



CENTRAL AMERICA

IFRC Country Cluster Office

COUNTRY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Central American region is made up of 6 countries with a population of more than 47 million people. It has growing population density well above the Latin American average, a large rural population, and high levels of social exclusion and inequity. Income inequality is a significant issue; for example, official reports indicate that the wealthiest 10% of families in Panama earned 37.3 times more income than the poorest 10% of families. Gender inequality is also prevalent in this region. Historically, the region has been affected by natural disasters, global economic crises, armed conflicts and, over the last decade, an increase in violence, migration and socio-political crises.

Each National Society (NS) in this region is working towards addressing these issues with a targeted, people-centered approach.

The Costa Rican Red Cross supports programs in disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate adaptation, social inclusion, migration, and disaster management (DM). The quality of its management structure offers opportunities to consolidate regional strategies and support other National Societies.

In El Salvador, the National Society looks to implement programs in DRR, health, and water, sanitation, & hygiene (WASH). Due to the level of violence and instability in the country, the social inclusion program has been very important in raising awareness to prevent violence. Initiatives for the security and safety of volunteers, branch development, leadership strengthening and sustainability support have also been important.

The Guatemalan Red Cross has implemented key actions in DRR & DM, emergency health, WASH, climate change, social inclusion, violence prevention and migration.

In Honduras, the National Society has made important efforts to strengthen its leadership and expand its programmatic portfolio, as this country has one of the highest levels of poverty in the Northern Triangle.

The Panamanian Red Cross currently provides ambulance services and first aid, community-based disaster preparedness, relief, search and rescue, restoring family links, promotion for blood donation, child care, and nursing homes.

All National Societies in the Northern Triangle of Central America receive technical and financial support from the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and various Partner National Societies (PNS), including the America, Canadian, Italian, Norwegian, Spanish, Swedish and Swiss Red Cross Societies, among others.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT



One of the key issues in this region is migration. While there are many causes of migration in this region, some of the main reasons identified are lack of economic opportunities and high levels of violence in countries of origin.

Central America is also vulnerable in terms of malnutrition, with the percentage of undernourished people as high as 22% in certain areas. Issues such as gender inequality, natural disasters, and criminal activity can exacerbate this issue.

STATISTICS

Up to 69% Of the population lives below the poverty line

60% Of children attend secondary school in Central America

13,129 Homicides occurred in the Northern Triangle in 2017

50% Of children under 5 years old in Guatemala suffer from chronic malnutrition

AREAS OF FOCUS

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

CHF 210,000 required

The IFRC will strengthen disaster preparedness and recovery through regional institutional support, coordination, and exchange of operational expertise.

- Developing public education campaigns to respond to risks.
- Implementing activities that help mitigate climate change.
- Supporting communities to develop longer term risk reduction plans

SHELTER

CHF 430,000 required

IFRC will help establish safe and durable shelters in emergencies. A shelter experts network will be created with governments, universities and regional organizations

LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS

CHF 1,200,000 required

Volunteers and technicians will be trained in food insecurity assessment and cash transfer programs. Significant progress will continue to be made in the recovery of vulnerable communities and long-term initiatives that reduce poverty.

- Stabilizing incomes through micro-finance support and job creation.
- Providing food assistance or cash for basic needs.
- Promoting public awareness and education on sustainable livelihoods.

HEALTH

CHF 1,050,000 required

Tools and methodologies will be implemented by the National Societies as part of the Regional Health Strategy for strengthening access to health services, such as Community-Based Health & First Aid (CBHFA), Epidemic Control for Volunteers (ECV), Psychosocial Social Support (PSS), and community-based monitoring.

- Providing health services and programs to reduce health risk factors.
- Mobilizing volunteers to provide first aid training
- Developing contingency plans to respond to epidemics and pandemics

WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE (WASH)

CHF 50,000 required

IFRC will support the regional WASH strategy, which includes contingency plan design, regional water mapping, and hygiene promotion. A network will be created to share knowledge and strategic alliances with water providers will be promoted.

- Developing community-based WASH management plans

PROTECTION, GENDER, AND INCLUSION

CHF 920,000 required

PGI policies will be promoted to systematically address and prevent abuse, harassment, and violence, both internal and external. Gender-sensitive practices & diversity will be a part of all Red Cross programs.

MIGRATION

CHF 1,700,000 required

The Monarch Butterfly program will promote cross-border cooperation, a regional surveillance system, and greater protection of vulnerable populations. The resilience of children and young people in situations of or at-risk of forced migration will be strengthened.

- Strengthening the capacities of children and youth to prevent the risks of forced migration.
- Migrants along the migratory route will receive humanitarian assistance with a special focus on the needs of children and youth
- Enhancing advocacy for the protection and fundamental rights of migrant children and youth

STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES

CHF 210,000 required

IFRC will support National Societies in implementing improvement plans, providing follow-up and technical support that emphasizes local development, sustainability, communication, resource mobilization and accountability.

ENSURE EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT

CHF 100,000 required

IFRC will provide support to national intervention teams (NIT), develop new tools, and update emergency contingency plans. Emergency warehouse & fleet management, procurement procedures, needs assessments, beneficiary communication, and geolocation mapping will be strengthened.

INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS

CHF 9,000 required

IFRC will promote the active communication between National Societies and national civil protection systems to address humanitarian issues, influence decision-making, and improve laws and policies. IFRC will also provide technical support in the implementation of flood resilience programs to shape the agenda for policymakers.

CONTACTS

For more information on the work of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Country, please contact:

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