



# Global Route- Based Migration Programme

Annual Update 2023

**The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** is the world's largest humanitarian network, with 191 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and around 16 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.

© **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva, 2023**

Any part of this publication may be cited, copied, translated into other languages or adapted to meet local needs without prior permission from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, provided that the source is clearly stated.

**Contact us:**

Requests for commercial reproduction should be directed to the IFRC Secretariat:

**Address:** Chemin des Crêts 17, Petit-Saconnex, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland

**Postal address:** P.O. Box 303, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland

**T** +41 (0)22 730 42 22 | **F** +41 (0)22 730 42 00 | **E** [secretariat@ifrc.org](mailto:secretariat@ifrc.org) | **W** [ifrc.org](https://www.ifrc.org)

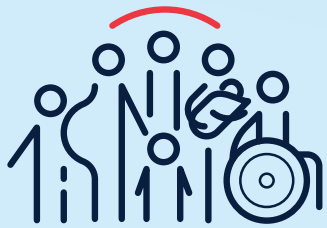
# Contents

<u>Global Snapshot</u>	<b>04</b>
<u>Context</u>	<b>06</b>
<u>Pooled Funding: A Tool for Aligned, Strategic Impact</u>	<b>07</b>
<u>The IFRC network's route-based migration approach</u>	<b>08</b>
<u>Regional Snapshot in Numbers: Africa</u>	<b>10</b>
<u>Regional Snapshot in Numbers: Americas</u>	<b>11</b>
<u>Regional Snapshot in Numbers: Europe</u>	<b>12</b>
<u>Regional Snapshot in Numbers: MENA</u>	<b>13</b>
<u>HSP@Sea</u>	<b>14</b>
<u>Operationalizing Pillars of Global-Route Based Programme: Snapshot of Best Practices</u>	<b>16</b>
<u>Humanitarian Assistance</u>	<b>16</b>
<u>Enhancing National Societies' Capacities</u>	<b>24</b>
<u>Fostering Local to Global Humanitarian Diplomacy</u>	<b>27</b>

# GLOBAL SNAPSHOT

This Global Update for 2023 aims to provide an overall snapshot of key actions undertaken in each of the regions where the programme is operational and provide some of the best practices that have potential for being scaled up.

Total number  
of people supported



**1,936,072**

People on the move along  
migratory routes

**1,500,127**



Assistance and protection to people  
on the move along migratory routes  
during return



**112,811**

People  
in host communities

**323,134**





Number  
of active HSPs



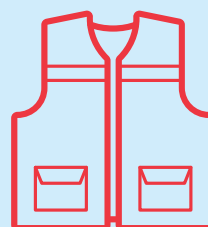
143

People supported  
through HSPs



1,500,127

Staff and volunteers  
trained



3,421

# CONTEXT

Around the world, people on the move – migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and other displaced people – undertake perilous journeys along land- and sea-based migratory routes in search of safety or a better life, often enduring great hardship and facing countless risks, harm, discrimination and vulnerability. One of the critical concerns for people on the move, at all stages of their journey, is the ability to access essential and life-saving assistance and protection.

In response to increasing humanitarian needs across key migratory routes, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) launched its **Global Route-Based Migration Programme in 2021**<sup>1</sup>.

This multi-regional, three-year programme, bringing together the humanitarian operations of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in Africa, the Americas, Europe and the Middle East regions, aims to improve the security and dignity of a target population of 4.7 million people, ensuring that the most vulnerable are protected from harm and are able to meet their basic needs.

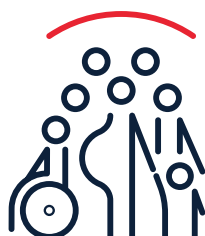
## The Global Route-Based Migration Programme has three operational pillars:

- Improving access to humanitarian assistance and protection for people on the move along migration routes, including through Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs)<sup>2</sup>.
- Strengthening National Society capacities to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to people on the move, including cooperation and coordination between National Societies across borders and along routes.
- Undertaking local to global humanitarian diplomacy to foster enabling policy and operational environments for assistance and protection to people on the move.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.ifrc.org/our-work/disasters-climate-and-crises/migration-and-displacement/migration-our-programmes/global>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.ifrc.org/our-work/disasters-climate-and-crises/migration-and-displacement/programmes/HSP>

Improving the  
safety and  
dignity



target population:  
**4.7**  
million people

Recognizing the fluidity of migratory routes, the programme was designed to be flexible and responsive to the needs of people on the move, accommodating their diversity of personas and vulnerabilities, irrespective of their legal status.

At its core, the unparalleled network of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, whose local branches and volunteers are embedded in communities, have first-hand knowledge of humanitarian needs related to migration, opening the door to locally-led responses. Equally, as a trusted volunteer network, National Societies often have unhindered access to communities thereby ensuring that the needs of the most vulnerable are identified and addressed.

Working through a network of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also facilitates a continuous and uninterrupted approach to the delivery of protection and humanitarian service

delivery assistance along major migration routes. It also allows for the provision of an enabling environment for the seamless exchange of wide-ranging expertise and information as well as enhancing coordination, consistency and cross-border collaboration. While operationally, focus has been on response to urgent and essential humanitarian needs, National Societies have continued to expand the scope of their programming and partnerships with local and national actors in order to address longer-term needs of migrants, and allow for a more holistic, integrated and comprehensive response to needs. Equally, the focus of the programme with regard to returnees has been on provision of services to meet immediate humanitarian needs upon arrival with these actions in many cases complemented with medium- and long-term support by National Societies for more sustainable re-integration.

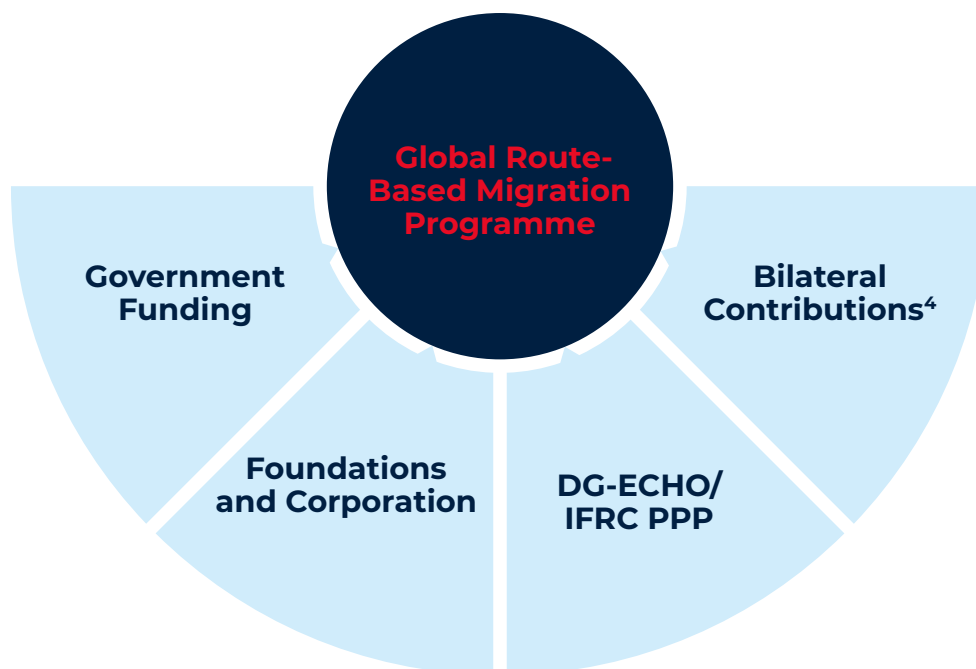
# POOLED FUNDING: A TOOL FOR ALIGNED, STRATEGIC IMPACT

The sustainability of the Global Route-Based Migration Programme is anchored in its predictable, multi-year investments and a diversification of its donor base. This approach has enabled the programme to adopt a longer-term planning cycle while allowing it the flexibility to tailor context-specific programming and ensure wider reach. Since its launch in 2021, the Global Route-Based Migration Programme has received funding through governments, bilateral contributions (namely through the IFRC network), foundations and corporations as well as the three-year Pilot Programmatic Partnership (PPP) with DG ECHO<sup>3</sup>. These diverse funding streams have contributed to more flexible and targeted programming, while also pinpointing the catalytic impact of leveraging a diverse pool of partners to meet acute needs. The flexibility of funding has allowed National Societies to assess the changing needs in their context and respond accordingly by scaling up their programmes or activating in new locations. National Societies have noted the value of being

able to determine for themselves the best way to respond and having the ability to act accordingly.

For example, in response to conflict outbreak in Chad, pooled funding streams in early emergency phases ensured responses met both immediate and medium-term needs. These activities later pivoted toward displaced people and refugees, using pre-positioning of stocks such as relief items, as well as procuring and readying shelters and shelter kits for expected population movements. In Chad, under core funding received through the PPP, core capacities of the National Society were built while DG ECHO's crisis modifier mechanism, allowed for complementary actions to be scaled up.

Moving forward it will be imperative that predictable, flexible and multi-year funding continues to be a cornerstone of the Global Route-Based Migration Programme which to date has allowed for the implementation of quality, timely and effective response.



<sup>3</sup> *Humanitarian Assistance and Protection for People on the Move Report | IFRC*

<sup>4</sup> *Bilateral contributions have been provided by: Austrian Red Cross, Belgian Red Cross, British Red Cross, Danish Red Cross, French Red Cross, German Red Cross, Italian Red Cross, Luxembourg Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross, Swiss Red Cross and The Netherlands Red Cross.*

## THE IFRC NETWORK'S ROUTE-BASED MIGRATION APPROACH

The IFRC network's approach to route-based migration is focused on responding to the most essential needs of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons at different stages of their journey. The IFRC network's route-based approach to migration is fundamentally based on needs, informed by rights and bound by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's Fundamental Principles. A route-based approach informs a deeper understanding of the humanitarian and protection needs of people on the move by analyzing the vulnerabilities arising from the geographical and human dimensions of migration routes and relevant contextual elements related to an individual's profile and status. This allows the IFRC network to better assist and protect vulnerable individuals and to adapt their interventions to fast-evolving operational realities.

Given its local to global presence along migratory routes, the IFRC network is in a unique position to bridge protection and assistance gaps affecting people on the move while at the same time seeking to engage the public authorities in addressing them. The IFRC network seeks to work in a complementary and coordinated manner, based on respective mandates, roles and responsibilities, to ensure that all migrants receive the protection they are entitled to under different legal frameworks - in particular, international human rights law and, where applicable, international refugee law and international humanitarian law - and have safe and effective access to humanitarian assistance and essential services, irrespective of legal status.







Total number of  
people supported  
**1,194,450**



People on the move  
along migratory  
routes  
**810,897**



People in host  
communities  
**306,548**



People supported  
through HSPs  
**744,527**



Assistance and  
protection to people  
on the move along  
migratory routes  
during return  
**77,005**



Number of active  
HSPs  
**73**



Staff and  
volunteers trained  
**921**

# REGIONAL SNAPSHOT IN NUMBERS: AFRICA

## Context

Multiple, complex, increasing and intersecting drivers shape decisions of people to move within and outside of the African continent. It should be noted that the movements largely occur within the African continent, 80% of migrants in the African region stay within the continent (IOM, 2022). The central Sahel region, encompassing Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, has long witnessed significant migration flows, as the region has had to contend with ongoing crises including climate and environmental degradation, desertification, political and institutional instability and violent extremism. Displaced people in Central Sahel face severe food insecurity and malnutrition and have limited access to basic services.

The factors leading to migration in West and Central Africa region have often been linked to improving livelihoods given much of the population's vulnerability to climate change, environmental degradation, water scarcity and coastal erosion.

A complex mix of factors – including conflict, political and economic insecurity – are key drivers of mixed migration from East Africa. Conflicts have forced millions of people to seek safety both within and beyond their home countries.

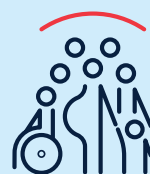
In these and neighbouring countries of Uganda, South Sudan, Niger and Chad, ongoing internal conflict or insecurity, disease outbreaks, floods, droughts and other hazard events have both been the cause and have been the cause of new influxes of displaced people. People displaced within this region are often sheltering in extremely remote locations or areas difficult to access due to conflict activity or environmental inaccessibility. And with each country facing their own internal challenges, meeting the needs of people on the move is fraught with difficulties.

# REGIONAL SNAPSHOT IN NUMBERS: AMERICAS

## Context

The Americas region is characterized by mixed migration flows. Hundreds of thousands of people across the region flee political instability and violence each year, or journey in search of livelihood opportunities in the face of structural factors such as lack of employment. Still more people are internally displaced as a result of widespread violence. Political, social and environmental crises collide generating cross-border movements between the countries that make up the Americas, causing an upward trend of population movement that has been steadily increasing since 2021. The Darien region of Panama in particular, as the only land corridor from South to North America, has seen record numbers of migrants cross this territory in recent years.

People's journeys are rarely linear. Some depart origin countries such as Ecuador or Venezuela and seek refuge or rest in a transit country such as Honduras, Guatemala or Panama, before moving on toward their intended country of destination. Many return or are returned, to their home country, including for health or economic reasons, only to later depart again as their original reasons for leaving remain unchanged. Additionally, in recent years, there has been an increase in extra-regional migration flows, namely from Caribbean, Asian and African countries towards South America. These individuals face a specific and often different set of challenges from regional migrants including access to regular migration status, language and cultural barriers.



Total number of people supported  
**510,556**



People on the move along migratory routes  
**467,242**



People in host communities  
**7,508**



People supported through HSPs  
**431,904**



Assistance and protection to people on the move along migratory routes during return  
**35,806**



Number of active HSPs  
**31**



Staff and volunteers trained  
**347**



Total number of  
people supported  
**231,066**



People on the move  
along migratory  
routes  
**221,988**



People in host  
communities  
**9,078**



People supported  
through HSPs  
**114,407**



Number of active  
HSPs  
**28**



Staff and  
volunteers trained  
**1,973**

# REGIONAL SNAPSHOT IN NUMBERS: EUROPE

## Context

While arrivals at sea via the Mediterranean saw the highest increase in 2023, the Western Balkans continue to be a substantial transit route for migrants attempting to reach the European Union. Data from IOM shows the number of migrant arrivals recorded by authorities in transit countries in Europe increased by five per cent in 2023 compared to the previous year. 2023 also saw the increased mobility of migrants, as they transited through countries more rapidly than in previous years, spending less time in reception/transit centres. The war in Ukraine continues to trigger increases in humanitarian needs due to outflows of refugees across the European continent.

# REGIONAL SNAPSHOT IN NUMBERS: MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA)

## Context

The MENA region continues to concurrently represent countries of origin, transit and destination along migration routes, with three interlinked dynamics at play: forced migration and internal displacement largely due to protracted crises across the region; irregular migration flows driven by economic factors and the movement of regular and irregular labour migrants. Protracted and emerging armed conflicts and the impact of climate change on water availability and agriculture are likely to exacerbate fiscal pressures, slow growth and heighten unemployment in the region, pushing more populations into poverty. The confluence of the above factors is likely to result in more and more people in the region considering internal mobility or migration as a viable option to improve their security and economic prospects in the coming years.



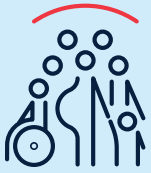
Number of active  
HSPs

**31**



Staff and  
volunteers trained

**347**



Total number of  
people rescued  
**2,299**



Distributed  
meals  
**16,000**



Distributed  
survival kits  
**2,299**

# HSP@SEA

## Context

Addressing the humanitarian needs of people on the move along sea-based migration routes is an integral component of the Global Route-Based Migration Programme. Due to the dangers and risks on the central Mediterranean route, the IFRC Secretariat entered a partnership with SOS MEDITERRANEE to provide humanitarian services on board the Ocean Viking ship which conducts rescue operations. While SOS MEDITERRANEE focuses on search and rescue at sea, the IFRC team focuses on providing humanitarian post-rescue services, including health services (medical care, first aid, psychosocial support), relief (food and non-food distributions) and protection. In 2023, the HSP@Sea rescued 2,299 people, distributed 16,000 meals and 2,299 survival kits.

The IFRC's commitment to saving lives at sea includes advocacy at both operational and policy levels. This includes efforts to address challenges to civil search and rescue operations and to ensure clear, safe and predictable disembarkation mechanisms for rescued people.

In 2023, the IFRC network generated data, messaging and case studies from the HSP@Sea operation to help foster a more conducive environment for search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean. This included engagement with EU and state authorities at different levels, bilaterally, with relevant National Societies, and as part of the Central Mediterranean Search and Rescue Network. Leveraging experience from HSP@Sea, the IFRC is also engaged with the establishment of a new Centre for Humanitarian Action at Sea which aims to address the global humanitarian crisis at sea by serving three primary functions: i) establishing a high-level dialogue platform to convene stakeholders from diverse sectors, facilitating discussions on challenges and solutions to search and rescue; ii) coordinating research, advocacy, diplomacy and technical expertise on the imperative of saving lives; and iii) expanding fleet conduction search and rescue operations across maritime routes. The first high-level dialogue, co-hosted by the IFRC, took place in October 2023 and united stakeholders across the relevant sectors: shipping companies, states, humanitarian actors and international organizations. This confidential, neutral, forward-thinking space fosters discussions on humanitarian challenges in maritime contexts and proposes innovative solutions.



# OPERATIONALIZING PILLARS OF GLOBAL- ROUTE BASED MIGRATION PROGRAMME: **SNAPSHOT OF BEST PRACTICES**

## Humanitarian Assistance

### **Pillar I: Improving access to humanitarian assistance and protection for people on the move along migration routes, including through Humanitarian Service Points**

HSPs constitute one of the main modalities through which the IFRC network provides humanitarian assistance and protection for people on the move along migration routes.

In line with IFRC's Strategy 2030, at the core, HSPs constitute a key action in expanding "support along major migratory routes and cycles to ensure that they are able to meet their humanitarian needs through essential services, irrespective of their legal status." HSPs have been developed by the IFRC network to overcome the barriers and lack of access to essential services for many migrants and displaced persons. They are strategically located along migratory routes offering humanitarian assistance where public services may otherwise be unavailable or inaccessible. HSPs offer safe and neutral spaces at strategic locations along migration routes. They may provide basic healthcare and psychosocial support, food and water, information, restoring family links services to help people contact or reunite with their loved ones, temporary shelter, safe spaces for women and children and safe referrals. HSPs may be mobile or fixed, depending on needs. HSPs are designed to be a flexible tool based on specific needs and capacities. While the exact services that HSPs provide differ, contingent on specific contexts and needs, core to all of them is promotion of greater cooperation and information sharing among National Societies. The approach adopted in the implementation of HSPs remains uniform, with the overarching aim being to provide continuous humanitarian

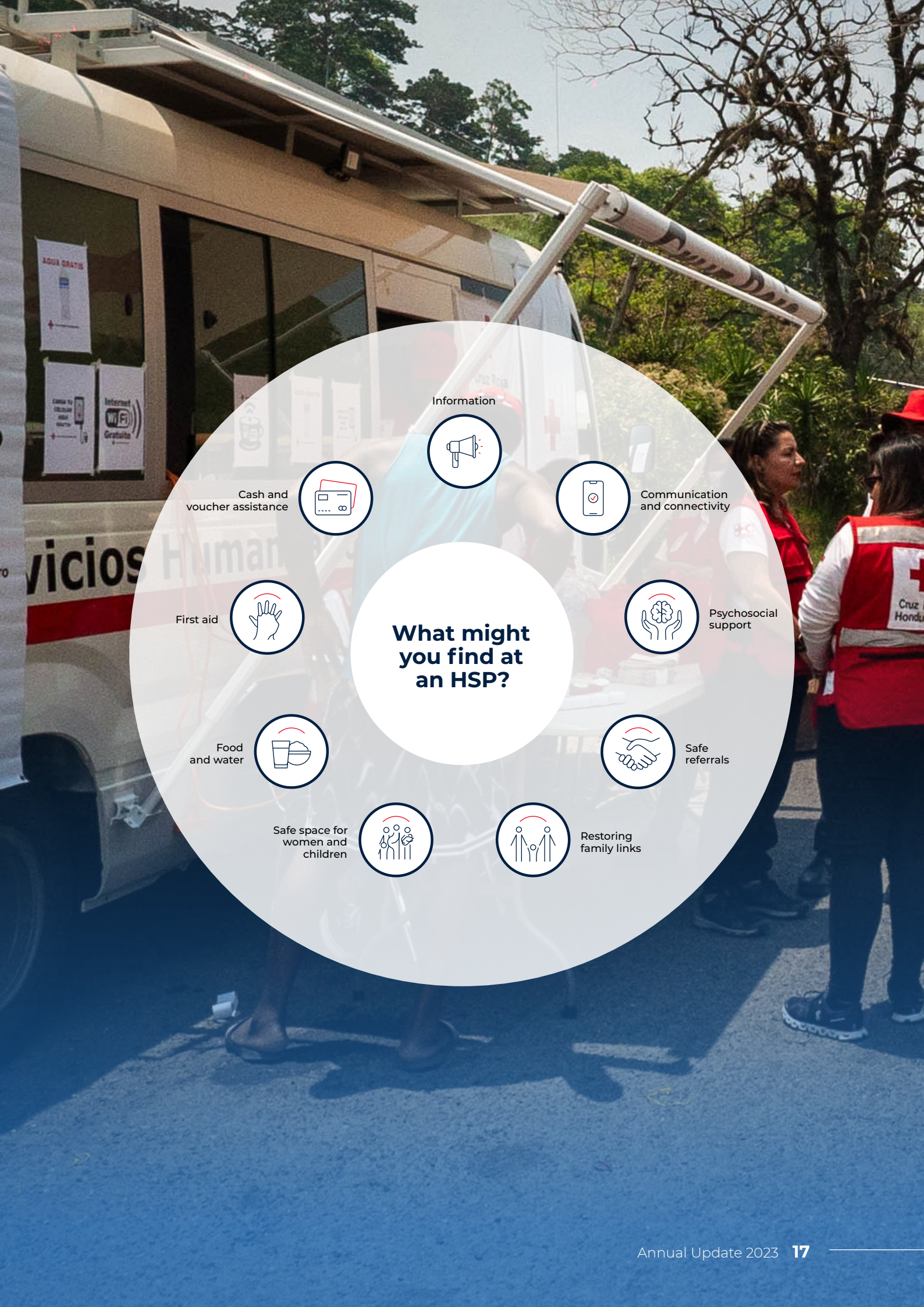
services where and when they are needed. HSPs are designed to best promote choice, agency and dignity: from the use of cash and vouchers to the creation of a clothes and hygiene products 'shop' to replace the distribution of one-size-fits-all hygiene kits. Significant variety is also seen in the design of HSPs, reflecting the differing needs they serve, from fixed HSPs in key locations (including at ports and borders) to mobile HSPs traversing long distances by land or sea. The Humanitarian Service Points in Action: A global review<sup>5</sup> provides numerous concrete examples of HSPs in operation along migration routes around the world and why they are critical to safety and well-being of people in vulnerable situations.

The approach of HSPs is also based on the strengths and expertise of the IFRC network, including the principled humanitarian approach of the IFRC, and the permanent local presence of National Societies along migration routes. HSPs are designed to be a flexible tool based on specific needs and capacities.

There is no "one size fits all" HSP model. While they have many things in common, HSPs may be strikingly different. Depending on the services provided, HSPs can directly contribute to the attainment of three objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, including: objective 3: providing accurate and timely information at all stages of migration, objective 8: saving lives and establishing

<sup>5</sup> *Humanitarian Service Points in Action: A global review* | IFRC





**What might you find at an HSP?**

Information



Communication and connectivity



Cash and voucher assistance



Psychosocial support



First aid



Safe referrals



Food and water



Restoring family links



Safe space for women and children



parent window flap ①,  
sheet and close buckles to avoid  
infections inside ②.

# LUMINOSITY

All openings should be opened to increase luminosity.

ALPINTER



ZOLLER

NE REMPLISSEZ PAS  
UN PNEUMATIQUE



## Scaling up response to Sudan crisis

Following the outbreak of armed conflict in Sudan in April 2023, large numbers of civilians have been forced to flee to neighbouring countries, including people who were already internally displaced because of previous conflicts in Sudan and refugees from other countries who had sought safety in Sudan.

In response to the emergency and in light of the increasing numbers of arrivals into Egypt, the Egyptian Red Crescent has been providing humanitarian assistance to Sudanese individuals who entered Egypt due to the crisis.

The National Society has set up five HSPs along the Sudanese-Egyptian border (Gustol and Argeen cross borders) and along the routes to Cairo (Abu Simle and Karkar bus stations and Aswan train station). HSPs are providing medical, WASH and shelter services as well as RFL. Since April, the Egyptian Red Crescent has been working with the IFRC Secretariat in developing an information management system regarding its operations on the Sudan crisis, focusing on data segregation, data verification, data visualization and reporting.

As the only authorized non-governmental organization with presence at the borders, the Egyptian Red Crescent has been the implementing partner for a number of agencies including the UNHCR, UNICEF and WHO.

coordinated international efforts on missing migrants, and objective 15: providing basic services for migrants.

The Global Route-Based Migration Programme has equally contributed to enhanced humanitarian assistance beyond new and improved HSPs, this has included mobile clinics in Africa, permanent WASH infrastructure in Panama and Uganda and tailored cash programming across many interventions have all enhanced National Societies' humanitarian assistance initiatives. National Societies have delivered holistic, wide-reaching assistance to people on the move. The multi-sectoral nature of the global programme has facilitated the integration of other thematics such as cash assistance, protection, community engagement and accountability (CEA) and social integration into programming. Across all activities, protection mechanisms have been reinforced and are deeply embedded.

Cash has been a key method of assistance, with many National Societies improving their cash and voucher assistance (CVA) methodology with technical support from IFRC and EU National Societies. Guidelines, tools and operating procedures in Honduras, Ecuador, Uganda and other countries have been updated to improve the effectiveness of CVA interventions in all programming, including assistance to people on the move. This has also included signing agreements with major banks, meaning CVA is tailored to the specific financial systems of a country making it easier for recipients to utilize.

With the support of CEA expertise, National Societies have prioritized community feedback. In the Americas, this has taken the form of surveys and assessments which have led to practical changes such as adjustments of 'open hours' and informed dialogue with authorities. In Chad, community-led committees have been formed which participate in weekly meetings and training on protection issues. This knowledge is then shared with family members, strengthening community awareness overall.

Social inclusion and integration activities are also taking place across many countries in the global programme to strengthen bonds between host and migrant populations. Often, these activities are woven into existing programming around awareness raising or community education.

To facilitate their work, National Societies have signed Memorandums of Understandings with their governments to ensure that they can provide unhindered humanitarian assistance to migrants. These partnerships by the National Societies reflect ongoing cooperation with authorities in emergency response, framed by their auxiliary role to public authorities in the humanitarian field. Furthermore, the role and mandate of National Societies with regard to safe and effective access to all migrants, irrespective of status, without penalty builds on Resolution 3 of the 31st International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent where State parties specifically guaranteed National Societies humanitarian access to all migrants.

As auxiliaries to their public authorities, National Societies are well-positioned to facilitate cooperation within borders and through the IFRC network along migratory routes, in particular through the collection and dissemination of information. This privileged position also enables humanitarian diplomacy with and on behalf of people on the move as well as in favour of policies that support social inclusion and non-discrimination. People on the move often come to HSPs when they are at risk or struggling to access services, therefore, information from HSPs can be extremely useful in identifying where governments may not be fulfilling their obligations and where there is a need for humanitarian diplomacy.



## In Focus: Greece

The Hellenic Red Cross (HRC) continued to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants through the programme at their Multifunctional Centres (MFCs) in Athens and Thessaloniki. The MFCs are fixed HSPs, offering holistic and multi-disciplinary services and activities under one roof. The main goal of MFCs is to reduce vulnerability of refugee and migrant communities by enhancing capacity towards self-sustainability, providing access to proper and effective information, navigating the Greek public systems and fostering integration and resilience through trainings and social support groups. Specifically, the MFCs provide information, medical assistance, social welfare services, legal advice, MHPSS, along with a range of services aimed at facilitating integration and inclusion (funded through other donors).

The programme also supported the MFC multilingual telephone helpline and online information to migrants and refugees with accurate and timely information about rights and services and/or orientation to competent services and agencies, in their native language.

The HRC also operated Educational Health Stations (EHS)/Primary health care centres, with the centre in Attica receiving support from the programme. The EHS provides medical and nursing consultation, communicable and non-communicable diseases prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and follow up, medical and mental health first aid, immunization, infants and toddlers health monitoring, gynaecological and sexual health monitoring, maternity care (pre-natal and post-natal care) oral and dental health care, mediation and facilitation of access to the public health units and social welfare services. The EHSs were supported by interpreters and cultural mediators.


The HRC also provided support to minors to access health and care services through the Accompaniment Referrals Programme, consisting of a team of cultural mediators trained on the Greek public health system structure and procedures.

## In focus: The Gambia

One of the many examples of HSPs which have provided critical support includes an example from The Gambia.

Migration is a significant and longstanding phenomenon in The Gambia, driven by economic challenges, high unemployment rates and limited prospects. The country's geographical location, surrounded by Senegal and the Atlantic Ocean, makes it a transit point for migrants traveling to Europe. Many Gambians embark on perilous journeys through what they refer to as 'the Backway', crossing the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea, facing risks such as human trafficking and drowning at sea. Remittances from those who reach Europe play a crucial role in the country's economy and serve as motivation for potential migrants. To address migration challenges, the Gambian government and international actors have initiated programmes to promote safe migration, combat human trafficking, and raise awareness about the dangers of irregular migration.

In The Gambia, for example, the National Society works with the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs and has signed an MoU with The Gambia Immigration Department. The Gambia Red Cross is also part of the National Coordination Mechanism on Migration and participates in relevant working groups with several Ministries and departments. This allows the Red Cross to cooperate with the authorities, including in situations of displacement



or where migrants become stranded at borders. The National Society has also trained authorities (including border police and security officers) about migrants' rights and referral pathways to the Red Cross, to facilitate access to assistance such as temporary shelter, food and non-food items, family reunification, life-saving information, first aid, psychosocial support and counselling and medical referrals. The Gambia Red Cross also collaborates with medical facilities, pharmacies and restaurants to provide free medical care, medication and food for migrants, including at border crossing points.

This type of exchange also allows relevant National Societies to prepare themselves to go to the border and assist returnees with transportation to their families, Restoring Family Links services, provide medical assistance including first aid, PSS, food and non-food items, and shelter. As a volunteer with The Gambia Red Cross has remarked, HSPs have provided a basis for continued engagement and foundational trust between the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and migrants along their journey: «The introduction of Humanitarian Service Points has provided a more humane and supportive environment for migrants, offering them the services and assistance they need in these challenging circumstances. It has proven to be immensely beneficial for migrants. It has become a reliable place they can turn to for assistance, and they often refer their friends as well. As volunteers we focus on building strong relationships with the migrants to rebuild trust, and where possible, we develop genuine friendships with them.»

# Enhancing National Societies' Capacities

## **Pillar II: Strengthening National Society capacities to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to people on the move, including cooperation and coordination between National Societies across borders and along routes**

In 2023, concerted efforts were made in supporting National Societies to learn about, design and operate HSPs in order to effectively meet the humanitarian needs of migrants. This has included the development of a training package on HSPs which includes 15 modules and is being rolled out across the regions implementing the Global-Route Based Migration Programme. The HSP training is a companion to the HSP Digital Toolkit<sup>6</sup> whose modules complement the training package and provide National Societies guidance to learn, design, build and operate HSPs to help meet specific needs of migrants. However, National Societies have requested the development of an additional tool that could be used to rapidly upskill staff and volunteers on HSP. As a result, plans are underway to develop HSP e-learning modules that could be promoted across the world to raise awareness of the tool and its minimum standards and best practices. The e-module intends to provide an introduction on HSPs to Red Cross Red Crescent staff and volunteers; an overview of its core element and key services, as well as enable learners to define whether an HSP is an appropriate modality of response, its management and possible closure and transition to another modality.

The HSP training is a global product which was piloted for the Europe region in Kazakhstan in November 2023. It is expected that rollout in the other regions will happen during the course of 2024. These trainings provide a critical space for peer-to-peer support and also explore the limitations and challenges of HSPs while examining the range and scope of programming that encompass the range of humanitarian services National Societies are mandated to provide.

### **Enhancing cross-border cooperation**

While coordination and collaboration are fundamental to the IFRC network's history, organizational culture and functioning, in the context of migration programming – particularly across borders – this represents a relatively new way of working. The Global Route-Based Migration Programme is aiming to prioritize and formalize

the diverse ways coordination and collaboration are operationalized within the IFRC network, be it bilateral or multilateral, one-off or long-term, formal or informal.

All National Societies under the global programme have enhanced their cooperation to build a strong, coordinated, route-based network. Besides frequent regional coordination meetings and close cooperation with other agencies operating in the regions to ensure complementarity, National Societies are in regular contact to discuss new entry points, increasing or changing flows of people, complex cases or shared political issues. Key to this coordination is the use of HSPs as a common mechanism, as well as improving data collection. With HSPs as a common way of working, National Societies have been able to learn from each other. They are also able to connect and complement interventions according to what is offered at each HSP along certain routes

In addition, innovations around information as aid, assisted people data management and the use of service maps are fostering coordination and improving service delivery. RedSafe is a digital humanitarian platform hosted by the ICRC that securely hosts digital copies of a person's documents, informs migrants of risks, maps humanitarian services along routes and allows for in-app messaging. Through the partnership, several National Societies in the Americas have begun to implement this app to strengthen the continuity of services in their country and across the region.

Other innovations include the development of an orientation brochure for people transiting through Ecuador and Colombia, available online via a QR code at the two National Societies' HSPs, and in print. In Mali and Niger, the on- and offline accessibility of Kobo tablets is being put to use to assess, register, report and implement services for migrants and displaced people. Through the use of QR codes, staff and volunteers at HSPs could see what kind of support the person had already received.

<sup>6</sup> [HSP Digital Toolkit](#)







# Fostering Local to Global Humanitarian Diplomacy

## **Pillar III: Undertaking local to global humanitarian diplomacy to foster enabling policy and operational environments for assistance and protection to people on the move**

At global level, the IFRC has been co-leading the UN Network on Migration Workstream on Missing Migrants and Humanitarian Assistance to Migrants in Distress, together with ICRC, IOM and UNHCR. The workstream was established to respond to a mandate in the Progress Declaration of the 2022 International Migration Review Forum, in which Member States requested the development of actionable recommendations on strengthening cooperation on missing migrants and providing humanitarian assistance to migrants in distress to prevent the loss of life. Evidence and insights from the global programme, including HSPs along land routes in Americas, Africa, Europe and MENA and the HSP@Sea in the Central Mediterranean have informed the draft actionable recommendations, which will be shared with the UN Secretary General's office in late 2024. The evidence and insights gathered through the GRBMP have also informed briefings with Member States; global, regional, and bilateral consultations with diverse stakeholders; and identification of promising practices.

At national level, working as auxiliaries to their national authorities in the humanitarian field, National Societies support and provide services to migrants. As conflict escalated in Sudan, African National Societies of neighbouring countries began to prepare for an influx of displaced people. They also turned to their government, urging them to prepare and consider the needs of these people. In Central America, migration is an intensely political subject where policies change frequently. Many National Societies are co-leads or members of committees led by the responsible government ministry. In these forums, as well as in direct dialogue, National Societies advocate for the rights and needs of migrants. In Guatemala, Honduras and other countries, National Societies have informed changes to national or local policy or gained access to centres or locations that migrants move through. The Red Cross of North Macedonia

continued to advocate with the Government on the issue of Integration (where there is an identified gap in provision). Dialogue and cooperation between governmental institutions, such as the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, and Red Cross made significant progress during 2023, with the National Society becoming part of the national coordination meetings on the topic.

Specific emphasis on coordination within the partnership has led to improvements both within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, as well as with other agencies and the authorities. Many National Societies lead or are part of thematic coordination mechanisms such as clusters and working groups, where they are increasingly recognized as local experts. In turn, National Societies' participation in these coordination channels has helped to deliver tailored, effective and complementary interventions. "Close coordination with the public administration in regions of intervention has built trust and ensured access to displaced populations, as in Mali and DRC. With changing flows of people through the Americas, National Societies work cooperatively with ministries and authorities to remain adaptable. In Honduras, monthly workshops are held with government institutions, border agency representatives, local committees and NGOs. These workshops ensure services are coordinated and referrals can be made safely."

Close coordination with the public administration in regions of intervention has built trust and ensured access to displaced populations, as in Mali and DRC. With changing flows of people through the Americas, National Societies work cooperatively with ministries and authorities to remain adaptable. In Honduras, monthly workshops are held with government institutions, border agency representatives, local committees and NGOs. These workshops ensure services are coordinated and referrals can be made safely.



Principios Fundamentales  
Movimiento Internacional  
Cruz Roja y Media Luna

Humanidad

Solidaridad

ad

Cruz  
Guat

Cruz Roja  
Guatemala

Cruz Roja  
Guatemala

Cruz Roja Gua

Guatemala

## Facilitating continuation of humanitarian assistance across borders

Hundreds of thousands of migrants cross the treacherous Darien jungle corridor connecting Colombia and Panama. From Haiti, Venezuela and elsewhere. Among the people journeying along this route are women who are pregnant or have a young child. These children often arrive undernourished and mothers can be facing unaddressed complications.

Panama Red Cross meets them at their HSPs in the Darien with a tailored maternity and infant care programme. Specialist medical staff and volunteers take the child's measurements and, if needed, can assist the mother in breastfeeding.

Through community feedback, Panama Red Cross understood that there was a concern about what would happen next – that while they had been supported in Panama, there was no way of sharing notes onward the next time they reached assistance. Panama Red Cross, referencing hospital bracelets, began recording key information on bracelets people could wear. However, when they heard from these people that bracelets felt conspicuous, Panama Red Cross transitioned to cards.

All information about the family including key metrics and any medicines provided is noted on a card that the family can carry onward. At future HSPs, or when they are met by other agencies, they will be able to share their recent medical history and data.

## Credits:

Cover: © IFRC. Photo by Gabriel Nuru

p. 8: © IFRC. Photo by Maria Victoria Langman

p. 15: © SOS Mediterranee. Photo by Flavio Gasperini

p. 17: © IFRC. Photo by Hermanos Corallo

p. 18: © IFRC. Photo by Guillaume Binet

p. 21: © Hellenic Red Cross

p. 22: © IFRC. Photo by Moustapha Diallo

p. 25: © Cruz Roja Ecuatoriana.

p. 26: © IFRC. Photo by Victor Lacken

p. 28: © IFRC. Photo by Maria Victoria Langman



