MAURITIUS AND SEYCHELLES
2023 IFRC network country plan

Funding Requirement CHF 2.4M
Appeal numbers MAAMU001, MAASC001

In support of the Mauritius and Seychelles Red Cross Societies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Society branches</th>
<th>National Society staff</th>
<th>National Society volunteers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

People to be reached

- Climate and environment: 20,000
- Disasters and crises: 20,000
- Health and wellbeing: 110,000
- Values, power and inclusion: 650

IFRC network multiyear focus

- Longer term needs
  - Disaster risk reduction
  - Climate change adaptation

- Capacity development
  - Branch development
  - Internal systems
  - Partnerships and resource mobilization

Population

- Mauritius: 1.3M
- Seychelles: 99,000

IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros & Seychelles, Antananarivo
This document details IFRC network-wide figures and actions in areas agreed with the country National Society. For additional information, see last page of this plan. * National Societies which have contributed only multilaterally through the IFRC in the past two years.

**Funding requirements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Funding Requirements (CHF)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Through the IFRC</td>
<td><strong>1.9M CHF</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through Participating National Societies</td>
<td><strong>270,000 CHF</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host National Society</td>
<td><strong>220,000 CHF</strong></td>
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</table>

**Longer term needs**

- **200,000 CHF** Climate and environment
- **380,000 CHF** Disasters and crises
- **710,000 CHF** Health and wellbeing
- **100,000 CHF** Values, power and inclusion
- **512,000 CHF** Enabling local actors

**Participating National Societies**

- French Red Cross
- Italian Red Cross
- Japanese Red Cross Society*
NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILES

Mauritius Red Cross Society

Number of staff: 12
Number of volunteers: 40
Number of branches (main islands) 3

The Mauritius Red Cross Society was established in 1973. It has been an auxiliary to the Government for five decades, assisting in response to hazard risks and disasters. In its permanent partnership with the local authorities, the National Society pursues policy goals such as stimulating economic development and promoting social inclusion and community cohesion. It designs strategies and action plans and encourages community cooperation during the delivery of wider strategies and programmes – with the aim of improving the quality of life for people living on the island.

The Mauritius Red Cross has prioritized disaster preparedness and risk reduction since 2005 and aligns its work with the objectives set out in the IFRC 2030 Strategy. Its strategic aims are to build a strong and sustainable National Society that has a better impact at community level, and successfully carries out humanitarian advocacy; improve community resilience to natural hazards and climate-related disasters, focusing on disaster risk reduction; and improve the quality of people’s health and well-being by providing countrywide and local services that meet the population’s needs.

The National Society in Mauritius provides continual training and capacity building for its volunteers to ensure vital support and services are offered at community level. In addition, it is committed to renewing its cyclone contingency plan to reduce the impact of this type of disaster.

Seychelles Red Cross Society

Number of staff: 8
Number of volunteers: 100
Number of branches 3

The Seychelles Red Cross Society was founded in 1989 and later recognized through the Seychelles Red Cross Act (1991) as an auxiliary to the public authorities in humanitarian services. The National Society’s current strategic plan lays out several goals which aim to reduce vulnerability, losses, damage and other detrimental consequences due to disasters and crises; promote safe and healthy living and respond to health care needs in emergencies; and promote the practical application of the humanitarian Fundamental Principles and a culture of non-violence and peace.

The National Society in the Seychelles benefits from a strong network of volunteers. It has a policy of providing continual training and capacity building to maintain high standards in programme implementation, community engagement and support for the emergency sector – specifically health, climate change and disaster risk.

As an auxiliary to the Government, the National Society has developed a contingency plan, in line with the Government’s Communication and Response Plan, standard operating procedures and disaster management policies. It is also a member of the Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response Committee of the Ministry of Health.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION IN 2023

Joint situational analysis

The Republic of Mauritius is a small island developing state in the Indian Ocean, with a population of approximately 1.3 million people. Nearly the same number of tourists visit its three main islands of Rodrigues, Agalega and Diego Garcia every year.

In 2020, Mauritius graduated to high-income country status, having transformed itself from a country with a predominantly mono-crop economy to a well-diversified economy, with growth in the industrial, financial and tourism sectors. Annual growth is in the range of five to six per cent. This achievement
Country plan

Mauritius and Seychelles

IFRC network action in 2023 has been accompanied by a more equitable distribution of income, greater life expectancy, a drop in infant mortality and much-improved infrastructure. In terms of production, sugarcane covers about 90 per cent of Mauritius’ cultivated land and accounts for 25 per cent of its export earnings. Meanwhile, the Government’s development strategy is focused on foreign investment.

Mauritius is exposed to several natural hazards, in particular cyclones and flash floods, exacerbated by climate change. It is also vulnerable to other effects of climate change. Some parts of the country are threatened by sea level rise, and climate-related instabilities are causing heavy showers and electrical storms on an increasing scale.

The Seychelles is an archipelago of 115 islands in the Indian Ocean, of which only 13 are inhabited. Its population is nearly 99,000 people, 75 per cent of whom live on the main island of Mahé, which lies southeast of mainland Eastern Africa. Victoria is its capital city – the smallest in Africa. The Seychelles has the highest gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in Africa, at US$13,306 in 2021, and is highly dependent on tourism and fisheries.

The Seychelles’ climate is tropical marine, humid, with a cooler season during the southeast monsoon (late May to September) and a warmer season during the northwest monsoon (March to May). Climate change is an important issue for the country – the main threats are similar to those faced by other small island developing states: changes in rainfall patterns leading to flooding, landslides and extended periods of drought, increases in sea temperature, changes in acidity and damage to marine ecosystems, increases in storms and storm surges, and rising sea levels.

According to a recent report by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), most disasters occurring in the Seychelles are related to storms, floods, rain and landslides. The report recommended that future planning should focus on flooding and landslides, which have caused the greatest economic losses.

Strategic priorities

Climate and environment

Small island developing states are particularly threatened by the effects of climate change. Their characteristics include small size, remoteness, and a limited resource base. Most of the small island developing states are the tropical and sub-tropical belt and are frequently impacted by cyclones. Large portions of their settlements, infrastructure, agricultural land and business centers are located on the coasts and many of them depend on the sea directly and indirectly for their livelihoods.

Mauritius

Mauritius is influenced by large ocean-atmosphere conditions such as trade winds, tropical cyclones and other extreme weather events. On the south coast, sea level rise already provoking significant damage to communities.

With the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events on the rise, including heavy showers and electrical storms, the country’s most economically weak communities will be increasingly vulnerable to danger because they are less able to adapt. Therefore, providing disaster relief and support is central to the work of the Mauritius Red Cross Society. It must also work on mitigating and preventing disasters and developing environmental protection and green gas initiatives.

The National Society will focus on reducing the current and future humanitarian impacts of climate and environmental crises, and support people to adapt and thrive in the face of it. This means climate change adaptation and mitigation is high on its collective agenda, integrating climate risk management across all programmes, operations and advocacy efforts.

The National Society will support the planting and care of 3,000 trees, including fruit trees, in schools and at the community level, in coordination with government ministries and local authorities, communities and other stakeholders. This is part of the IFRC pan-African initiative on Tree Planting and Care.

The Seychelles

All the Seychelles’ 115 islands are vulnerable to disasters and the impacts of climate change. Hazards include tsunamis, storms, cyclones, flooding, landslides, rising sea levels, forest fires and land degradation. On several islands, where the impacts of climate change are predictable, the Seychelles Red Cross Society’s volunteers actively work on sensitizing communities on measures and behaviours they can adopt in the face of climate change.
The Seychelles National Development Strategy 2019–2023 highlights that, over the last few decades, global climate change has led to a rise in temperature and sea levels around the Seychelles islands. The strategy acknowledges that the trend of global warming will continue and lead to adverse climatic phenomena such as flooding, coastal erosion, severe storms and heat waves. The country is therefore strategically investing in clean energy, ecosystem restoration and resilience, to create new jobs and sustain growth – especially in innovative climate-smart investments.

As an auxiliary to the Seychelles Government, the National Society has been part of a national effort to prevent the impacts of climate change. It has done so by leveraging its volunteers to support action, mainly alongside the Ministries of Health and Education. This collaboration, in coordination with all stakeholders, ensures that resources are effectively and efficiently distributed, and used for the benefit of all. The Seychelles Red Cross Society will focus on the same partnership approach with communities, local authorities, the private sector and NGOs that contribute to address the climate and environmental crises.

As with other small island developing states, the Seychelles focuses more on climate change adaptation than mitigation. It reinforces this position in its national communications and in its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The National Society in Seychelles will join the Government – through the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Climate Change – in implementing adaptation activities, including mangrove protection, tree planting and safe beach environments. In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the Seychelles Red Cross will also promote climate change and environmentally friendly energy sources in clubs, schools and communities. This is part of the IFRC Pan-African Initiative on Tree Planting and Care.

At the community level, the National Society will work on social mobilization for behaviour change, while identifying and promoting innovative and sustainable livelihoods within target communities.

Disasters and crises

For real-time information on emergencies, see IFRC GO pages Mauritius and Seychelles.

Mauritius

According to the 2020 World Risk Report on countries with the highest disaster risk, Mauritius ranks 53 out of 181 countries, compared with 16 in 2018. An assessment conducted in 2021 identified 41 hazards in Mauritius – classified as meteorological, hydrological, environmental, biological, chemical, geographical and technological. The frequency of extreme weather such as torrential rains, tropical cyclones, storms and tidal surges, floods and flash floods, landslides, tsunamis has increased significantly over the last two decades. These hazards can lead to disasters, if not properly managed.

The Mauritius Red Cross Society will join the Government in its disaster risk management activities. It works in close partnership with the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, United Nations agencies and the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change.

The IFRC Pan-African Red Ready initiative will support the Mauritius Red Cross with strengthening its disaster preparedness and response capacity. The initiative will give the National Society a platform to draw up branch development plans, a youth and volunteering engagement policy, a disaster management policy and a fundraising strategy. It will also enable a review of its strategic plan through a tailored Preparedness Effective Response (PER) approach, which will focus on sector-wide, integrated multi-hazard work plans.

The National Society will prioritize preparedness in response to shocks, enhancing community risk reduction. This will include early warning, Early Action Protocols and anticipatory action to mitigate risks from multiple hazards affecting the lives, livelihoods, homes and living conditions of the vulnerable and the most disadvantaged and hard-to-reach communities.

The country depends on food importation and many other basic commodities, and the authorities give a particular focus on sustainable development. Sugarcane plantation is one of the best income-generating activities in rural communities of Mauritius. The National Society will engage in IFRC Pan-Africa Zero Hunger initiative to gain understanding on the goal, intermediate objectives, and outcomes, and advance its mandate as auxiliary to public authorities in the achievement of zero hunger.

Overall, the National Society will respond effectively to evolving crises and disasters, with a well-defined auxiliary role in disaster risk management. It will also expand its leadership in the field of disaster law.
The Seychelles

The Seychelles' early warning system was implemented in 2009 and updated in 2020. The country worked with stakeholders to develop standard operating procedures in the early detection of hazards. The Seychelles also has a relatively strong Department of Risk and Disaster Management, as part of its disaster response initiative, which carries out structured and periodic capacity building in disaster preparedness. The Seychelles Government takes responsibility for disaster preparedness in accordance with the Disaster Risk Management Act.

The Seychelles Red Cross Society has developed mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery measures to cope with disasters. In 2023, it will enhance its capacity to be ready to respond to disasters, by training volunteers, providing equipment, and updating contingency plans and assessments. This is in line with IFRC Pan-African Red Ready initiative.

The National Society will continue contributing to the Seychelles' disaster recovery work, by identifying the causes and impacts of disaster, and building resilience to natural hazards. It will support the identification of consequent damages, losses and recovery needs in several key sectors; provide training and capacity building of branches and volunteers; and assess institutional structures for effective disaster preparedness and response. To achieve this, the National Society will rely on its partnership with the IFRC and the French Red Cross Indian Ocean Regional Intervention Platform (PIROI).

The Seychelles is a net importer of food and many other basic commodities. Through various development programmes, the country is working to improve the livelihoods of rural Seychellois through activities that support food security, income generation, asset building and increased resilience to climate change and economic shocks. The National Society will engage in IFRC Pan-Africa Zero Hunger Initiative, including understanding its goals and intermediate objectives. This will reinforce the National Society's mandate as an auxiliary to the local authorities and help mobilize resources for opportunities that contribute to the achievement of zero hunger.

The Seychelles national disaster risk reduction and management framework aligns with the Global Framework for Disaster Risk Management (Sendai Framework 2015–2030). Over the last few decades, the country has become increasingly vulnerable, not only to hydrometeorological events, but also to other human-induced hazards that threaten lives, properties and the environment and have a negative impact on the national economy. The IFRC will support the National Society to engage with the public authorities on the revision and implementation of the national disaster risk management approach.

Health and wellbeing

Mauritius

Mauritius faces a range of health care challenges, including outbreaks of vector-borne diseases, issues stemming from inadequate drainage infrastructure and waste management, and non-communicable diseases (including cardiovascular diseases and animal-transmitted diseases).

The COVID-19 pandemic presented new challenges for Mauritius' health care system and its population. It demonstrated the need to consider global events that might affect the country's economy and food supply, as well as national and local events.

Seychelles

Over the last four decades, the Seychelles has made remarkable social and economic progress, and it has developed a comprehensive health care infrastructure. The average life expectancy reached 73 years in 2015, and infant and maternal mortality rates are low. In the Seychelles in 2017, 53 women died from pregnancy-related causes for every 100,000 live births – this is lower than average for the region (445 deaths), but higher than average for its income group (14 deaths).

In the Seychelles, the Universal Health Coverage Index score is 71 per cent which measures higher than average in the region (46) but lower than average for its income group (79).

Like education, access to health services is free. The predominance of chronic non-communicable diseases and a rapidly ageing population present significant new challenges for the country’s public health and health care systems. Non-communicable conditions, particularly cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and cancer, account for 60–70 per cent of all deaths. The Seychelles remains at risk of infectious disease outbreaks (particularly arboviruses), as is the case in other small island developing states in the region, although health indicators are generally very good.

The Seychelles Red Cross Society has experience in implementing community-based health and first aid, psychosocial support and water, sanitation and hygiene activities. National Society volunteers are close to their communities, so they already have a good
level of capacity to assist in community health and other services.

Based on its partnership with the Ministry of Health, the Seychelles Red Cross has signed a Memorandum of Understanding on its contribution to the health sector. The National Society will support the Ministry of Health in achieving and sustaining its national immunization targets and promoting fair and equitable access to new vaccines – including COVID-19 vaccines. The National Society is currently implementing a COVID-19 vaccination project funded by USAID – and capturing lessons learnt, experiences, approaches and methodologies for future work.

A continent-wide initiative between the IFRC and Africa CDC will invest in building resilient public health security infrastructure in Africa, and this will reinforce the fight against COVID-19 in Mauritius and the Seychelles. Under the USD 39 million Saving Lives and Livelihoods initiative – funded by the Mastercard Foundation – the IFRC and African National Societies are building a programme that aims to ensure that 60 per cent of African people are vaccinated against COVID-19. The partnership between the Mastercard Foundation and Africa CDC will support the procurement and delivery of tens of millions of COVID-19 vaccines and hasten economic recovery on the continent. Under this programme, the two National Societies will deliver critical risk communication and community engagement activities to vulnerable communities, in support of COVID-19 vaccine uptake. Other programme partners will provide procurement and logistics services to a central warehouse (UNICEF), in-country logistics (World Food Programme), managing COVID-19 vaccination centres (Amref Health Africa and GHSS) and safety surveillance (Akros).

**Values, power and inclusion**

**Mauritius**

The Mauritius Red Cross Society will join government-led programmes aimed at promoting social inclusion. Inequalities have decreased in Mauritius thanks to economic growth, however vulnerabilities of specific groups remain, and new challenges arise, such as related to health and well-being. The National Society will place the dignity, access, participation and safety of all people, particularly the most vulnerable people and communities, at the centre of its actions. It aims to empower people to influence the decisions that will affect them and give them the confidence that the National Society is there to serve their best interests. It will also take this approach with its staff and volunteers, and introduce compulsory sessions on protection, gender and inclusion, with a specific focus on the prevention of harassment and sexual abuse.

The Mauritius Red Cross will also contribute to positive changes in communities by encouraging a broader understanding, ownership and practical application of humanitarian values and the Fundamental Principles. It will particularly focus on the knowledge, skills and behaviour of young people.

**The Seychelles**

The people who live in the Seychelles have access to an efficient legal system. There are effective governmental systems that identify officials guilty of human rights abuses and hold them accountable. Rape, spousal rape and domestic abuse are criminal offences, punishable by up to 20 years in prison, and the law prohibits sexual harassment. The Seychelles Red Cross Society supports the Government in these protection activities by focusing on capacity building activities for staff and volunteers, local authorities and communities, while also providing awareness sessions and psychosocial activities.

The National Society will take steps towards institutionalizing protection, gender and inclusion considerations in its work, by developing strategies and building the capacity of staff and volunteers.

It will promote and support equitable access to quality education for all young people affected by disasters, crises or population movement. It will also ensure that the dignity, access, participation and safety of all people will remain its priority, with the most vulnerable people and communities at the centre of its actions.

To ensure that communities engage with its work, the National Society will train staff and 30 volunteers at its headquarters and at branch level in community engagement and accountability. It will also integrate community engagement and accountability and monitoring indicators into all programmes and operations, by developing a strategy and action plan, while documenting case studies and lessons learnt.
Enabling local actors

The two National Societies are committed to strengthening their organizations, and are part of the IFRC Pan-African initiative on National Society development and sustainability. The initiative is focused on good governance, management and leadership, financial sustainability, integrity and risk management, localization, digital transformation, youth and volunteering, and improved membership coordination. It supports the National Societies in delivering quality services that are relevant and sustainable and leave no one behind.

Both National Societies are implementing the IFRC Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) process and are at the orientation phase. The PER approach is a continuous and flexible process that enables National Societies to assess, measure and analyze the strengths and gaps of its preparedness and response mechanism, and ultimately take the necessary actions to improve it.

Engaged

The Mauritius Red Cross and the Seychelles Red Cross will keep pace with the fast-changing world, and aim to be respected as neutral, impartial humanitarian organizations supporting the needs of vulnerable people and communities. They will set up and support branches to modernize, innovate and embrace digital technologies which achieve their strategic objectives, and aim to operate more efficiently and effectively as a responsive and coordinated network. The National Societies will increase their visibility and public trust through communications and public advocacy, strengthen their auxiliary role with other organizations and work better as a coordinated network.

Accountable

The National Societies will ensure that they have integrated processes and accessible web-based systems, while increasing financial resources through a newly developed financial architecture which will reach more people in need. They will also develop the talents of their staff and volunteers, to ensure the effective management of financial resources. Both National Societies commit to eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy and duplication within systems, so that they function more efficiently and with greater accountability.

Good membership cooperation is an essential part of the National Societies’ plans for 2023. Internally, both will encourage good communication and coordination between the different departments and the managers and volunteers of their local branches. Externally, they will mobilize their partners – including United Nations agencies and the World Health Organization (WHO) – to work together and develop National Society resource mobilization policies. To guard against reputational risk, the National Societies in Mauritius and the Seychelles will adopt guidelines, tools and mechanisms on issues such as fraud, corruption and child safeguarding.

Trusted

The Mauritius Red Cross and the Seychelles Red Cross will strive for mutual respect and cooperation within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and with external partners and commit to listening to and responding to the needs of their members. The National Societies will increase the involvement of young people and volunteers, while fostering gender equality and inclusion. They will empower people and communities affected by crises to influence the decisions being made about their lives and livelihoods.

Both National Societies are committed to building and strengthening strategic partnerships and developing their branches in line with the IFRC’s localization agenda. They aim to nurture trust at a local level, through community engagement and shared decision-making in their interventions and programmes. The National Societies will work closely with their governments, local authorities and communities when making decisions. There is a strong commitment to inclusion and diversity within both National Societies, so that no one will be excluded on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, level of education, sexual orientation or age.

In the Seychelles, in line with the IFRC National Society Development Framework, the National Society is focused on strengthening its operating and internal environments. Its development priorities include setting up and equipping active branches on the two main islands and training National Society staff on IFRC financial procedures. Furthermore, the National Society will develop a five-year strategic plan, review the Seychelles Red Cross Act, develop a youth policy, review its volunteer policy, and digitalize its volunteer database.
THE IFRC NETWORK

The IFRC

The IFRC has a permanent delegation in the Indian Ocean islands, based in Antananarivo, Madagascar. Its support to the National Societies of Mauritius and the Seychelles centres on strategic and operational coordination, National Society development and humanitarian diplomacy. It also supports accountability as a cross-cutting theme.

In recent years, the IFRC has supported both National Societies through a number of Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) operations, in relation to epidemic preparedness and response, and tropical storms. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IFRC, through its global appeal, has supported the National Societies in their COVID-19 response.

IFRC membership coordination

The IFRC coordination involves working with member National Societies on assessing humanitarian contexts, situations and needs; agreeing common priorities; 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. It also ensures that strategies and programmes incorporate elements of humanitarian action, development, and efforts to reinforce the National Societies’ auxiliary roles in their respective countries.

Both National Societies are part of the four IFRC Pan-African initiatives focusing on Tree Planting and Care, Zero Hunger, Red Ready and National Society development. These initiatives are reflected under the relevant sections of this plan.

The French Red Cross is a key strategic partner for the two National Societies, through the Indian Ocean Regional Intervention Platform (PIROI), which is based in La Réunion. PIROI provides a range of training courses, resources and tools for the National Societies in the Indian Ocean, and maintains emergency response capacities, in close coordination with the IFRC. PIROI also directly supports activities for disaster risk reduction in Mauritius and the Seychelles, and health in emergencies in Mauritius.

The Italian Red Cross supports the National Society in Mauritius with National Society development.

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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