



# MALAYSIA

## 2023 IFRC network country plan

Funding Requirement **CHF 3.9M**

Appeal number **MAAMY002**

### In support of the Malaysian Red Crescent Society



**168**

National Society branches



**150**

National Society staff



**230,000**

National Society volunteers

### People to be reached



**15,000**

Climate and environment



**50,000**

Disasters and crises



**50,000**

Health and wellbeing



**25,000**

Migration and displacement



**25,000**

Values, power and inclusion

### IFRC network multiyear focus

#### Longer term needs

- Disaster risk reduction
  - Climate change adaptation
  - Humanitarian protection and assistance for people on the move
- #### Capacity development
- Auxiliary role strengthening
    - Volunteering
  - Financial sustainability and resource mobilization
    - Digital transformation

### Key country data

Population	<b>32.8M</b>
INFORM Severity rating	<b>medium</b>
Long-term Climate Risk Index	<b>116</b>
Human Development Index rank	<b>62</b>
Population below poverty level	<b>8.4%</b>

## Hazards



Floods



Fires



Earthquakes



Disease outbreaks



Migration

## Funding requirements

**Total 3.9M** CHF

Through the IFRC

**2.2M** CHF

Through Participating National Societies

→ **700,000** CHF

Host National Society

**1M** CHF

### IFRC Breakdown

#### Longer term needs

**720,000** CHF  
Climate and environment

**800,000** CHF  
Disasters and crises

**200,000** CHF  
Health and wellbeing

**25,000** CHF  
Migration and displacement

**25,000** CHF  
Values, power and inclusion

**380,000** CHF  
Enabling local actors

## Participating National Societies

Australian Red Cross

Finnish Red Cross\*

Italian Red Cross

Swiss Red Cross\*

Turkish Red Crescent Society\*



# NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

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**The Malaysian Red Crescent Society** was established as a branch of the British Red Cross in 1948 and recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in July 1963. It was accepted as a member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in August 1963. The National Society was initially incorporated under an Act of Parliament in 1965 as the Malaysian Red Cross Society; however, it later changed its name to Malaysian Red Crescent Society through the amendment of the Act of Parliament in 1975. The National Society's vision is to be the leading humanitarian organization in Malaysia that brings people and institutions together to support the vulnerable. Its mission is to prevent and reduce suffering, wherever it may be.

The mandate of the Malaysian Red Crescent Society is outlined in an Act of Parliament, in Directives of the National Security Council, an Act of the Ministry of Health, and a Police Directive on crisis and violence management.

The National Society's role is to:

- Provide emergency medical and first aid services and prepare and provide food assistance
- Support the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development by providing food in relief centres, distributing relief items such as clothing and blankets, conducting the registration of affected people, and providing recovery support

- Work with the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development to evacuate affected people, conduct mass feeding operations and provide a workforce for relief centres
- Work with the Ministry of Health to provide first aid, ambulances, health screening, emergency medical services, and health services in relief centres
- Support other mandated agencies in rescue and evacuation efforts
- Support the Ministry of Health with preventing and controlling infectious diseases, and carry out the enforcement of related measures
- Operate the emergency ambulance service (established in 1969) in non-disaster situations, covering the federal territory of Kuala Lumpur and 11 states, and manage the 999 emergency assistance hotline

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society has branches in Malaysia's 16 states and three federal territories, including Kuala Lumpur. It operates through more than 150 staff and 230,000 registered volunteers. The Malaysian Red Crescent Society regularly responds to disasters, especially flooding during the monsoon season. During non-disaster times, the National Society's main role is providing emergency ambulance services.

In 2021, the National Society reached more than 365,000 people with disaster response and early recovery, 331,000 with livelihoods support, and 282,000 people through health services. It also trained 68,385 people in first aid.

## IFRC NETWORK ACTION IN 2023

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### Joint situational analysis

Malaysia is a Southeast Asian country consisting of 13 states and three federal territories. The South China Sea separates the country into Peninsular Malaysia and Malaysian Borneo (East Malaysia).

Despite being geographically located outside the Pacific Ring of Fire, Malaysia is vulnerable to several natural hazards. It has warm weather all year round and is susceptible to disease outbreaks. Many migrants and refugees travel to Malaysia as a destination and host

country, and there is a particularly complex situation involving migrants and stateless persons in Sabah, Malaysian Borneo.

Malaysia practices the parliamentary democracy system, with a constitutional monarchy, and elections are held every five years. Since early 2020, the country has seen a number of leadership changes over a short time period. Political defections in March 2020 resulted in the fall of a government administration that was elected less than two years prior, followed by the appointment of a new prime minister. In August 2021, there was another

change of leadership. These unprecedented political changes have led to mistrust of the Government and an overall climate of political instability. Combined with recent global events, this has contributed to economic uncertainty.

Malaysia is one of the most open economies in the world, with an average trade to GDP ratio of more than 130 per cent since 2010. Openness to trade and investment has been instrumental in creating jobs and income growth, and about 40 per cent of jobs in Malaysia are linked to export activities. After the Asian financial crisis of 1997–1998, Malaysia's economy has been on an upward trajectory, and growth has averaged 5.4 per cent since 2010. The country is expected to complete its transition from an upper middle-income economy to a high-income economy by 2024.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major economic impact on Malaysia, particularly in vulnerable households. Having revised its national poverty line in July 2020, 5.6 per cent of Malaysian households are currently living in absolute poverty. The Government is focused on addressing the well-being of the poorest 40 per cent of the population. This low-income group remains particularly vulnerable to economic shocks, as well as increases in the cost of living and mounting financial obligations.

Income inequality in Malaysia remains high in relation to other Southeast Asian countries, but it is gradually reducing. While income growth for the bottom 40 per cent has outpaced the top 60 per cent over much of the last decade, the absolute gap across income groups has increased. This has contributed to widespread perceptions of the poor being left behind. Following the removal of broad-based subsidies, the Government gradually moved towards more targeted measures to support the poor and vulnerable, mainly in the form of cash transfers to low-income households.

Based on the Sustainable Development Report published in 2022, Malaysia ranks 72 out of 163 countries in development, with an SDG index of 70.4 per cent. Malaysia is on track to achieve two of its goals: zero poverty (SDG 1) and decent work and economic growth (SDG 8). It achieved a moderate score in eight of its goals: good health and well-being (SDG 3), quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), affordable and clean energy (SDG 7), industry, innovation and infrastructure growth (SDG 9), sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11), responsible consumption and production (SDG 12), and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16). The scores in six other goals are stagnating: zero hunger (SDG 2), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), climate action (SDG 13), life below water (SDG 14), life on land (SDG 15), and partnerships for the goals (SDG 17). There is no data available for the last goal of reduced inequalities (SDG 10).

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## Strategic priorities

### Climate and environment

Southeast Asia is the most flood-exposed area in the world, and Malaysia has had to contend with unusual levels of flooding over the last two years. The effects of climate change leave the country vulnerable to frequent and extreme weather and climate-related disasters. Biodiversity loss, compounded by other longer-term impacts of climate change, will lead to further shocks in communities. This includes an increase in vector-borne diseases, such as dengue, which are observed during warmer periods.

Malaysia is exposed to the El Niño and La Niña phenomena. While the El Niño impacts are generally consistent across different intensities, La Niña can have entirely different impacts among different categories. According to the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research, during the year, between December and February, strong (moderate) La Niña caused a significant decrease

in wet precipitation extremes over Peninsular Malaysia. This was related to the broadening (narrowing and westward displacement) of the anomalous cyclonic circulation over the western north Pacific during strong (moderate) La Niña. Hence, the likelihood of widespread flooding over the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia during this period increases during moderate, but not during strong, La Niña events.

The latest Climate Risk Country Profile Malaysia (2021), conducted by the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, found that:

- Malaysia is particularly vulnerable to the natural hazard of flooding, which causes more damage than any other country experiences

- The frequency and extremity of flooding has increased in recent decades, with projections showing it will continue to increase with ongoing global warming
- The frequency and intensity of heatwaves experienced in Malaysia is expected to increase significantly due to a warming climate
- The mean surface temperature in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak increased by 0.14°C–0.25°C per decade between 1970 and 2013
- Under the highest emissions pathway (representative concentration pathway (RCP) 8.5), average temperatures are projected to increase by 3.11°C by the 2090s (0.6°C less than the global average), while under the lowest emissions pathway (RCP2.6) the increase is projected to be 0.8°C by the 2090s – approximately 0.2°C less than the global average
- Although there is significant uncertainty around precipitation projections, rainfall is expected to increase across Malaysia – more so in the states of Sabah and Sarawak than in Peninsular Malaysia
- Vulnerability assessments are used to identify the risks that rising sea levels pose to agricultural production in coastal areas, in the range projected by the RCP scenarios (approximately 0.4–0.7m by 2100, with a greater sea level rise in Sabah and Sarawak)
- Modelling suggests that droughts and floods that occur early in the rice-growing season could reduce yields by up to 60 per cent, while drought conditions may affect the cultivation of rubber, palm oil and cocoa

With support from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Malaysia carried out vulnerability and adaptation assessments for various hazards (including floods) in September 2018 as part of its climate change projection. As floods become increasingly severe, water and coastal resources will be affected, as will food security and agriculture, various infrastructure and transportation hubs, energy and utilities, and public health services.

Coastal adaptation and disaster risk reduction has become a higher national priority in Malaysia. Many people believe that climate change contributed to the recent flooding in urban residential areas in Peninsular Malaysia. As its impacts have reached beyond coastal communities, urban and suburban communities have also become more aware of climate change issues.

Low-income earners are more economically dependent on activities where climatic conditions play a prominent role – including agriculture, fishing and informal sectors in the urban economy – and they typically live in areas that are more exposed to environmental hazards. Consequently, climate change threatens to exacerbate poverty and inequality.

The Malaysian Green Technology and Climate Change Corporation, an agency of the Ministry of Environment and Water (KASA), is mandated to work towards green growth and climate change mitigation, and promote green lifestyles. Three national policies – the National Green Technology Policy, the National Climate Change Policy and the Green Technology Master Plan – are focused on green economic growth. KASA is in the early stages of developing the framework for the Climate Change Act, which the Ministry of Environment expects to be tabled in Parliament in 2025.

The Malaysian Climate Change Action Council was established by KASA in April 2021 as the ultimate platform for setting the agenda on climate change. Its goals are to determine the direction of change, discuss climate change policies and actions, drive green economic growth, and catalyze green technology and low-carbon growth at all levels, particularly in the federal and state governments.

### Main actions and areas of support

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society signed the [Climate and Environment Charter](#) for Humanitarian Organizations in 2022, as a demonstration of its commitment to addressing climate change and environmental degradation. Its three commitments under the charter are:

- Conduct climate-smart disaster risk reduction activities
- Develop and implement environmental policies within the National Society
- Work collaboratively across the humanitarian sector and beyond to strengthen climate and environmental action

With support from the IFRC, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society plans to:

- Develop a community-based project on climate change as part of community-based disaster risk reduction
- Conduct community awareness campaign activities on climate change



- Engage and participate in climate change related networking or working groups, including the regional resilience working group, the Asia-Pacific Data Research Centre, and the Malaysian Climate Change Action Council
- Develop a capacity building plan for staff and volunteers on climate change adaptation and [anticipatory action](#)
- Provide training and orientation for National Society staff and volunteers on IFRC [enhanced vulnerability and capacity assessment](#), climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction
- Work collaboratively with local and national authorities, international financial institutions, the private sector, researchers, suppliers and donors, as well as environmental, development and human rights actors, in order to strengthen climate and environmental action
- Develop an environmental policy using the new IFRC toolkit

## Disasters and crises

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

Hazards affecting Malaysia include floods, forest fires, haze, landslides, seismic activity and epidemics. Floods are the primary hazard affecting the country, with a risk of earthquakes mainly in Sabah, East Malaysia. Landslides and droughts are significant, although their effects are limited to smaller eastern regions.

Floods have increased in frequency over the last two years. Unexpected and unusual flash flooding occurred in the state of Kedah, with those affected unable to prepare or respond adequately. Supported by the IFRC, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society has responded to at least [five flood disasters](#) since 2021 by providing emergency assistance. The response focused on addressing basic needs, which included access to food, personal hygiene items, health services (including COVID-19 screening and referral), water for both drinking and household use, and basic access to sanitation. The National Society coordinated with the local authorities, the National Agency for Disaster Administration and the Social Welfare Department, on the emergency response.

A directive has been established in Malaysia to set national guidelines for disaster management (Directive No. 20: national policy and mechanism on disaster management and relief). It establishes a coordinated

mechanism for pre-, mid- and post-disaster phases, and determines the roles and responsibilities of all agencies involved – including search and rescue, health, logistics and media.

Malaysia has also implemented numerous other guidelines such as the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, the ASEAN Standard Operating Procedures for Regional Standby Arrangements and the Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations, alongside various supporting laws. The most recently established are the 1998 Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases Act, 1998 Fire Services Act, Malaysia Civil Defence Force Act 1951 (amended in 2016), and the National Security Council Act of 2016. However, given their heavy reliance on response and recovery, the scope of these policies is somewhat limited, especially in terms of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.

The Eleventh Malaysia Development Plan for 2016 to 2020 highlighted disaster and climate resilience as one of the cornerstones for sustainable and resilient development in Malaysia. However, it seems that only a few other policy revisions have been made to date.

## Main actions and areas of support

In the long term, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society intends to:

- Reduce vulnerability and exposure to hazards
- Build community resilience, early warning and early action measures
- Develop cash readiness
- Improve response readiness, including accessing IFRC supply chain management support
- Scale up emergency and disaster responses
- Strengthen its auxiliary role
- Develop disaster law and legislative advocacy, including civil-military relations
- Operationalize the Malaysian Humanitarian Field School (a humanitarian aid training centre)

In 2023, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society plans to:

- Continue to address the socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic through recovery programming

- Consolidate the lessons learned from the community-based disaster risk reduction project in Kampung Angkat, so that a case study can be developed to support a further pilot in another community
- Continue to promote school safety and school-based disaster risk reduction activities as part of wider climate-smart community-based risk reduction initiatives
- Build staff and volunteers' knowledge and skills of anticipatory action, enabling them to start participating in regional dialogue
- Scale up cash readiness and promote cash and voucher assistance, to better support water, sanitation and hygiene activities, and health and livelihood recovery

The IFRC will support the Malaysian Red Crescent Society to become more prepared to respond to disasters by developing a disaster management strategy. The Malaysian Red Crescent Society will also create a safety and security policy, and conduct a review of its business continuity planning. A visualization system for emergency operations will be established at the national headquarters.

The IFRC will also support the National Society with strengthening its stock pre-positioning strategy (including hygiene kits and ready-to-eat food kits), in terms of developing its framework agreements and aligning its activities with procurement and logistics capacity guidelines.

Through the anticipatory action learning approach, the IFRC will support the Malaysian Red Crescent Society to work towards building knowledge and skills on anticipatory action and participate in a [regional dialogue platform](#) on anticipatory humanitarian action. The National Society will also access disaster risk financing for anticipatory action in 2024.

The IFRC will provide the National Society with technical support on cash readiness, recovery programming and disaster law, and support the promotion of the Malaysian Humanitarian Field School within the country and across the region.

## Health and wellbeing

According to Malaysia Health Facts data released in early 2021, non-communicable diseases cause 73 per cent of total deaths in Malaysia, and 35 per cent of deaths occur within the working-age population. The four highest causes of hospitalizations in Malaysia are

pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period (22.24 per cent); conditions originating in the perinatal period (10.67 per cent); diseases of the respiratory system (9.01 per cent); and diseases of the circulatory system (8.87 per cent).

The data also found that the main causes of death are diseases of the circulatory system (23.22 per cent); diseases of the respiratory system (19.69 per cent); certain infectious and parasitic diseases (13.02 per cent); and neoplasms (11.56 per cent).

Vaccine hesitancy among parents was increasing before the pandemic but it became more pronounced when the COVID-19 vaccination for children was rolled out. Only 42.3 per cent of children aged five to 11 have now been vaccinated against COVID-19. The Ministry of Health noted that many parents missed routine vaccination appointments during lockdowns out of fear of getting infected with the virus. With the re-emergence of polio in Sabah after 27 years of Malaysia being polio-free, the continuation of vital immunization services has become even more critical to eliminating vaccine-preventable diseases.

There is a growing need for mental health and psychosocial support, not only in times of disaster but also for those who have suffered the socio-economic effects of epidemics, social exclusion and stigma, and people who have experienced sexual and gender-based violence.

In addition to COVID-19, water-borne and vector-borne diseases continue to affect parts of the country. Piped clean water is essential to prevent the spread of water-borne diseases, and it increased in rural areas of Peninsula Malaysia in 2020 from 42 per cent to 96 per cent. In East Malaysia, however, undulating topography and sparse and scattered rural populations make the cost of providing infrastructure very expensive. Consequently, in 2020, there was piped water coverage of just 62 per cent in Sabah and Sarawak.

In 2018, the UN Special Rapporteur made the following comments and recommendations in the area of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in Malaysia:

- The WASH needs in Kelantan, Sabah and Sarawak need considerable policy reforms; in particular, there is a lack of federal bodies and technical and financial resources
- Orang Asli (indigenous people) must have access to continuous and sustainable water and sanitation services, by increasing the capacity of the Department of Orang Asli Development

- Human rights impact assessments should be carried out at each stage of a megaproject; there should be meaningful participation of the people affected, and they must be provided with easy access to project information
- A baseline survey should begin, to improve the availability of data on undocumented and stateless people in East Malaysia
- Monitoring must be conducted on how gender inequalities persist in access to toilets, including among gender non-conforming people, and how they manifest in spheres beyond the home
- The Ministry of Health needs to play a more active role in auditing and interpreting the results of water quality monitoring by providers, and prioritize targeted monitoring of hazardous substances, such as pesticides, in water sources
- Develop and implement activities related to hygiene promotion, including menstrual hygiene management
- Expand the reach, quality and financial sustainability of first aid activities, including training
- Develop an appropriate commercial first aid model
- Scale up the voluntary non-remunerated blood programme and increase promotional activities to encourage regular blood donations
- Integrate psychological first aid in all first aid training courses, ambulance services and emergency response services
- Develop a pandemic and epidemic preparedness plan, and build the capacity of staff and volunteers to be better prepared for disease outbreaks
- Strengthen its auxiliary role as an active member of national coordination platforms
- Develop, adopt, socialize and implement health and WASH strategies that are aligned with the mandate from the Malaysian Government and IFRC policies, including the IFRC Global Health Framework 2030; the IFRC Asia Pacific Emergency WASH Strategy 2021–2030; the mental health and psychosocial support framework, and pandemic preparedness

### Main actions and areas of support

The IFRC will provide technical support and guidance to the Malaysian Red Crescent Society so that it can:

- Continue its ongoing collaboration with the Ministry of Health on the COVID-19 vaccination programme, targeting vulnerable and underserved populations including migrants, elderly people, people living with disabilities, people with chronic illness, children, and pregnant and breastfeeding women
- Collaborate with health authorities to mobilize communities to engage with routine and emergency vaccination campaigns
- Develop community-based surveillance and community awareness activities on non-communicable diseases, while building the capacity of staff and volunteers to engage with those activities
- Scale up WASH preparedness in emergency and non-emergency community programmes through various activities, including the pre-positioning of hygiene kits and the maintenance of assets such as toilets and sinks
- Develop and implement developmental WASH projects, such as localized water supply solutions, to enable gravity feed systems and rainwater harvesting in selected communities
- Develop and implement a youth-led campaign to sustain hygiene practices and respiratory etiquette, in the context of the continuing threat of COVID-19

### Migration and displacement

A significant number of migrants travel to Malaysia, largely due to its labour market opportunities and economic status; and its higher learning institutions are popular among foreign students. The largest number of migrants come from Indonesia, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal, India and the Philippines, with smaller numbers from Iran, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Pakistan, Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa. Government data shows that there were nearly two million migrant workers in Malaysia in September 2019, with unofficial estimates of both regular and irregular migrants ranging between 1.4 and three million.

Many migrant workers live in urban centres around Kuala Lumpur. Others live in Penang, Johor Bahru, Melaka, Kota Kinabalu and other major cities where there are employment opportunities in construction, manufacturing, the service sector and domestic work. There are also small populations of migrant workers in rural areas where there are jobs in the plantation sector. The type of jobs left available to migrant workers usually fall into the '3D' category – which means dirty, dangerous or demeaning.





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People have moved freely for generations between the Malaysian state of Sabah and the Philippines, where there is a porous sea border. Migration and statelessness are sensitive issues in Sabah, and a Sabah Federal Special Task Force was formed 1989 to address the area's rising number of migrants. In 2012, a Royal Commission of Inquiry on illegal immigration in Sabah was established, to further address these issues, but its recommendations have not been implemented. The Philippines' unresolved historical claim to Sabah, together with the 2013 invasion of Lahad Datu in East Sabah by a group aligned to the former Sultan of Sulu, have added to a complex political situation in the area.

The Malaysian Government places a strong emphasis on border governance and security, despite the country's heavy reliance on migrant labour. Malaysia has not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, nor does it have a domestic legal framework that recognizes asylum seekers and refugees as people in need of international protection. Therefore, they are not distinguished from irregular or undocumented migrants, and others without legal status. Asylum seekers and refugees are considered to be irregular or illegal migrants, and this makes them vulnerable to arrest, penal sanctions, deportation and refoulement. In April 2022, there were approximately 182,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Malaysia who had registered with UNHCR.

The Government allows recognized refugees to temporarily stay in Malaysia, pending their resettlement in a third country. Migrant workers are dependent on their employers for their work permits, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation. If a worker's employment

is terminated and they do not have valid immigration documentation, they lose their legal status in Malaysia.

The humanitarian needs faced by migrants in Malaysia are many and complex. With support from the IFRC, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society conducted a migration and displacement needs assessment to identify areas of concern. The lack of a clear legal and policy framework that addresses migrants' needs and vulnerabilities means that protection is a clear need.

A lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services puts women and girls in a particularly vulnerable position, and migrant women workers are prohibited from becoming pregnant, which puts them at even greater risk. Survivors of gender-based violence lack access to services that could aid them in their recovery. A handful of NGOs provide access to shelter and psychosocial support; however, these facilities are located primarily in cities such as the Klang Valley and Penang, and their services are limited to refugees and asylum seekers. Children, especially girls living in crowded conditions, are susceptible to abuse and exploitation, including child marriage.

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

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society has developed a plan of action on migration and displacement for 2021–2024, with technical support from the IFRC and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The plan focuses on strengthening the capacity of the National Society in the field of migration and displacement, humanitarian responses to migration and displacement, and partnerships and humanitarian diplomacy.

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society National Committee on Migration and Displacement, led by the national chairperson and key decision-makers on the governing board, has been formed to provide leadership to the National Society and guide and support the implementation of the plan of action.

The IFRC and ICRC will guide and support the National Society to review and update its Incorporation Act, to include migrants in its mandate for responding to humanitarian needs. They will also guide and support the National Society to engage in humanitarian diplomacy at all levels, based on a mapping of relevant ministries and government agencies.

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society will mainstream migration and displacement considerations into all existing programmes, including health, cash and voucher assistance, disaster preparedness, emergency response (including for people arriving by boat), restoring family links, and risk communication and community engagement. With guidance from the ICRC and in collaboration with local branches, the National Society will also conduct a needs assessment on restoring family links requirements, focusing on places of detention and the surrounding areas.

In order to encourage public advocacy around migration issues, the National Society will develop the tools to collect, analyze and act upon public perceptions of migrants, displaced people and host communities in Malaysia.

### Values, power and inclusion

One in four adults, and 4.7 per cent of children aged two to 17 experience functional difficulties in Malaysia, according to the 2019 National Health Morbidity Survey. While the Government has introduced the Persons with Disabilities Act of 2008, it does not necessarily adopt a rights-based approach to disability inclusion.

Annual flooding has a disproportionate impact on vulnerable communities, such as people living on the streets, children who are out of school, indigenous minorities living in rural and semi-rural urban settings, people living with disabilities, and migrants and refugees. Anticipatory action and educational programmes are required.

In times of disasters, schools are the default evacuation location, alongside temporary shelters, until it is safe for the displaced populations to return home. Regardless of the duration of their usage for emergency shelter, children's access to education is inevitably disrupted.

Online lessons and blended learning was incorporated into the national school system by the Ministry of Education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the landscape of volunteering changes in Malaysia, there needs to be a more inclusive approach within the operations of the Malaysian Red Crescent Society. It must embed ways of working that promote protection, gender and inclusion into disaster risk reduction activities, anticipatory action and youth as agents of behavioural change programmes. This will encourage volunteers and community members to be more aware of issues around gender and inclusion, and the need for protection of vulnerable people.

Community engagement and accountability at the grassroots level is essential to encourage as many people as possible to get vaccinated. The perception survey conducted by the National Society from 2020 to 2021 recommended that it considers the way it shares information and captures community voices through social media, television and video. Three-quarters of respondents said they trusted information provided by the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, community health workers, the Government and Ministry of Health.

### Main actions and areas of support

The IFRC will provide technical support and guidance to the Malaysian Red Crescent Society to focus on:

- Promoting accountability and transparency in the way the National Society works with communities, volunteers and staff in internal processes, operations and ways of working
- Implementing practical guidelines and briefings to mainstream community engagement and accountability, as well as protection, gender and inclusion, in all National Society operations and programming
- Creating an inclusive and diverse environment within the National Society, where all members are equal partners and able to contribute to organizational decisions

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society will organize a youth as agents of behavioural change leadership programme for Chapter Youth Council and Branch Youth Council members. It will also implement Movement Education Plus Programmes and integrate youth into all its thematic programmes, including disaster management, international humanitarian law, school safety, health, first aid, and risk communication and community engagement. It will also pursue a stronger partnership with the Ministry of Education.





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The National Society will conduct a thorough assessment and produce a report on the impact of disasters and emergencies on children's education, when school buildings are used as temporary shelter or evacuation centres for displaced persons. It will also develop strategic partnerships and innovative mechanisms for collaboration, identifying key actors in the field of education to work with during emergencies.

The IFRC will guide and support the National Society to review and adopt existing policies on protection, gender

and inclusion for all staff and volunteers. It will also endorse mandatory onboarding courses for all staff and volunteers as a prerequisite for deployment to missions.

The National Society will receive tools and guidance from the IFRC to activate and formalize a community engagement and accountability working group, comprised of members from all branches. Regular meetings will be held to share knowledge, capacity and resources between branches.

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## Enabling local actors

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society is committed to pursuing its institutional strengthening and has carried out the self-assessment part of the Organizational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC) process in 2015. The self-assessment part of the OCAC process is intended to capture the strengths and weaknesses of National Societies as a whole, in relation to a wide range of organizational capacities.

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society identified that the auxiliary role of the National Society, and its mandate, need to be strengthened. While the auxiliary role is clear, the broader role in disaster management (preparedness, response and recovery) is not strongly articulated and defined. The mandate of the National Society has not been fully communicated to all branches, and this has

led to a lack of understanding and awareness among staff, members and volunteers. Public authorities and the general public also need to develop a clearer understanding of the National Society's auxiliary role, to ensure that it is not mistaken for an NGO.

The Malaysian Red Crescent Society does not currently have a resource mobilization strategy to facilitate its financial sustainability and access to funding during emergencies. In the last two years, the National Society has had financial support from the IFRC, and conducted successful fundraising activities for the COVID-19 response and the recent flood response. However, a resource mobilization strategy is needed to enable the National Society to maintain its financial stability, especially in non-emergency times.

## Main actions and areas of support

### Engaged

With support from the IFRC, the Malaysian Red Crescent plans to:

- Re-engage with the Government to update its auxiliary role as the main humanitarian actor in the country
- Review and update the Incorporation Act on the National Society's mandate, so that it can respond to current humanitarian needs through disaster law and humanitarian diplomacy
- Co-lead and host the Malaysia COVID-19 Coordination and Action Hub – a platform that connects donors, civil society organizations and relevant government agencies to enhance coordination and impactful humanitarian action across the country
- Deliver high-impact media and communications on emergencies and undertake public advocacy targeting donors, the Government, partners and policy influencers through traditional media, social media, web and other digital channels
- Build staff and volunteer communication skills as frontline actors representing the Movement
- Work towards digitalization across the organization, as well as basic and advanced data protection and information security
- Implement the digitalization road map (developed from the assessment on digitalization conducted in 2022) to undergo the digital transformation of the National Society – ensuring that technological tools support its activities

### Accountable

With support from the IFRC, the Malaysian Red Crescent will seek to:

- Strengthen its human resource management capacity
- Implement policies on personnel behaviour
- Strengthen its financial management capacity
- Strengthen its supply chain management capacity
- Strengthen its planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting capacity

### Trusted

With support from the IFRC, the Malaysian Red Crescent plans to:

- Finalize the development of its Strategy 2030, in line with the IFRC Strategy 2030, and implement it across all levels of the organization
- Develop, approve, socialize and implement a fundraising strategy, establish an emergency fund, and develop and adopt policies, guidelines, tools and mechanisms on the prevention of fraud and corruption
- Develop and adopt policies, guidelines and tools to prevent sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and sexual and gender-based violence – ensuring they are enforced – while also focusing on child protection
- Implement the recently approved volunteering policy, and review existing guidelines on volunteering in the area of risk management, personal protective equipment, working times, compensation and allowances

## THE IFRC NETWORK


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### The IFRC

The IFRC Asia Pacific Regional Office is based in Kuala Lumpur, the capital city of Malaysia. It provides support as needed to the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, in alignment with the National Society strategic plan for 2021–2025. IFRC support ensures that the National Society will strengthen its organizational and response capacities to fulfil its humanitarian mandate.

Through Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) [operations](#), the IFRC regularly supports the Malaysian Red Crescent Society to respond to disasters, especially flooding during the monsoon season, and health emergencies. It also ensures the National Society's readiness for other disaster events. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IFRC, through its [global appeal](#), has supported the National Society in its COVID-19 response.

## 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
Australian Red Cross	CHF 0.60M								
Italian Red Cross	CHF 0.10M								

**Total**

**0.70M**

## IFRC membership coordination

The IFRC will continue to engage with the Malaysian Red Crescent Society through a Federation-wide approach to support emergencies and programmes.

Membership coordination will be prioritized across all thematic areas to harness the power of the National Society. The National Society will operate the Malaysian Humanitarian Field School, supported by the IFRC, as a facility where the next generation of Red Cross Red Crescent responders can undertake practical learning. With IFRC facilitation, the **Italian Red Cross** will provide

support to the Malaysian Red Crescent Society for implementing the Humanitarian Field School.

To position the IFRC network as the partner of choice for humanitarian assistance and community resilience in Malaysia, the IFRC will document and apply lessons learned from the COVID-19 operation.

The **Australian Red Cross**, with funding from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, is providing support to the Malaysian Red Crescent Society on its COVID-19 vaccination project running from April 2022 to June 2023. This is the first time the National Society has received funding support from the Australian Government.

## Movement coordination

Movement coordination mechanisms that bring together the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, the IFRC and the ICRC will be continued, including joint assessments, planning and reporting arrangements. In addition, the National Society will collaborate with the IFRC and the ICRC to make progress on the action plan on Strengthening Movement Cooperation and Coordination (SMCC) 2.0, in line with SMCC principles and the newly adopted [Seville Agreement 2.0](#).

The ICRC supports the National Society through its regional delegation in Kuala Lumpur, with most of the humanitarian work in Malaysia focusing on Sabah. The National Society and the ICRC have established a five-year partnership agreement from 2021 to 2026, to jointly cooperate in the areas of migration and restoring family links, and the overall development of the National Society, including its role as an auxiliary to the Government.



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## Coordination with other actors

In line with its auxiliary role, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society works closely with a range of governmental bodies. This includes, in particular, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, and the Ministry of Health. During emergencies, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society coordinates with the governmental bodies at both national and district levels. The National Disaster Management Administration Coordination is the lead agency for disaster response in Malaysia, under the Prime Minister's Office. Other governmental bodies involved typically include the Social Welfare

Department and the Malaysian Civil Defence Force. Immediate response of the Malaysian Red Crescent Society includes complementing the search and rescue operations by government agencies, and the deployment of staff from the national headquarters to support assessments and initial assistance to people affected.

USAID is a key donor to the Malaysian Red Crescent Society, working through the IFRC to support the National Society's disaster response to floods and COVID-19, and the Red Ready project.

### 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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### **Malaysian Red Crescent Society**

**W** [www.redcrescent.org.my](http://www.redcrescent.org.my)

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