LATIN CARIBBEAN
2023 IFRC network multi-country plan

Funding Requirement **CHF 3.6M**
Appeal number **MAA49004**

In support of the Cuban Red Cross and Dominican Red Cross

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People to be reached</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1,807</strong> National Society branches</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1,297</strong> National Society staff</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>62,693</strong> National Society volunteers</td>
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**125,000** Climate and environment

**200,000** Disasters and crises

**30,000** Health and wellbeing

**100,000** Migration and displacement

**35,000** Values, power and inclusion

**IFRC network multiyear focus**

- **Emergency response**
  - Hurricane Ian in Cuba

- **Longer term needs**
  - disaster risk management
  - health services
  - climate change adaptation
  - migration-related needs

- **Capacity development**
  - strengthened internal systems
  - planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting
  - volunteering and youth

**Population**

- **Cuba** 11.3M
- **Dominican Republic** 11M
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.

### Ongoing emergencies

**MDRCU008**
Cuba – Hurricane Ian

### Participating National Societies

- Danish Red Cross*
- French Red Cross*
- Italian Red Cross

### Funding requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong> 3.6M CHF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Through the IFRC</td>
<td>3.3M CHF</td>
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<tr>
<td>Through Participating National Societies</td>
<td>250,000 CHF</td>
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### IFRC Breakdown

**Longer term needs**

- **500,000 CHF**
  - Climate and environment
- **950,000 CHF**
  - Disasters and crises
- **450,000 CHF**
  - Health and wellbeing
- **750,000 CHF**
  - Migration and displacement
- **250,000 CHF**
  - Values, power and inclusion
- **450,000 CHF**
  - Enabling local actors

### Hazards

- Hurricanes
- Floods
- Earthquakes
- Population movement
- Disease outbreaks
**NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILES**

**Cuban Red Cross**

Number of staff 429  
Number of volunteers 48,000  
Number of branches 1,637

The Cuban Red Cross was founded in 1919 and admitted to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in the same year. The National Society action is oriented to the people and communities affected by diverse vulnerabilities, crises and disasters.

The National Society is a humanitarian organization that acts in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. As per its legal base and auxiliary role, it is part of the National Civil Defense system and works closely with the Ministry of Public Health. As part of the Council of Civil Defense, the National Society has a mandate to be active in evacuation using its trained staff and volunteers. Cuban Red Cross staff and volunteers also provide rescue, first aid and psychosocial support in the immediate aftermath of disasters.

In 2022, the National Society in Cuba responded to multiple crises including the Saratoga Hotel blast in May, the migration crisis in June, and the fire at the Matanzas oil storage facility in August. In the last decade, the Cuban Red Cross has also responded to several major hurricanes, providing shelter support for 7,000 families after the impact of Hurricane Sandy in 2012 and 10,000 families during Hurricane Irma in 2017.

Since September 2022, the Cuban Red Cross has been responding to Hurricane Ian. National Society staff and volunteers were mobilized 72 hours before the impact of the hurricane, with full access to the affected areas and communities. The National Society has a permanent presence in the affected provinces and is continuing to assist vulnerable communities in close coordination with local authorities. A total of 1,664 volunteers and staff have been actively involved in responding to the disaster and 2,391 people were evacuated by the National Society as a result of the hurricane.

The Cuban Red Cross’s Department of Operations and Relief is responsible for developing prevention, response and recovery actions in the community in case of disasters. Its Aquatic Security Department aims to prevent accidents in public pools, rivers and beaches by inspecting bathing areas and raising awareness of water safety through signage. The National Society carries out rescue operations and delivers first aid to those in need. In addition, it provides psychosocial support and restoring family links services.

**Dominican Red Cross**

Number of staff 868  
Number of volunteers 14,693  
Number of branches 170

The Dominican Red Cross was founded on 15 April 1927 and admitted to the IFRC in 1931. As an auxiliary to public authorities in the humanitarian field, it has been integrated into the National System for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response. Through this system, the National Society aims to improve disaster risk reduction in the Dominican Republic. It also delivers pre-hospital care and community health activities, supported by national ambulance services and three blood banks.

The National Society’s 2021–2025 strategic plan has four strategic axes:

- Disaster damage reduction through the empowerment and involvement of people, communities and risk management institutions
- Implementation of strategies for healthy and safe communities
- Promotion of a society committed to humanitarian values and a culture of peace
- Institutional and professional strengthening of the National Society

People in the Dominican Republic are vulnerable to frequent disease outbreaks and tropical storms, which the National Society responds to. In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Fiona in 2022, the Dominican Red Cross provided support across shelter, livelihoods, health, water, sanitation and hygiene, and disaster risk reduction.

Through the IFRC Global Fleet Vehicle Rental Programme, the Dominican Red Cross supports 48 per cent of the ambulance units that serve the national population, through the National System of Emergency Care and Security. The Red Cross Fleet Strategy includes a continuous training programme with highly qualified
instructors, allowing staff to meet the required safety parameters. The Dominican Red Cross has also implemented a georeferencing system, offering a clear picture of nationwide coverage of ambulance units.

Through the 911 system, the Dominican Red Cross has significantly improved its visibility and work. It aims to expand the 911 system model, based on lessons learned.

To support migrants in the country, the Dominican Red Cross will strengthen its migration programme. It will also improve disaster preparedness and response through a decentralization process at the provincial level. The National Society is actively working on its restoring family links network, in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and other National Societies of the Americas region.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION IN 2023

Joint situational analysis

The Dominican Republic and Cuba are diverse Latin Caribbean countries. The World Bank has indicated that significant growth opportunities exist for both countries; however, the region faces extreme vulnerability to natural hazards, as well as health and economic challenges due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cuba

Cuba, with a population of 11.3 million, is the largest island in the Caribbean region and the second-most populous after Hispaniola. The country invests significantly in health and education and, as a result, its education indicators are among the highest in the world. The country's main challenges include a complex economic situation and limited access to development funds.

Following the initial COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, Cuba maintained a very low infection rate. However, cases increased significantly in 2021. In 2022, the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases peaked in January and again in March.

Amid rising cases, the Cuban economy was detrimentally affected by forced border closures and restrictions on non-essential economic activities. The pandemic also led to an almost complete collapse of international tourism, negatively affecting the country's most important economic sector. As a result of these factors, the Cuban economy contracted by 11 per cent in 2020.

Cuba is the only country in Latin America to pursue the development of its own COVID-19 vaccines. In 2021, the first of these vaccines reached stage three of clinical trials.

Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic, located on the eastern side of the island of Hispaniola, is a middle-income developing country with a population of 11 million. It occupies two-thirds of the eastern part of the island, or 48,500km², excluding maritime territory. Because of the country's geographical location in the sub-tropical hurricane region and its relatively small surface area, there is a strong maritime influence on general weather patterns, and it is highly vulnerable to hurricanes.

The Dominican Republic's political system has remained relatively stable, but fragmentation and public distrust in the country's political parties have increased over the last 10 years.

Despite a period of long-term macroeconomic growth, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause significant disruption in the Dominican Republic. As the most tourism-dependent country in the region, the economic consequences of the pandemic were very serious.

Humanitarian needs remain high in the Dominican Republic, with increasing disparity between those who can access opportunities and public services and those who cannot. Previous economic gains have not been accompanied by effective solutions to reduce inequality. In the last two years, poverty rates have not decreased in line with economic growth, and social expenditure is low compared with other countries in the region. These factors contribute to marked inequality and high levels of extreme poverty.

People in the Dominican Republic are extremely vulnerable to the negative effects of climate change, experiencing intense droughts and rainy seasons throughout the year. Due to its location, climate change increases the probability of adverse impacts from hurricanes and other hydrometeorological hazards, and there are also geological hazards such as earthquakes.

The Dominican Republic hosts the largest number of Venezuelan refugees and migrants in the Caribbean sub-region.
In 2021, a needs assessment conducted under the United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office identified the four most significant mid-term needs in the Dominican Republic as education, water and sanitation, social needs, and health needs.

### Ongoing emergency response

For real-time information on emergencies, see the IFRC GO pages on [Cuba](#) and [Dominican Republic](#).

**Emergency Appeal MDRCU008, Cuba – Hurricane Ian**

- **People affected/at risk:** 500,000 (100,000 families)
- **People targeted:** 25,000
- **Appeal dates:** 06/10/2022 – 31/12/2023

On 26 September 2022, the National Civil Defense in Cuba declared a cyclonic alert for six western territories: Pinar del Rio, Artemisa, Mayabeque, Havana, Matanzas and the special municipality of Isla de la Juventud. An information phase was declared for three central territories: Villa Clara, Sancti Spiritus and Ciego de Avila. In the early hours of 27 September, Hurricane Ian made direct landfall in the Pinar Del Rio province, battering large swaths of western Cuba as a powerful Category 3 hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 185km/hour.

The hurricane left Cuba after seven hours of destruction, mainly affecting urban and rural areas in the Pinar del Rio and Artemisa provinces. Hurricane Ian also caused notable damage in Havana and Isla de la Juventud. For an hour and a half, the eye of the hurricane remained over the capital city of this territory, causing heavy damage to infrastructure, housing, agriculture, electricity and telecommunications services.

According to the World Food Programme’s Automatic Disaster Analysis and Mapping tool, nearly 600,000 people were exposed to wind speeds of 120km/hour or more. By 30 September 2022, six western provinces had been affected, and more than 65,000 people were evacuated from high-risk areas. Local and international media outlets reported that Pinar del Rio, Cuba’s westernmost province, bore the brunt of the impact, with significant damage reported across the province. Hurricane Ian reportedly caused the deaths of at least three people and left thousands without power.

Cuba has strong early warning systems and preparedness protocols that minimize the impact of hurricanes. Before Hurricane Ian made landfall, the Cuban Red Cross was delivering preparedness activities. As an auxiliary to the Government, the National Society helped coordinate evacuations – an operation that began on 24 September, three days before the hurricane made landfall.

Short description of the emergency operational strategy

The IFRC launched an Emergency Appeal on 6 October 2022 to support the Cuban Red Cross during the Hurricane Ian response. The aim of the Appeal is to provide immediate humanitarian assistance, protection and recovery support to the most affected people in the Pinar del Rio province. The operation will support 25,000 people across 5,000 households for a period of 15 months. The response is articulated around three axes:

- **Integrated assistance**, which includes emergency shelter support for families whose homes were damaged or destroyed by the hurricane, with an emphasis on rebuilding better homes. The Cuban Red Cross will use the IFRC participatory approach for safe shelter awareness.

  - **Health care, water, sanitation and hygiene** activities, including health and hygiene promotion, first aid, mental health and psychosocial support, distribution of menstrual kits, safe water, sanitation, and vector control. Additionally, to contribute to the restoration of health services, the Emergency Appeal will provide the Ministry of Health with equipment, solar panels or climate-efficient energy solutions, medical supplies, and support for infrastructure rehabilitation.

- **Protection and prevention** actions according to the IFRC minimum standards for protection, gender and inclusion in emergencies, ensuring that these activities are implemented under the IFRC dignity, access, participation and safety framework. This also includes safeguarding mechanisms for child protection and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. The Cuban Red Cross will encourage the meaningful participation of people in affected communities and improve community resilience through meetings, focus groups and key informant contacts.
Strategic priorities

Climate and environment

Cuba

Cuba’s climate is tropical and seasonally wet. Temperatures are generally high, ranging from 20ºC to 26ºC. The most variable element of the weather is rainfall, with an average of 1,300mm of rain falling annually in most parts of the country.

Approximately 80 per cent of the total annual rainfall occurs during the rainy season between May and October. Among the meteorological events that affect Cuba’s territory, tropical cyclones are a frequent and indisputable part of the Cuban climate.

Extreme weather events pose a significant threat for people living in Cuba. Over the last 100 years, the country has suffered major losses of life due to hurricanes, particularly the Santa Cruz hurricane in 1932 and Hurricane Flora in 1963. The number of tropical cyclones and hurricanes that affect Cuba is variable, ranging from zero to five per year.

Studies have identified important climatic variations in Cuba and the wider region. Increases in air temperature and frequent extreme climatic events, such as intense rains and severe local storms, characterize the changing climate in Cuba today. The influence of the El Niño Southern Oscillation on the Latin Caribbean region is also contributing to the changing climate in Cuba, with more frequent droughts and fewer hurricanes.

Cuba is highly vulnerable to the impact of climate change. Projections show that, without interventions, some 21 coastal communities in Cuba will disappear completely by the end of the 21st century due to rising sea levels. More than 98 communities will be severely affected by climate-related hazards.

In addition, coastal erosion, flooding, saline intrusion, droughts and sea level rises continue to threaten the economic and social gains achieved by the Government’s commitment to sustainable development and global warming adaptation through the Tarea Vida National Plan.

The main priority of the Cuban emergency response system is the preservation of human life. Achieving this will require improving climate change education and strengthening of the country’s monitoring and warning systems.

An impact assessment conducted by Cuban authorities has identified adaptation options based on immediate or anticipatory adaptation. The general adaptation strategy in Cuba will ensure:

- Rational use and protection of water resources
- Conservation and protection of beaches and mangrove areas
- Improvement of Cuban agriculture and the conservation and protection of forest resources
- Appropriate use of territorial zoning in the human settlement and land use system
- Protection of biodiversity and wildlife
- Improvement of Cuba’s health care system

Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic is one of the 50 countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, according to the Global Climate Risk Index. Haiti, with which it shares the island, is among the three most affected countries in the world.

Thirteen provinces in the Dominican Republic have high or very high levels of vulnerability to climate change, according to critical points of vulnerability analysis. Furthermore, future climate scenarios carried out for the Third National Communication by the Humid Tropics Water Center predict that the temperature in the Dominican Republic will rise, while precipitation may decrease substantially, particularly in the southern and western provinces. Extreme weather events such as floods and droughts will also increase. The Dominican Republic ranks second in size among the countries of the Greater Antilles. It is an insular Caribbean country with high biodiversity and endemism due to its geological and geomorphological complexity.

The Dominican Republic has created a National Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2015–2030. Its main objectives are to:

- Reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacity and resilience
- Facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation into new and existing policies, programmes, development planning processes, strategies and activities, within relevant sectors and at all levels
Main actions and areas of support

Both National Societies are part of the IFRC’s Global Climate Resilience Programme, which aims to foster an unprecedented scale-up in locally led climate-smart disaster risk reduction and adaptation efforts to prevent and reduce climate-related disaster impacts and build community-level climate resilience. The programme aims to support 500 million people in 100 of the most climate-vulnerable countries, focusing on the least supported and marginalized communities. This holistic, multi-year programmatic approach consists of four operational pillars: (1) scaling up climate-smart disaster risk reduction, anticipatory action and preparedness; (2) reducing the public health impacts of climate change; (3) addressing climate displacement; and (4) enabling climate-resilient livelihoods and ecosystem services.

Actions planned for 2023 include:

• Enhancing National Societies’ knowledge and capacity to address climate change, including engaging with national authorities and existing climate change frameworks such as Tarea Vida in Cuba, conducting national workshops on climate change, climate action and climate-smart programming, and developing enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (EVCA)
• Strengthening community response through EVCA in selected communities
• Supporting National Societies’ communications to address the effects of climate change and build capacities and alliances for improved communications
• Supporting National Societies’ efforts to promote sustainable environmental practices by introducing the IFRC environmental policy
• Supporting National Societies to develop environmental policy in alignment with IFRC and national environmental policy
• Supporting National Societies to ‘green’ their operations and programmes through the establishment of climate-smart components and staff training

Disasters and crises

Cuba

Cuba’s governing structure is the National Civil Defense, established by law in July 1966 with the aim of protecting the population and the national economy in exceptional situations. The system operates throughout the country to support mobilization efforts, emergency planning, early warning systems, recovery and urgent repair, search and rescue efforts, and the reduction of risks and vulnerabilities.

The frequency of hydrometeorological hazards in Cuba, combined with its geographical location, have forced the National Civil Defense to develop forecasting and early warning tools for the protection of people and material goods in high-risk areas. Preventative activities remain a priority due to the impact of natural disasters on economic and social development in the country.

The context in Cuba demonstrates that disasters occur not only due to increasingly recurrent and extreme weather events, but as a result of vulnerabilities that have accumulated over time. Effective monitoring and early warning systems are crucial to response and recovery.

Cuba is influenced by natural phenomena common to the geographical area, with the magnitude and frequency of these phenomena increasing due to El Niño and the physical, socio-economic and historical characteristics of the region. Communities face a multitude of meteorological, geological, biological and technological hazards. The frequency and impact of extreme weather events has a devastating effect on the population and economy, while Cuba’s location in the seismic belt leaves it vulnerable to geological risks. Emerging and re-emerging disease outbreaks are also a significant issue for people living in Cuba. The country also faces technological dangers from its own economic development.

Hurricanes have caused considerable damage to the island’s infrastructure and economy in recent years. In September 2017, Hurricane Irma caused 13,500 million Cuban pesos (CHF500 million) in damages, the costliest cyclonic event in Cuba’s history. In October 2016, Hurricane Matthew crossed the western tip of Cuba, causing more than CHF91 million in damages (2.6 per cent of GDP). Hurricanes Ike and Sandy cost CHF276 million (12.05 per cent of GDP), and CHF262 million (9.53 per cent) respectively.

Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic is affected by multiple natural hazards, including tropical storms, droughts, heatwaves, lightning, landslides, dam failures, floods and forest fires. The country is frequently in the path of hurricanes, especially in the south and northeast during the annual hurricane season from June to November. The climate is hot and humid, the geographical terrain is mountainous, and the largest population concentrations are
in the coastal areas. As a result of these factors, the Dominican Republic is particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, such as storm surges, more intense hurricanes and flooding.

On 19 September 2022, the Dominican Republic was hit by Hurricane Fiona, the first hurricane to directly cross the island since Hurricane Jeanne in 2004. With strong winds of up to 150km/hour and heavy rains that produced landslides, fallen bridges, road blockages, power outages, interrupted telecommunications and overflowing dams, the Category 1 hurricane caused widespread devastation as it passed through the country. Authorities reported that 12 provinces have suffered the most damage so far. The report also indicated that more than 2,600 homes were affected, 457 were partially affected and four destroyed, two lives were lost and more than 12,000 people were displaced.

Although the Dominican Republic is vulnerable to hurricanes, the most frequent phenomena are floods. The most vulnerable regions are near the basins of the Yaque del Norte, Yaque del Sur, Yuna and Soco rivers, as well as on the riverbanks of the cities of Santo Domingo and Santiago de los Caballeros.

**Main actions and areas of support**

Both National Societies continue to respond to the recurring disasters that affect their countries, including Hurricanes Ian and Fiona in Cuba and the Dominican Republic respectively in September 2022. The IFRC global emergency response mechanisms have been activated for these disasters.

The National Societies in Cuba and the Dominican Republic are focusing on their preparedness and readiness to respond to shocks, with the aim of enhancing community risk reduction and resilience. This work will include early warning, early action and anticipation to mitigate the risks of multi-hazards that affect the lives, livelihoods, homes and living conditions of vulnerable communities and the most disadvantaged and hard-to-reach areas. Activities will include:

- Supporting effective risk communications and capacity in at-risk communities through EVCA, the participatory approach for safe shelter awareness and other IFRC initiatives
- Supporting preparation at community level to respond to crises and disasters through hurricane season preparedness
- Strengthening the National Societies’ logistical processes to ensure strategic humanitarian positioning in their country
- Developing the National Societies’ response preparedness capacities and anticipatory actions mechanisms
- Influencing national governments to establish and adopt laws that facilitate effective disaster response and humanitarian assistance
- Continuing to strengthen the humanitarian corridor as a top priority for the IFRC in the Dominican Republic, to reduce delivery times and improve the quality of humanitarian aid

**Health and wellbeing**

**Cuba**

The Cuban authorities have made health a priority since 1959, dedicating efforts and resources to the development and consolidation of the national health system under its governing body, the Ministry of Public Health. Legal regulations are contained within the Constitution of the Republic and under Law 41 on Public Health, which establishes the right to health protection and the responsibility of the State to guarantee this right.

The national health policy prioritizes health as an essential component of human well-being and as a strategic objective of development. Accordingly, all social sectors must share the objectives of universal health coverage and guarantee equal access to comprehensive and quality health services for everyone.

The national health service is universal, free of charge, accessible, regional and comprehensive, reaching both rural and urban communities. It is structured on three territorial levels (national, province and municipality) and three levels of care based on a network of integrated, comprehensive, general, specialized and regional services. The first level of care is represented by family doctors and nurses, polyclinics and other services; the second level is represented by hospitals; and the third level is made up of highly specialized hospitals and research institutes. Primary Health Care is the strategy and fundamental axis of the national health system.

The Cuban health system offers universal health care coverage, regardless of skin color, creed, geographic location, or economic, social or political situation.
Dominican Republic

In the Dominican Republic, both dengue and malaria are endemic. Outbreaks of dengue occur with greater intensity in the rainy season between June and October, while increasing cases of malaria have been linked to climatic phenomena. Zika, chikungunya and cholera are also present.

Small island communities in the region face a triple burden of malnutrition, whereby undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity exist simultaneously within a population. The Dominican Republic also suffers increasing rates of diet-related non-communicable diseases with 10.4 per cent of adult populations considered undernourished and 26.9 per cent considered obese. Climate change is likely to exacerbate the triple burden of malnutrition and the metabolic and lifestyle risk factors for diet-related non-communicable diseases.

Most people in the Dominican Republic have access to clean water and sanitation facilities on a regular basis. Ninety-seven per cent of the population have access to basic drinking water and 84 per cent can use basic sanitation facilities.

In 2014, the Dominican Republic adopted a model of care based on the primary health care and integrated health service delivery networks strategy. The strategy aims to coordinate, manage and articulate policies, resources and structures designed to meet health commitments and reach the targets of institutional stakeholders within the national health system.

Main actions and areas of support

The Cuban Red Cross will ensure that everyone has safe and equitable access to health, water, sanitation and adequate living conditions. This will involve the expansion of integrated community-based health, care, first aid, water, sanitation and hygiene programmes to address the unmet needs of vulnerable or marginalized groups. The National Society will also invest in epidemic and pandemic preparedness, training local actors, networks and volunteers as community-based responders to detect and respond to disease outbreaks and other health risks.

To achieve this, the IFRC will support the Cuban Red Cross to expand the scale and quality of its health and water, sanitation and hygiene services at the community level in emergency and non-emergency settings.

In the Dominican Republic, the IFRC will support the Dominican Red Cross to:

- Strengthen pre-hospital care services provided to the state through the 911 system
- Reduce the number of people affected by vector-borne diseases and COVID-19
- Provide community-based first aid and primary health care through the establishment of humanitarian service points
- Provide maternal and child health programmes in vulnerable communities

Migration and displacement

Cuba

2021 saw record numbers of transcontinental population movements in the Americas, primarily from Haiti, Cuba and Venezuela. Migrants crossing Colombian territory on foot, en route to Central and North American countries, face significant protection risks during their journey through the dangerous Darién Gap.

The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre ranks Brazil, Cuba, Guatemala and Honduras among the 25 countries in the world with the highest number of new displacements due to disaster or conflict in 2020.

Historically, the National Society has supported Haitian migrants arriving in Cuba with shelter, medical attention, water, sanitation and hygiene facilities and protection measures. National Society staff and volunteers continuously monitor and support government actions while responding to the needs of the affected population.

Dominican Republic

The immigrant population in the Dominican Republic, according to the 2017 National Immigrant Survey, is equivalent to 5.6 per cent of the total national population. Immigrants in the Dominican Republic tend to settle in regions where the job market allows for rapid employment.

The Dominican Republic is a main host country for Haitian and Venezuelan populations, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Haitian migration is influenced by the transborder commercial dynamics between the two nations, as well as improved service offerings available in the Dominican Republic. Official data indicates that there are close to 750,000 people of Haitian descent living in the Dominican Republic.

The International Organization for Migration consistently monitors migratory flows and border dynamics between Haiti and the Dominican Republic. Its August
2021 survey explored Human Mobility on the Dominican Border, highlighting the transborder work carried out at official entry and transit points in the Dominican provinces of Dajabón, Comendador de Elías Piña, Pedernales and Jimani. Humanitarian needs have been identified by the Dominican Red Cross in the border area and metropolitan areas such as the Greater Santo Domingo, Santiago, and Punta Cana.

According to data from the Interagency Coordination Platform for Refugees and Migrants, of which the Dominican Republic is a partner, there are close to 115,000 Venezuelan migrants currently residing in the country. The platform facilitates successful local integration and ensures that refugees and migrants from Venezuela have access to regularization and documentation through multiple channels.

Main actions and areas of support

Both National Societies are part of the IFRC three-year Global Route-Based Migration Programme, which aims to improve the safety and dignity of people on the move along deadly and dangerous land and sea-based migration routes across Africa, the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East and North Africa. The programme aims to support 4.7 million people on the move and people in host communities annually through three operational pillars: (1) improving access to assistance and protection, including through humanitarian service points; (2) strengthening National Society capacities; and (3) local to global humanitarian diplomacy.

The Cuban Red Cross will work to ensure that displaced people are safe and treated humanely and with dignity, with access to the assistance and protection support they need to thrive in inclusive societies.

To achieve this, the IFRC will support the National Society to understand migration dynamics and deliver appropriate humanitarian services to migrants, displaced people and those affected by migration and displacement, including families who stay behind.

The IFRC will support the Dominican Republic Red Cross to:

- Establish humanitarian service points for the migrant populations, as part of the humanitarian corridor initiative. A total of six humanitarian service points will be established in Santa Domingo, Santiago and La Altagracia, locations that are experiencing a high influx of migrants
- Strengthen its work on migration and its humanitarian support for migrants
- Ensure effective coordination between the three National Societies in Cuba, Dominican Republic and Haiti to provide effective humanitarian assistance to migrant populations

Values, power and inclusion

Cuba

The Cuban state is committed to the empowerment of women, and it has enacted a series of laws and policies to promote women’s equal and active participation in society. The Woman in the House and Man in the Street report shows remarkable progress towards women’s economic empowerment and gender equality – and this is due to the provision of universal and free education, state employment opportunities, equal pay for equal work, maternity protection and childcare facilities. However, the report also reveals that these measures have fallen short of challenging deeply entrenched gendered social norms about female and male roles in the family and society. Specific recommendations from the report include:

- Training courses for vulnerable and disadvantaged girls and young women to learn new skills
- Local childcare services
- Safe and youth-friendly spaces for adolescents
- Communication interventions that change the norm
- Interventions targeting men and boys

Non-governmental organization Humanity and Inclusion reports that although people living with disabilities receive free medical care, the lack of transportation services and modern, specialized equipment such as hearing tests limit access to health care. People living with disabilities are particularly vulnerable when natural disasters occur.

Attitudes towards LGBTQI+ people continue to be a challenge in many countries. In 2018, the National Assembly voted to legalize same-sex marriage with a constitutional referendum to be held in February 2019, but it was later removed from the draft Constitution. In May 2019, the Government announced that the Union of Jurists of Cuba is working on a new Family Code which will address same-sex marriage. Discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity is illegal in Cuba.

UNESCO’s global education monitoring document entitled 2020: Inclusion and Education Report revealed that Cuba is using positive and innovative inclusion approaches to improve access to education in their
respective countries. These activities include setting up resource centres for multiple schools and enabling mainstream educational facilities to accommodate children with additional needs.

**Dominican Republic**

The Dominican Republic is a developing country that has made significant progress in supporting vulnerable groups and promoting inclusion. However, demographic, economic and social realities persist, challenging the development of relevant public policies to protect the most vulnerable populations.

In response to the need for improved living conditions, the Social Policy Coordination Cabinet has promoted plans, programmes and projects to address the lack of safe, quality housing. These actions are also designed to improve the inclusion of people living with disabilities in society and promote equal access to sexual health, nutrition, and pregnancy and drug abuse prevention services for all.

People living with disabilities face additional barriers in accessing inclusive education, employment opportunities and social participation. According to the 2013 National Multipurpose Household Survey, 17 per cent of people living with disabilities have not achieved any level of education; 40 per cent have not completed basic education, compared with 17 per cent without disabilities; 85 per cent have not completed secondary education; and 94 per cent have not completed university. The Ministry of Education also found that 64 per cent of schools did not have support staff for the educational inclusion of students living with disabilities, and 59 per cent had no specific methodological strategies or teaching resources adapted to the learning processes of these students. A lack of participation and access to basic services from early childhood limits the development of people living with disabilities, denying them the opportunity to live a dignified and independent adult life.

Inclusion in the labour market remains a challenge for people living with disabilities. Sixty-six per cent of people living with disabilities are not employed in any economic activity, 10 percentage points below those without disabilities. These indicators confirm strong limitations in access to work, reinforcing the well-established relationship between disability and poverty.

**Main actions and areas of support**

Throughout the response to Hurricane Ian, the Cuban Red Cross is leveraging its close relationship with affected communities, ensuring their meaningful participation in community meetings and focus groups. During activities implemented under this response, and through volunteers trained in feedback and complaints mechanisms, the National Society will field questions, suggestions, complaints and any other feedback provided by affected people. This information will be documented and analyzed to tailor interventions to the needs expressed by the community. The Cuban Red Cross is accountable for the feedback received in community assemblies and focus groups. Additionally, it will conduct focus groups during education sessions, with families also included to identify possible gaps in interventions. The National Society will ensure that the response prioritizes participation, accountability and protection, gender and inclusion policies.

Both National Societies aim to protect and promote positive change for their communities based on humanitarian values and principles. They seek to increase the capacities of their branches to engage young people and the education sector in their work, protect people and their dignity, and contribute to building resilience and peaceful environments.

The IFRC will support the National Societies to:

- Develop more inclusive and diverse work dynamics
- Establish a protection, gender and inclusion policy
- Raise awareness of the importance of promoting positive change based on humanitarian principles and values

**Enabling local actors**

Both National Societies are committed to pursuing institutional strengthening and are engaged in the IFRC Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) process. The Cuban Red Cross is at the action and accountability phase, and the Dominican Red Cross is at the orientation phase. The approach is a continuous and flexible process that enables National Societies to assess, measure and analyze the strengths and gaps in their preparedness and response mechanism, and ultimately take the necessary action to improve it.

The Dominican Red Cross also carried out the self-assessment phase of the IFRC Organisational Capacity Assessment and Certification process (OCAC) in 2014. The self-assessment part of the process is intended to capture the strengths and weaknesses of National Societies as a whole in relation to a wide range of organizational capacities.
Main actions and areas of support

The IFRC will respond to the developmental needs of the National Societies based on their priorities, with a particular focus on embracing digital technologies, including data collection methodologies, tools and systems.

Additional support to the Dominican Red Cross will include:
- Building on the National Society auxiliary role
- Reinforcing strategic communication
- Strengthening the National Society internal systems across finance, administration and logistics
- Improving planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting capacities
- Improving the National Society volunteers and youth network

THE IFRC NETWORK

The IFRC

The IFRC Latin Caribbean Country Cluster Delegation, covering Haiti, Cuba and the Dominican Republic is based in the Dominican Republic. It operates with support from an extended regional team of specialists in different areas, including disaster risk reduction, community health, emergency response, logistics, finance, planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and information management.

The IFRC supports the National Societies in Cuba and the Dominican Republic across strategic and operational coordination, National Society development and humanitarian diplomacy, as well as strengthening their auxiliary role. It also supports accountability as a cross-cutting theme for both National Societies.

In recent years, the IFRC has supported the National Societies in Cuba and the Dominican Republic through Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) and Emergency Appeals operations. These operations have supported emergency responses to tornados, hurricanes, floods, droughts and population movement in Cuba, and tropical storms, hurricanes, floods and disease outbreaks in the Dominican Republic. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, through its global appeal, the IFRC has supported both National Societies during their COVID-19 responses with funding and technical assistance.

To support the response to Hurricane Ian in Cuba, the IFRC deployed a response team from the Americas Regional Office and Latin Caribbean Country Cluster Delegation. The IFRC also employed an operation manager as part of the surge capacity scheme for two months, providing a permanent presence in Cuba until long-term staff can be assigned to the operation. All procurement processes are coordinated through the IFRC regional logistics unit in Panama to ensure material availability and expedite the procurement process. Managing procurement from the regional logistics unit is more expeditious as there is limited availability of materials and supplies in the country.

IFRC membership coordination

IFRC coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess humanitarian contexts, situations and needs, and agree common priorities; co-developing common strategies to address issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian access, acceptance and space; mobilizing funding and other resources; clarifying consistent public messaging; and monitoring progress. The IFRC also ensures that National Society strategies and programmes incorporate clarity of humanitarian action and development assistance, as well as reinforcing the role of National Societies in their respective countries.

Under the coordination of the IFRC Americas Regional Office and through the IFRC Latin Caribbean Country Cluster Delegation, the regional Reference Centre for Disaster Preparedness (CREPD) supports National Societies in different aspects of National Society development. It assists them to strengthen their disaster preparedness capacities through the development of methodologies, tools, learning techniques and harmonization processes, considering the expertise and best practices of the National Societies themselves. The Reference Centre also provides technical support to strengthen National Societies’ disaster preparedness and response through institutional assessments, protocols and other initiatives.
The **French Red Cross** supports the Latin Caribbean National Societies through its **American-Caribbean regional intervention platform (PIRAC)**, which acts as the international delegation of the French Red Cross for the Caribbean region. In coordination with the IFRC, the platform has been responding to emergencies and supporting initiatives to strengthen the resilience of Caribbean territories since 2005. The French Red Cross has its coordination offices in Guadeloupe, with teams and emergency resources located in various French territories in the region – Martinique and Guyana, and Haiti as well.

The **Italian Red Cross** Caribbean delegation is well established in the Dominican Republic. It supports the Dominican Red Cross in disaster risk reduction and community projects, and in strengthening its youth department. It also continues to support the well-being of young mothers and households in vulnerable communities in the Province of Elias Pina. Furthermore, the Italian Red Cross has developed remote technical assistance for virtual learning and volunteer management.

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**Movement coordination**

The IFRC and ICRC maintain close coordination in their support of National Societies. This is carried out in line with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) principles, and the newly adopted **Seville Agreement 2.0**.

Through its regional delegation in Panama, the ICRC supports the Cuban Red Cross to deliver restoring family links activities and respond to migration issues and the COVID-19 pandemic.

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**Coordination with other actors**

The **Cuban Red Cross** works in coordination with Cuban authorities, primarily civil defence, local government, management centres for risk reduction and the Ministry of Public Health. The National Civil Defense system integrates all levels, from nation to community, with measures for prevention, mitigation and preparedness. It is also responsible for the dissemination of guidelines on the protection of the population, their property and the national economy. The National Civil Defense general staff is the main governing body of this system, in charge of overseeing compliance with civil defence measures and international conventions related to civil protection. It is also responsible for coordinating international cooperation and assistance during disasters. In times of emergency, the National Society liaises closely with authorities and oversees the arrival of humanitarian goods, which must pass through several government approvals to enter Cuba.

Throughout the ongoing Hurricane Ian response, the Cuban Red Cross and the IFRC are actively coordinating with other humanitarian actors, conducting numerous meetings both in country and externally. UN OCHA also organized an ad hoc meeting with the Regional Group on Risks, Emergencies and Disasters for Latin America and the Caribbean, where the UN Plan of Action and IFRC Emergency Appeal were shared among the UN agencies and international NGOs. The United Nations system in Cuba supports national response efforts to address the most urgent needs, primarily through in-country pre-positioned supplies and by mobilizing its own resources. UNICEF, UNESCO and UNFPA are addressing programmatic areas related to psychosocial support and protection, gender and inclusion, based on their expertise and humanitarian mandate. Care International also has a presence in several affected municipalities through its disaster preparedness projects.

The Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation continues to support the Cuban Red Cross to implement the strategic plan of the Ministry of Public Health, with a financial contribution for the purchase of medicines and medical equipment.
The **Dominican Red Cross** is actively represented at national, provincial and municipal levels and works closely with the following organizations:

- The National Council for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response, the governing body in charge of guiding, directing, planning and coordinating the national system
- The National Emergency Commission
- The Emergency Operations Centre
- The National Technical Committee for Risk Prevention and Mitigation – the Dominican Red Cross branches act as the operational arm of the Provincial and Municipal Committees for Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response
- Consultative teams

The Dominican Red Cross has established agreements and strategic alliances with external actors in order to complement and strengthen its prevention and response actions. Through the development of projects, the National Society has developed important relationships with various UN agencies. It works with the World Food Programme and the United Nations Development Programme to strengthen community resilience through the national prevention, mitigation and response system. Together with IFRC, the National Society has been working to establish a humanitarian corridor between Hispaniola and Cuba.

The Dominican Red Cross is also part of a regional consortium with the Nature Conservancy and the IFRC to develop its ecosystem-based adaptation and climate action.

The COVID-19 response operation has enabled the National Society to build additional partnerships for resource mobilization, including Mastercard and a network of private banks in the Dominican Republic.

### 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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