusive of all backgrounds. The National Society and partners will promote greater intergenerational dialogue with youth in all camps and gatherings to constantly renew ideas, promote innovation and better adapt to young people's ambitions and expectations. They will also help develop their functional capacities and competencies for solid leadership through a curriculum of training and mentoring. The IFRC will promote a Red Crescent Youth Talent Hunt programme across the country so the National Society has a more robust youth engagement

approach. It will also support the launch of the annual national-level Limitless Innovation Contest among youth groups, and mentor those selected to replicate the innovation project in more communities or districts.

The National Society will be supported in developing its annual operational plan in the country in line with the multi-year plan, so that all the work of the in-country Movement partners are coordinated through it. Similarly, the IFRC will support the National Society in creating one dashboard to reflect the work done in the country by the IFRC network. To achieve this, the IFRC will also facilitate country coordination team meetings to track the one plan. The IFRC will update the existing cooperation agreement with the National Society and develop the Movement cooperation guidelines to promote intensive and qualitative coordination among the members.

## THE IFRC NETWORK

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### The IFRC

**The IFRC** has been supporting the work of the Bangladesh Red Crescent for several decades, and has a delegation in Dhaka, with a sub-delegation in Cox's Bazar. IFRC support focuses on strategic and operational coordination, National Society development, and humanitarian diplomacy. It also supports accountability as a cross-cutting theme. The IFRC works with the National Society in strengthening its auxiliary role by meeting key stakeholders at government level on a regular basis, and also provides technical expertise for a broad range of services.

In the past ten years, the IFRC has supported the Bangladesh Red Crescent through an average of two Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) and/or Emergency Appeal operations per year, mainly in relation to cyclones and floods. One Emergency Appeal and one DREF operation were launched in 2022, crossing over to 2023. The long-running IFRC Emergency Appeal for Population Movement from Myanmar is one of the largest IFRC operations of the past five years. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IFRC, through its global Appeal, has supported the National Society in its COVID-19 response

### IFRC membership coordination

The IFRC coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situations and needs; agreeing common priorities; co-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, development assistance, and the auxiliary role efforts to reinforce the role of National Societies in their respective countries.

Acting on the implementation of its Agenda for Renewal process, the IFRC is coordinating and engaging the network to work together, contributing to the activities of the National Society in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Red Crescent is part of the IFRC network New Way of Working initiative, which is being piloted in 14 countries. It aims to establish a new model of membership coordination, working to instill a thorough change in the ways the IFRC network works together, placing the National Society of the country at the centre. This includes prioritizing effective coordination for much greater gains, optimizing the power of working as one IFRC network by sharing resources, learnings, and common standards, and to ultimately achieve greater impact. Particular

## Participating National Society Support - Bilateral

Name of Partner NS	Funding Requirements	Climate	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing	Migration	Values, power and inclusion	Engaged	Accountable	Trusted
American Red Cross	CHF 0.88M	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
British Red Cross	CHF 1.10M	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Canadian Red Cross				●		●			●
Danish Red Cross	CHF 2.20M	●	●	●	●		●	●	●
German Red Cross	CHF 5.50M	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Italian Red Cross	CHF 0.05M								
Japanese Red Cross	CHF 0.28M			●					●
Qatar Red Crescent	CHF 1.00M		●	●		●			
Swedish Red Cross	CHF 0.39M			●					
Swiss Red Cross	CHF 1.65M	●	●	●		●	●	●	●
Turkish Red Crescent		●		●		●		●	

### Total

13.04M

attention is given to collective planning to ensure that National Society partners present in a country participate in one multi-year country plan, which will ensure that the resources and expertise of the network in country are used in a complementary and efficient way.

Several coordination mechanisms are in place and practiced regularly in Bangladesh. Different programme level coordination meetings take place with participating National Societies, and bi-weekly country representatives' meetings take place convened by the IFRC head of delegation.

In situations of disaster and crisis, the IFRC adopts a membership-wide approach, where the National Society response plan is at the centre. For example, the Population Movement Operation in Cox's Bazar is part of a Federation-wide approach to support the National Society in its response and to maximize the collective humanitarian impact of the IFRC membership. One of

the most successful outcomes of the Federation-wide approach is the shared leadership modality piloted by the IFRC and American Red Cross in this operation.

The Bangladesh National Society is part of the global [Pilot Programmatic Partnership](#) between the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations of the European Commission (ECHO) and the IFRC. The National Society benefits from the support of the German Red Cross (lead EU National Society), Danish Red Cross and the IFRC for the implementation of activities in the areas of disaster risk management, epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response, and community engagement and accountability.

A total of 10 participating National Societies have long-term partnerships with the Bangladesh Red Crescent across the following thematic areas:

The **American Red Cross** has been working in Bangladesh since 2007, with a presence in the country since 2014. It has been working with the Bangladesh Red Crescent and the IFRC in line with its Joint Strategic Partnership Plan. The National Societies share a common goal to assist vulnerable people and communities in Bangladesh to prepare for, respond to, and recover from, disasters and humanitarian crises. It supports Bangladesh National Society development, disaster response, disaster preparedness, cash preparedness and disaster risk reduction efforts. The American Red Cross and the IFRC have been supporting work that positions the Bangladesh Red Crescent as the leading humanitarian organization in the country, through its national work with the Government of Bangladesh, UN agencies, and other humanitarian actors, academia and technical institutions.

The American Red Cross is supporting Bangladesh in implementing the Coastal Disaster Risk Reduction Programme across its coastal belt, with a community focus in the Bagerhat, Patuakhali and Khulna districts. Areas of intervention cover institutional response readiness, community disaster preparedness, organizational development, National Society branch capacity building, anticipatory action, climate change adaptation and displacement tracking.

The American and Bangladesh National Societies and the IFRC implement comprehensive disaster risk management in Cox's Bazar camp settlements and district. The interventions are disaster readiness, emergency preparedness and community resilience.

The American Red Cross is supporting Bangladesh in strengthening its disaster risk governance and community early warning and early action systems. This allows the National Society to increase multi-hazard preparedness and response in the Cox's Bazar district and Naikhongchhari sub-district of Bandarban. Disaster risk governance, early warning, anticipatory action, multi-hazard preparedness, climate change adaptation, and displacement tracking are the focus areas of intervention. Targeting the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin area, the macro-level flood preparedness initiative will focus on institutional response readiness, community disaster preparedness, organizational development, National Society capacity building, anticipatory action and climate change adaptation interventions.

The **British Red Cross** is one of the longest-term partners of the Bangladesh Red Crescent. It supports bilateral programmes and has operated in the country since 2006 in areas of early recovery and integrated resilience programming. The British Red Cross is also

a major contributor to multilateral response mechanisms in the country. Its Bangladesh portfolio has shifted towards focusing support on the urban context, after almost 10 years supporting programmes in rural (coastal and northern districts) areas. It started the urban resilience programme in the Barishal City Corporation, and currently supports livelihoods resilience. In addition, the British Red Cross is supporting the Bangladesh Red Crescent in its climate change adaptation project in Narayanganj City Corporation, focusing on climate and environmental crises. This will be implemented over the next three years.

In 2019, the British Red Cross in Bangladesh, for the first time, became part of an ECHO consortium for a disaster preparedness programme in Dhaka. British Red Cross activities relating to the Population Movement Operation in Cox's Bazar are multilateral with the IFRC for camp population, while it works with the Swedish Red Cross for the water, sanitation and hygiene consortium in camps. The British Red Cross continues to support host communities in the Teknaf sub-district in Cox's Bazar using the vulnerability to resilience model. It will continue the work in the areas where it has specific expertise, owing to the long-term programming experience across the country.

The British Red Cross will continue to redirect its focus towards the urban context, except in Cox's Bazar where it plays an important role in supporting host communities and strengthening branch capacity. It will support National Society development, contributing to the goal of the Bangladesh Red Crescent becoming a stronger National Society, and building upon the British Red Cross's earlier investments in the area of Preparedness for Effective Response (PER), cash preparedness, community engagement and accountability, and branch development. The British Red Cross's multilateral support to various emergencies in Bangladesh will continue, including milestone funding from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office in Bangladesh to fund the IFRC's COVID-19 Appeal.

The **Canadian Red Cross Society** has operated in Bangladesh since the beginning of the population influx from the Rakhine state of Myanmar into Cox's Bazar in 2017. It is mainly focused on support to the health work of the Bangladesh Red Crescent. The Canadian Red Cross is supporting one health post and one community centre, and providing support in sexual and reproductive health, vaccination, community-based health and first aid, community-based surveillance, psychosocial support, community engagement and accountability, and protection, gender and inclusion at camps in Cox's Bazar.



In July 2021, the Canadian Red Cross started to work with a host community in Cox's Bazar. It currently works in the Sadar sub-district (covering 10 unions) and the entire Ramu sub-district. It is implementing a multi-country COVID-19 response project from January to October 2022, and is currently working on planning and funding confirmation for October 2022 onwards. Bangladesh is a priority country for the Canadian Red Cross.

The **Danish Red Cross** has worked with the Bangladesh Red Crescent since the 1980s, focusing primarily on community-level health care and disaster response activities. In 2017, following the influx of people from the Rakhine state of Myanmar into Cox's Bazar, it increased its presence in the country by supporting the National Society as a bilateral partner in providing humanitarian assistance to people in the camp, host communities and vulnerable districts of Bangladesh.

In 2021, the two National Societies decided to concentrate on development and emergency operations in the northeast and southeast of Bangladesh, which are most vulnerable to flash floods and earthquakes, cyclones, and displacements, covering more than 27 districts countrywide. The Danish Red Cross's support to Bangladesh focuses on the following priorities:

- Supporting preparedness and risk reduction initiatives and ensuring immediate response for the communities affected by multi-hazards and disasters. This helps vulnerable communities to prepare for, anticipate and mitigate multi-hazards and disasters. Special focus is put on building the capacity of students and teachers in schools to share knowledge and skills with their families and communities, and anticipation, early warning and early response to flooding and other disasters.
- Promoting access to quality information and health care services, including mental health and psychosocial support through the Bangladesh Red Crescent's existing mother and child health centres, with specific focus on prevention and management of non-communicable diseases, epidemic and pandemic preparedness and response through the community-based surveillance system. As a technical lead on mental health and psychosocial support, the Danish Red Cross supports the National Society in ensuring that mental health and psychosocial support is mainstreamed into its health interventions, disaster response systems and regular programmes.

The Danish Red Cross is also focusing on empowering people to adapt to the impact of migration and displacements and rebuild their lives. This will help improve access to protection services and equal opportunities to increase recovery processes and resilience building. The Danish Red Cross will continue to focus on Cox's Bazar, as conditions there have evolved. To effectively support the Bangladesh Red Crescent, the Danish Red Cross operates a country office in Dhaka, and an operational office in Cox's Bazar with a key focus on localization.

The **German Red Cross** has been a partner of the Bangladesh Red Crescent for more than 40 years and has been supporting the strengthening of its disaster risk management structures and capacities within the long-term National Society development approach. The German Red Cross has been leading and implementing projects supported by ECHO in Bangladesh. It is also the country lead for the ECHO-funded Pilot Programmatic Partnership.

The German Red Cross has been a pioneer in anticipatory action and urban resilience programming. It has been supporting the Bangladesh Red Crescent in forecast-based financing and is in the process of institutionalization of the forecast-based financing and action by the IFRC's DREF. Early Action Protocols (EAPs) for cyclones and floods are in place, and the finalization of the EAP for urban anticipation for heat-waves is ongoing. In addition, the German Red Cross's projects, including urban resilience building through knowledge and innovation and the Dhaka Earthquake Emergency Preparedness-Enhancing Resilience project, have strengthened the Bangladesh Red Crescent's and urban stakeholder capacities. It will continue to build upon and deepen urban disaster risk management and disaster risk response and integrated resilience programming, including contingency planning, emergency response promotion and prioritizing cash and voucher assistance as a modality, as well as National Society development, as key areas of focus for the Bangladesh Red Crescent. The German Red Cross is also planning to support the National Society in the development and linking of shock-responsive social protection.

Additionally, the German Red Cross will continue its support in the protracted population crisis in Cox's Bazar through work in water, sanitation and hygiene, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods and shelter components, in partnership with the IFRC, participating National Societies and other non-government organizations, both for host and guest communities. It will also continue its water, sanitation and hygiene support

to the population in Bhasan Char. The German Red Cross intends to consolidate its care and maintenance support with more value-added technical services, and bring innovation to locally owned and designed solutions in population movement crises.

The **Japanese Red Cross Society** deployed its emergency response unit health team from September 2017 to April 2018, following the population influx in Cox's Bazar. After this, it switched to a bilateral project and continued to support the Bangladesh Red Crescent on health. Currently, it is supporting one health post and community-based health and first aid activities. It is also working with the Danish Red Cross on psychosocial support activities.

The **Qatar Red Crescent Society** has been working in Bangladesh since the start of the population movement crisis in Cox's Bazar in August 2017. Health, shelter, relief and livelihoods, and water, sanitation and hygiene are the major areas of interventions by the Qatar Red Crescent in Bangladesh. By December 2021, it had implemented 35 projects. The Qatar Red Crescent also supports the National Society in response operations in other parts of the country and is supporting the ongoing flood response in the Sylhet region.

The **Swedish Red Cross** strategy is based on the three goals of Bangladesh Red Crescent's Strategic Plan 2021–2025 and the Swedish Red Cross International Direction 2020–2023. It will focus on three thematic priorities: community resilience, inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene, emergency preparedness and response. There will be two themes – protection, gender and inclusion, and green response – for its planned support in Bangladesh for 2022–2025.

The **Swiss Red Cross** is currently implementing three development projects with the Bangladesh Red Crescent, in addition to the COVID-19 vaccination project. The Swiss Red Cross, in partnership with the Bangladesh Red Crescent, is addressing vulnerabilities and risks of disadvantaged communities to build resilience.

The Swiss Red Cross has supported the National Society in its Reinforcing Rural Resilience programme since July 2021. This will continue until June 2024 in Gaibandha, Kurigram and 10 other districts, to scale up local capacities at the community and local governmental level, and to reduce the risk and enhance preparedness and response readiness to natural and health hazards. The programme includes disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and resilience strengthening activities. It works to develop and revise or adapt

multi-hazard contingency plans for disaster and crisis situations within the communities. An important aim of this project is to strengthen the health system at the union level so that the target communities have improved access to quality health services and demonstrate improved health. Finally, the project intends to strengthen the financial sustainability of Bangladesh Red Crescent by developing its capacity in resource mobilization.

The Swiss Red Cross is supporting the COVID-19 vaccination campaign of the National Society in 22 districts of Rangpur, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and in 12 city corporations. This support contributes to the target of 20 million people vaccinated by December 2022 and strengthens Bangladesh Red Crescent's collaboration with the Directorate General of Health Services and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

In collaboration with other partners, the Bangladesh and Swiss National Societies will continue to operate five primary health care centres over the next year, before establishing an alternative financing mechanism in Cox's Bazar. The primary and environmental health project in Ukhiya, Cox's Bazar (July 2022–December 2024) plans to establish a sustainable model of waste management services. This is expected to benefit 107,000 people in the camps and a further 25,000 people from the host community.

The Urban Empowerment and Resilience Project phase three (July 2022–December 2023) in Gazipur and other city corporations focuses on health, disaster risk management and National Society development, which are defined as a priority for both National Societies.

The Swiss Red Cross is committed to linking relief rehabilitation and development. During the 2022 floods in the southeast part of Bangladesh, it contributed CHF100,000 as part of the IFRC's Emergency Appeal and another CHF35,000 as a grant to the Bangladesh Red Crescent for responding to the disaster.

The **Turkish Red Crescent Society** has supported Bangladesh with an active delegation since 2012. During the influx of displaced people from the Rakhine state of Myanmar in Cox's Bazar in 2017, it provided major relief support to the Bangladesh Red Crescent's Population Movement Operation. The Turkish Red Crescent has increased its support in the areas of health, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, food and livelihoods, protection, gender and inclusion, psychosocial support and community engagement and accountability.

The Turkish Red Crescent is also providing major food support to host and guest communities, with food packages during religious festivals like Ramadan and Eid-al Adha. It also extended its support to National Society development in Bangladesh, through projects including the construction of Raman Bibi mother and child care centre, support for human resources at the Bangladesh Red Crescent headquarters, and emergency disaster relief.

The Turkish Red Crescent will continue to work with the Bangladesh Red Crescent for shelter, food security and livelihood support for the displaced Rakhine community. It will also continue to support the delivery of locally led health services, including mental health and psychosocial support, access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, information, education and communication materials for promoting behavioural change, and effective protection, gender and inclusion programming.

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## Movement coordination

Movement country coordination team meetings convene on a regular basis. They are attended by the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, the IFRC, all 10 in-country participating National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). For the Cox's Bazar operation, Movement coordination and the Population Movement Operation steering committee meetings remain key forums for making strategic decisions. This is carried out in line with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) principles, and the newly adopted [Seville Agreement 2.0](#).

In Bangladesh, the ICRC helps people affected by violence, visits detainees, supports physical rehabilitation services and promotes international humanitarian law.

Together with the Bangladesh Red Crescent, it strives to re-establish family links where contacts between relatives have been interrupted, and to reunite missing people with their families. The ICRC is holding discussions for the renewal of the partnership framework agreement for 2023–2025 with the Bangladesh Red Crescent. In particular, the ICRC will continue working closely with the National Society in protecting and assisting the displaced population from Myanmar's Rakhine state in Cox's Bazar. For 2023, support will be provided in the areas of National Society development, safer access, duty of care, communication and dissemination, international humanitarian law, restoring family links, water, sanitation and hygiene, and first aid response capacity.

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## Coordination with other actors

While the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is the line ministry of the Bangladesh Red Crescent, the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief is a key partner. The National Society has also partnership and congenial working relationships with the Department of Disaster Management, the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, the Local Government Engineering Department and local government offices in the districts.

Along with Bangladesh Red Crescent, the IFRC has been actively engaged with the Humanitarian Cluster Team and technical clusters, including: food security; water, sanitation and hygiene; health; gender; child protection; logistics; needs assessment working group; national cash working group; and information management.

The IFRC leads the shelter cluster in Bangladesh and coordinates with cluster partners to ensure a coordinated response. The Global Shelter Cluster is an

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) coordination mechanism and IFRC has been leading the Shelter Cluster in disaster contexts since the establishment of the cluster approach in 2005. This critical mandate places IFRC as one of the lead agencies in the international humanitarian coordination system. IFRC leverages its leadership position in the Global Shelter Cluster for improved coordination, stronger policies and standards across the sector, and better support for affected people in their recovery.

The IFRC head of country delegation, or nominated representative, regularly takes part in the Strategic Executive Group meeting in Bangladesh with the United Nations and other agencies.

The IFRC is hosting the Country Support Platform, which is an operational arm of the Global Task Force on Cholera Control. The Country Support Platform in Bangladesh is working with the Government of

Bangladesh to effectively implement the National Cholera Control Plan, ensuring consistency and alignment with the Global Roadmap.

The National Society is a key partner of and works closely with the Government at both the national and Cox's Bazar level. It built a strong relationship with the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commission (RRRC) following the 1978 influx of people from Myanmar. The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief is at the forefront of the Cox's Bazar response and is represented by the RRRC at the local level. The RRRC is leading the coordination among the humanitarian actors in the area. The auxiliary role, combined with the National Society's close relationship with the Government and

the IFRC status agreement, has enabled the operation to benefit from reduced bureaucracy in many matters.

The National Society and the IFRC are working closely with the International Organization of Migration and the Displacement Management Cluster, led by the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, to support the Government in implementing the Strategy for Management of Internal Displacement induced by Disasters and Climate Impacts. Aligned with this, the Bangladesh Red Crescent and the IFRC are working with the Government and the broader humanitarian community to find solutions to those displaced persons and track the displacement before they become desperate to move to cities or consider other coping mechanisms, including migration.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- [IFRC Global Plan and Country Plans](#)
- [Subscribe for updates](#)
- [Donor response](#) on IFRC website
- [Live Disaster Response Emergency Fund \(DREF\)](#) data
- Operational information: [IFRC GO platform](#)
- National Society data: [IFRC Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)



**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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### **Bangladesh Red Crescent Society**

**W** [bdrcs.org](http://bdrcs.org)

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