

OPERATION UPDATE

Central America & Mexico: Migration crisis

Emergency appeal №: MDR43008 Emergency appeal launched: 29 July 2022 Operational Strategy published: 2 September 2022	Glide №: N/A
Operation update #1 Date of issue: 15 September 2022	Timeframe covered by this update: 29 July to 15 September 2022
Operation timeframe: 12 months - 29 July 2022 to 31 July 2023	Number of people to be assisted: 210,000
Funding requirements (CHF): IFRC Secretariat funding requirement: 18 million CHF Federation-wide funding requirement: 28 million CHF	DREF amount initially allocated: 1 million CHF PRC: 75,000 CRRC: 140,000 NRC: 50,000 SRC: 50,000 HRC: 250,000 GRC: 140,000 MRC: 175,000 CCD CA: 60,000 ARO: 60,000

To date, this Emergency Appeal, which seeks 18 million CHF is 1 per cent funded. Further funding contributions are needed to enable the National Societies in the region, with the support of the IFRC, to continue with the preparedness efforts of and provide humanitarian assistance and protection to people on the move. Click [here](#) for the donor response.



Delivery of Humanitarian Aid, Tablillas, Northern Border - Costa Rica. February 2022. Source: CRRC.

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the crisis

The Americas region is home to complex and mixed migration, which takes place both within and beyond the region. Many migrants¹, refugees, and returnees move through irregular pathways driven by persecution, violence, disasters or a desire for better opportunities. Central America has become, in recent years, one of the busiest transit routes to the United States.

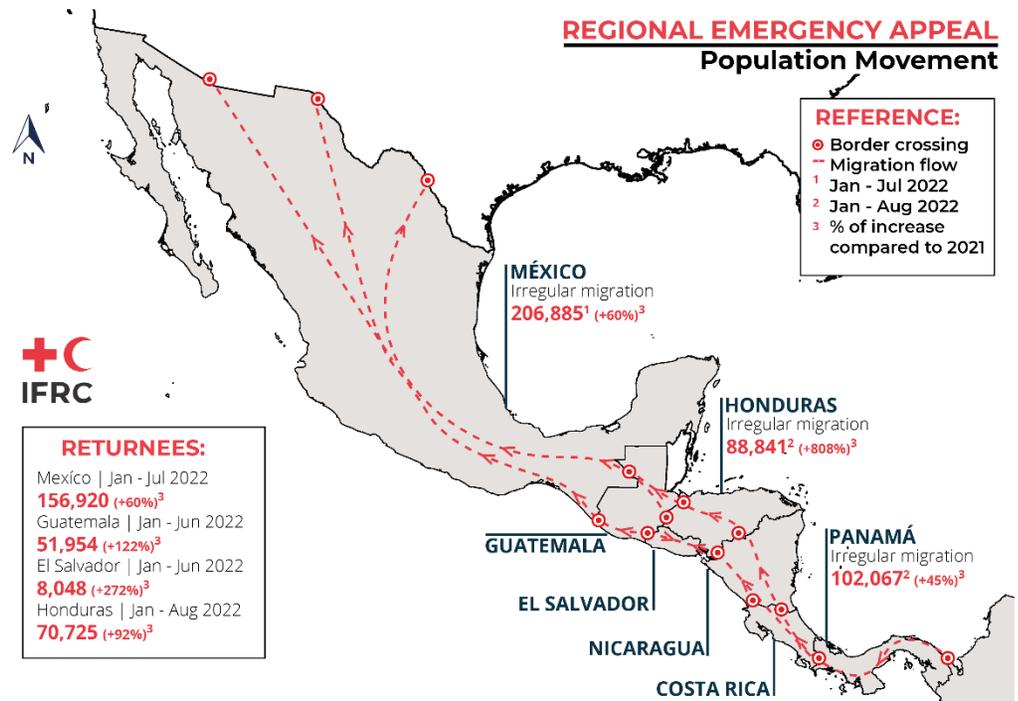
Unlike in the 1990s, when most migrants were of Central American nationalities, and there was evidence of a growing south-north migration, today migrants come from multiple regions and continents. Many are from very different nationalities, and often use Panama as the first point of passage to continue to the United States and Mexico. The mixed flows trigger multiple groups and profiles of migrants travelling in Central America by different routes and at various stages of the journey in the same region. For example, migrants from Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua, which are countries of both origin² and return, are vulnerable since, among other things, they have often been displaced due to violence, poverty, lack of employment or other threats such as disasters.

Since the beginning of 2022, there has been a massive increase in the number of refugees, migrants, and returnees in transit by land northwards through Central America, compared to previous years. Just in the Northern Triangle of

¹ In accordance with the IFRC's 2009 Policy on Migration, 'migrants' are persons who leave or flee their habitual residence to go to new places – usually abroad – to seek opportunities or safer and better prospects. This includes migrant workers, stateless migrants, migrants deemed irregular by public authorities as well as asylum seekers and refugees.

² For the complete list of nationalities see: [Panama National Migration Service. Tránsito irregular Darien. 2022](#)

Central America – made up of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador – from January to July 2022, 131,857 people have returned, an increase of 110.8 per cent compared to the same months in 2021³. Nicaragua also has migrant populations in transit and leaving to nearby countries or travelling to Mexico and the United States, in addition to all the people in transit coming from other continents or other regions of America, as with Venezuelans, Haitians and Cubans transiting the Darien border and then through the Northern Triangle.



In 2021, Mexico received over [130,000 asylum requests](#), the third-highest number of any country in the world, with approximately 90,000 of these filed in Tapachula, on the border with Guatemala. As of August 2022, the Mexican Commission for Refugee Aid (COMAR) received 77,786 asylum applications, predominately from nationals of Honduras, Haiti, Cuba, El Salvador and Venezuela⁴, bolstering the finding that these countries are becoming countries of transit, departure and return.

Red Cross National Societies in the Americas are committed to addressing the humanitarian assistance and protection needs of migrants, refugees and returnees, irrespective of their status, and at key stages of their migration journeys. This ongoing commitment is expressed in a new regional Americas-route-based programme entitled “Humanitarian Assistance and Protection for People on the Move”. This programme is multi-year and multi-country and includes the humanitarian activities of 22 National Societies in the region. This Emergency Appeal has been launched to complement the regional response by enabling additional support to National Societies to address the massive increase in migrants, returnees, and refugees on the move and the increase in critical assistance and protection needs.

The high demand for assistance continues to rise as the migratory flows maintains a steady increase:

- The UN puts the number of Venezuelan migrants and refugees worldwide at 6.8 million. Most of the migrants, specifically 5.75 million, have landed in Latin American and Caribbean countries. Colombia alone accounts for 2.48 million. Colombia is followed by Peru (1.22 million), Ecuador (502,000), Chile (448,000) and Brazil (358,000), although the list includes a total of 17 Latin American and Caribbean countries⁵.
- The number of migrants arriving to the US from Cuba, Venezuela, Colombia and Nicaragua has increased significantly since January 2021. These four nations account for the majority of encounters at ports of entry along the southwest U.S. border with migrants from countries other than Mexico and the Northern Triangle (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras)⁶.

On the other hand, migrants are reportedly using a new route from the island of San Andres. This route seeks to avoid entering Panama and Costa Rica, to arrive directly to Nicaragua and continue their journey to the US⁷.

³ [OIM, Regional Returnee Information](#)

⁴ [COMAR, Refugee requests](#)

⁵ [Notimerica.com, 27 August 2022.](#)

⁶ [CNNespanol.com, 29 August 2022.](#)

⁷ [RCNRadio.com, 17 August 2022.](#)

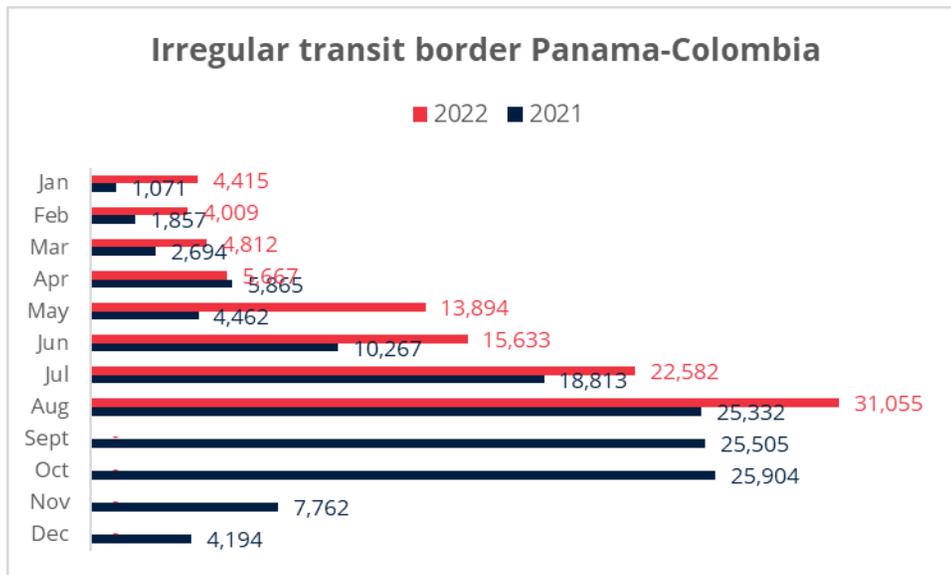
Summary of response

Overview of the host National Society and ongoing response

Signature of Project Funding Agreements and transfers of DREF funds to the National Societies are being processed at the writing of this report, however, the National Societies have been preparing for the implementation of actions as follows:

Panama

According to the latest official data, from January to August 2022, 102,067 people have crossed the gap⁸, an increase of 45% in comparison to the same period in 2021⁹. People of many nationalities cross the Darien Jungle; around 67% are Venezuelan, 6% are Haitian, 4% are Ecuadorian with the remainder hailing from countries as widespread as Angola, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Uzbekistan.



The Panama Red Cross Society continues to provide services through its current partners. However, the needs of the Migratory Reception Stations (ERM by its Spanish acronym) and host communities continue.

For this appeal, a first meeting was held with the IFRC team to discuss team planning, structural mapping and functional restructuring.

Costa Rica

In 2022¹⁰, a steady increase in the number of migrants was identified on the southern border of Costa Rica. As of April 2022, it has increased by 269% compared to December 2021 when the monitoring of flows began. According to data from the General Directorate of Migration and Foreigners, between May 2021 and May 2022, 5,509 rejections were reported in Paso Canoas. And according to the IOM¹¹, in May 2022, most of the migrants entering Costa Rica came from Venezuela, Haiti, and Senegal, and are heading to the United States.

⁸ [SNM Panama Statistics of migratory flows in Darien 2022.](#)

⁹ [SNM Panama Statistics of migratory flows in Darien 2021.](#)

¹⁰ [IOM DTM. Costa Rica - Panama: Flow monitoring of people in mobility situations through the Americas #6 \(May 2022\).](#)

¹¹ [IOM. Monitoring of flow of people on mobilization in Paso Canoas, Costa Rica. May 2022.](#)

Also, according to OIM, during the period covered by the Irregular Migratory Flows Monitoring Report in the Northern Zone of Costa Rica¹² (May 23 to June 30), a total of 9,314 irregular crossings were observed at the three monitoring points on the Costa Rica-Nicaragua border.

The Costa Rican Red Cross (CRRC) is holding different meetings regularly with the areas and departments that will support the implementation of the operation activities, in order to inform each of the areas of the needs and requirements and thus jointly generate a strategy for the development of the project, to begin once the funds are received.

A procurement plan is being drawn up according to the needs of each activity, which will be sent to the technical areas for review before proceeding:

Area	Description
Health	First Aid Assistance Supplies
Education	Migrant children's kits
Water and Sanitation	Hygiene kits
Migration	Food kits
N.S. Development	Visibility for volunteers

The CRRC is beginning to hire the personnel that will be involved in the different activities of the operation.

Within the framework of the CRRC's agreement with UNICEF, an initiative is being generated with the hired interpreters, who are providing workshops in French and English to the volunteer personnel of the branches in the northern and southern border areas, in order to improve communication and understanding when approaching the migrants and delivering supplies and kits.

Within the framework of an agreement between the CRRC and PADF, 6,000 kits of humanitarian supplies will be received for distribution by the National Society:

- 2,400 kits (960 women's kits and 1,440 men's kits) for distribution on the northern border.
- 3,600 kits (1,440 women's kits and 2,160 men's kits) for distribution on the southern border.

Meetings have been held with other cooperation actors such as UNHCR, IOM, HIAS, where synergies have been generated for field work with logistical aspects suitable for placing mobile humanitarian service points.

Honduras

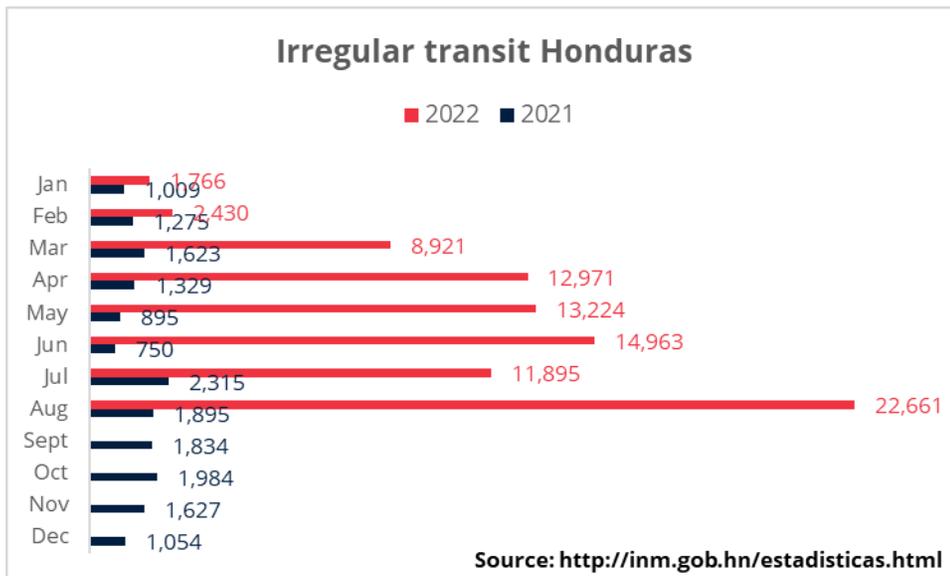
Reports by the Honduran Red Cross show that at least 300 Hondurans migrate daily. This data does not include the flow of people belonging to the *caravans*¹³. In 2022, at least two caravans were convened in January and April.

The National Institute of Migration (INM) reports that 88,831¹⁴ people entered irregularly in 2022 (January to August), primarily through the Honduras-Nicaragua border, in the Departments of Choluteca and El Paraíso. Cubans continue to represent the most significant number of irregular migrants entering the country, accounting for 53% of all entries. There has also been an increase in the number of migrants from Venezuela, who in August 2022, accounted for 27% of all entries.

¹² [OIM. Monitoring of Irregular Migratory Flows in the Northern Zone of Costa Rica, La Cruz, Upala, Los Chiles. June 2022.](#)

¹³ Central American migrant caravans are migrant caravans that travel from Central America to the Mexico-United States border.

¹⁴ [INM Honduras. Statistics of irregular migratory flows.](#)



The situation of returnees is also of concern in Honduras. From January to 4 September 2022¹⁵, a total of 67,888 Hondurans returned to the country. They continue to be received at the Returned Migrant Care Centres (CAMR, by its Spanish acronym).

El Salvador

Internal displacement and migration are, in many cases, direct consequences of violence. Many people are forced to leave their lives behind to seek new alternatives within their own country or across borders. In El Salvador, both phenomena are evident and need to be addressed: displaced persons seeking a safe place within the country and migrants who risk traveling the migratory route to reach new destinations. Many of them are subsequently deported.

Under this scenario, the Salvadoran Red Cross (SRC), within the framework of this Emergency Appeal, has begun to organize internally to strengthen response actions. In this regard, they have begun to identify the communities to be prioritized, which include direct work with returnees and internally displaced persons. At the same time, the prioritization of actions to be developed during the first months of the operation has also begun.

Guatemala

According to monitoring carried out by the Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC), the average of 800 persons per week registered in August increased to 1,311 during the week of September 1-7, representing a 61% increase: 56% of Venezuelan nationality and 34% Honduran nationality. The remaining 10% are from Nicaragua, Colombia, El Salvador, Ecuador, Peru, Cameroon, Haiti, Panama, Brazil, Dominican Republic, and Cuba. In this same period, 67% were adult men, 19% adult women, 6% girls and 8% boys. Considering the changing scenario, the CGR has started to organize internally to strengthen response actions within the framework of this Emergency Appeal.

Regarding the implementation actions, the process of calling, selecting, and hiring personnel has begun: 1 Administrative Technician and 1 Project Coordinator, who will be in charge of planning, coordinating and executing the planned actions. Likewise, the content of the kits, basic medicine, messages in personal portable water containers, among others, which will be distributed throughout the operation, has been reviewed and updated.

At the same time, together with the teams currently in the field, sessions have been held to update trends, mixed flow behaviors, identification of new "unofficial" places of entry into the national territory for follow-up on migratory routes.

¹⁵ [CONMIGHO Comparison of Hondurans returned from 2015 to 2022.](#)

Mexico

The Mexican Red Cross works in coordination and with the financing of the ICRC, the Spanish Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross and the American Red Cross in Chiapas and Sonora to strengthen its Humanitarian Service Points on the migratory route, its health and health promotion strategies, as well as the quality and variety of RFL services.

The MRC's National Migration Program (recently inaugurated) depends on the National Relief Coordination, which allows it to have response capacity thanks to the consolidated infrastructure and capacity of this coordination.

The Mexican Red Cross is currently making logistical preparations for the purchase of mobile units that will allow it to offer greater coverage in humanitarian assistance to the growing number of people traveling through the country to the United States.

Needs analysis

Panama

In San Vicente, Darien the conditions of the temporary ERM remain unchanged. With the increased flow, authorities have accelerated the mobilization of people to the Planes de Gualaca. Departures from Darien are becoming more expeditious for people who have the money to travel. It is worth mentioning that the movement of migrants is no longer as orderly as it was at the beginning of the year. Buses sometimes leave from 10:00 AM from Darien until late in the afternoon and even at night, which means that the arrival time at Planes de Gualaca is in the early hours of the morning. Consequently, the few services provided at this point are not received by a large part of the migrant population.

Despite the speed of the mobilizations, at the end of August more than 100 people left the San Vicente station on foot. They maintained that they had no money for fares and would continue the route on foot. On the other hand, the Zapallal route continues to be active with smaller but steady arrivals.

Despite the increase in the use of the Bajo Chiquito route, Canaan Membrillo continues to be the host community with the largest influx of migrants. The arrival of more than 1,000 people to the community repeatedly represents a high probability that the number of migrants crossing the Darien will continue to rise in the following months, as in August 31,055 people were registered.

Costa Rica

There are still no authorised stations or centres for migrants in Costa Rica that can provide conditions to care for significant numbers entering through the southern border. Many of these people lose their possessions along their journey, lose contact with their families, or are exposed to exploitation, stigma and human trafficking. They thus require immediate assistance through cash, information about the route, health and WASH actions, and protection, including safe referrals and shelter. Costa Rica also receives significant numbers of refugee applicants to the point where they have exceeded the capacity of the system.

These migrants travel long distances and have few resources: food is a main concern, and rather than provide meals or cooking spaces, CRRC plans to provide small meals such as snacks or food kits, which are easier to carry.

Honduras

Returning Honduran migrants also continue to enter the country by air and land through Centres for Care for the Returned Migrant (CAMR by the Spanish acronym) in the municipalities of Omoa, La Lima and San Pedro Sula, all in the department of Cortés.

According to national legislation, every migrant and Honduras national who enters the country irregularly must pay a fine and must regularise their transit or entry. For the irregular migrant population, the State considers this payment

a way to finance the improvement of security during transit through the national territory. For people who enter through the department of El Paraíso, this procedure can be done through the National Migration Institute in Danlí and Trojes.

This year, mixed migratory flows through Trojes have increased significantly, at an approximate daily count of 556 people in the months of April and May 2022, with an average daily increase of 631 people in the month of June.

El Salvador

According to the Humanitarian Response Plan for El Salvador¹⁶, forced displacement has a multidimensional negative effect on the exercise of rights. At the community level, the lack of state presence and the social and territorial control of gangs hinder displaced persons access to rights and services. To mitigate risks, people affected by violence often limit their movements, aggravating their situation and affecting their sources of income. Once they flee their community, displaced persons leave behind their property, belongings, education, and employment opportunities. In addition, displacement entails the loss of social, community and family networks, while generating new challenges related to the establishment of the family in a new place.

Upon arrival, returning migrants, in El Salvador, suffer discrimination that limits their reintegration into their communities of origin. The stigma that follows them is usually associated with crime. Other returnees have physical and mental health problems or have been victims of sexual abuse in transit. Some returnees fled and were forcibly displaced and feel threatened to return to their place of origin.

Some of the factors of departure were family reunification, uprooting, adverse weather conditions that have contributed to the loss of jobs and the closure of businesses in the communities of origin, which makes it difficult to generate livelihoods.

Guatemala

The responses by Guatemala, oriented to the care and protection of the migrant population, have been scarce. In this regard, it is important to coordinate an inter-institutional humanitarian response, including the CRG, to address the most immediate needs of the population in mobility, prioritizing groups in vulnerable situations: children and adolescents, women, LGBTIQ+ people, people with disabilities, people with chronic diseases and family units with limited resources. To this end, it is important to incorporate the PGI, and Community Participation and Community Accountability (CEA) approaches to ensure quality and differentiated care.

Given the increase in the massive and mixed flows of people in mobility in recent months, the demand for humanitarian services has also increased, as has the need to expand care in different parts of the country. This has required the further availability of resources of all kinds, to ensure quality and relevant care in all modalities.

The funds received under this Emergency Appeal will allow the CRG to continue offering, in a strengthened manner, shelter services, humanitarian relief items, WASH services, protection, and psychosocial support, among others, to people in mobility. The funds will also allow the CRG to continue its work in humanitarian diplomacy, inter-institutional humanitarian coordination, and its response in governmental and non-governmental spaces.

Mexico

During the first months of 2022, the detention events registered by the Office of Customs and Border Control ¹⁷(CBP) increased considerably. In January, 154,812 arrests were registered, 165,894 in February and 221,303 in March. The increase is 53.6% comparing the data of the first quarter of 2021 with the same period of the current year (in 2021, there were 352,790 events, compared to 542,009 in 2022). Despite the decrease in the number of foreigners

¹⁶ [OCHA / Humanitarian Response Plan – El Salvador, 2022](#)

¹⁷ [Office of Customs and Border Control](#)

presented by the immigration authority in Mexico during the first months of 2022, a year-on-year increase of around 107.9% was observed.

According to reports from field personnel, in Chiapas, between August and September, there have been at least four caravans leaving Tapachula for Huixtla with an average of between 2,000 and 4,000 people. The increase in caravans represents a challenge for the humanitarian response of the Mexican Red Cross.

The Mexican Red Cross is in the preparatory stages to reduce the gap in access to shelter, housing, settlement, healthcare, mental health and protection, gender and inclusion services for 22,000 migrants in transit and return, mainly through humanitarian service points. At the same time, it seeks to strengthen the national society in order to provide an adequate and timely response to emergencies.

Operational risk assessment

The rapidly changing situation of migrants constantly on the move requires a continued dynamic process of planning that responds to the needs of the affected people and that can be adjusted when needed. Different scenarios are being used for planning so that National Societies can adapt their services to accommodate the affected populations. This will include further adaptation of the Operational Strategy.

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Update on the strategy

As part of the Mexico and Central American Migration Crisis Emergency Appeal, the Regional Operational Strategy aims to support the Red Cross Societies of Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico to scale up assistance and protection to 210,000 people along migratory routes. The Secretariat will support the country's operations with a Regional Operation structure and with Information Management and CEA expertise and will set up a regional monitoring and evaluation framework to enable a coordinated and enhanced response.

This Operational Strategy is part of a Federation-wide approach, focusing on activities across the following priorities, with an overall focus on National Society Strengthening (NSS): a) Implementation and management of Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs), b) Cash and Voucher Assistance, c) Health and WASH assistance, d) Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI), e) Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), f) Information Management and Digital transformation, g) Humanitarian Diplomacy, h) Membership coordination, i) Communication, j) Surge capacity, k) Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER), l) Finance and Administration and m) Logistics. To date, no modifications have been made to the initial strategy.

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL REPORT

At the writing of this report, the Project Funding Agreements for each National Society are being signed and therefore, disbursement of funds is in process. National Societies have been preparing to implement actions, as described in the “Summary of response” section of this report, therefore there are no achievements on indicators as of now. Furthermore, National Societies are still in the process of determining which indicators they will report on as well as defining their targets, which will be published in the next Operation Update on 2 October 2022. For a complete list of indicators, please refer to the [Regional Operational Strategy](#).

D. FUNDING

As of 16 September 2022, 1 per cent of the Appeal’s funding requirements has been covered. The IFRC kindly encourages increased donor support for this Emergency Appeal to enable host National Societies to continue to provide support to the migrants and host communities, primarily in the process of attending their immediate needs for food, shelter, water and livelihoods.

Click [here](#) for the donor response.

Federation-wide funding requirement*

Federation Wide Funding Requirement including the National Society domestic target, IFRC Secretariat and the Partner National Society funding requirement	IFRC Secretarian Funding Requirement in support of the Federation Wide funding ask
28 million CHF	18 million CHF

**For more information on Federation-Wide funding requirement, refer to section: Federation-wide Approach in the Regional Operational Strategy*

Breakdown of the IFRC secretariat funding requirement



OPERATING STRATEGY

MDR43008 – Mexico & Central America: Migration crisis

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Planned Operations	12,119,346
Shelter and Basic Household Items	321,308
Livelihoods	611,031
Multi-purpose Cash	845,013
Health	2,096,713
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	2,228,172
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	859,824
Community Engagement and Accountability	181,710
Education	116,856
Migration	4,643,033
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	191,586
Environmental Sustainability	24,100
Enabling Approaches	4,782,061
Coordination and Partnerships	2,381,340
Secretariat Services	29,829
National Society Strengthening	2,370,892
TOTAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS	18,000,000

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)

Contact information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

At the Red Cross Society of Panama

- **President:** Elias Solis, elias.solis@cruzroja.org.pa
- **General Director:** Larissa Rodriguez, larissa.rodriguez@cruzroja.org.pa

At the Costa Rican Red Cross

- **President:** Dyanne Marenco Gonzalez; dyanne.marenco@cruzroja.or.cr
- **General Director:** Jose David Ruiz; david.ruiz@cruzroja.or.cr

At the Nicaraguan Red Cross

- **President:** Oscar Gutierrez; presidencia@humanidad.org.ni
- **General Director:** Auner Garcia; direcciongeneral@humanidad.org.ni

At the Salvadoran Red Cross

- **President:** Dr. Benjamin Ruiz Rodas; jose.ruiz@cruzrojasal.org.sv
- **General Director:** Rigoberto Hernandez; rigoberto.hernandez@cruzrojasal.org.sv

At the Honduran Red Cross

- **President:** Juan Jose Castro; josejuan.castro@cruzroja.org.hn
- **General Director:** Alexei Castro; alexei.castro@cruzroja.org.hn

At the Guatemalan Red Cross

- **President:** Annabella Folgar; annabella.folgar@cruzroja.gt
- **General Director:** Daniel Javiel; daniel.javiel@cruzroja.gt

At the Mexican Red Cross

- **President:** Fernando Suinaga; presidencia@cruzrojamexicana.org.mx
- **General Director:** Jose Antonio Monroy; jamonroy@cruzrojamexicana.org.mx

At the IFRC Americas Regional Office

- **Head of Central America Country Cluster Delegation:** Nelson Aly; nelson.alyrodriguez@ifrc.org
- **IFRC Regional Office for Head of Disaster, Climate and Crises:** Roger Alonso Morgui, roger.morgui@ifrc.org
- **Operations, Evolving Crises and Disasters Manager:** Maria Martha Tuna; maria.tuna@ifrc.org
- **Head of Partnerships and Resource Development:** Mei Lin Leon (acting), meilin.leon@ifrc.org
- **Communications Manager:** Susana Arroyo, susana.arroyo@ifrc.org
- **Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Manager:** Pradiip Alvarez (acting); pradiip.alvarez@ifrc.org
- **Logistics Coordinator:** Mauricio Bustamante, mauricio.bustamante@ifrc.org

In the IFRC Geneva Headquarters

- **DREF Senior Officer:** Eszter Matyeka; email: eszter.matyeka@ifrc.org
- **Operations Coordination Focal Point:** Karla Morizzo (acting); email: karla.morizzo@ifrc.org

Reference documents



Click here for:

- [Link to the Emergency Appeal and updates](#)

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief, the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable, to **Principles of Humanitarian Action** and **IFRC policies and procedures**. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.