



# EQUATORIAL GUINEA

## 2023 IFRC network country plan

Funding Requirement **CHF 1.1M**

Appeal number **MAAGQ002**

### In support of the Red Cross of Equatorial Guinea



**8**

National Society branches



**26**

National Society staff



**500**

National Society volunteers

### People to be reached



**14,000**

Climate and environment



**14,000**

Disasters and crises



**14,000**

Health and wellbeing



**14,000**

Values, power and inclusion

### IFRC network multiyear focus

#### Longer term needs

- Disaster preparedness
- Climate change adaptation • Health
- Water, sanitation and hygiene
  - Social inclusion

#### Capacity development

- Communications
- Resource mobilization
- Digital transformation
- Risk management
- Financial management

### Key country data

**Population** **1.4M**

**Human Development Index rank** **145**

**Population below poverty level** **76.8%**



IFRC Country Cluster Delegation for Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Sao Tome & Principe, Yaounde

## Hazards



Floods



Drought



Storms



Disease



Sea level rise

## Funding requirements

**Total 1.1M** CHF

Through the IFRC

**1.1M** CHF

### IFRC Breakdown

#### Longer term needs

**75,000** CHF  
Climate and environment

**170,000** CHF  
Disasters and crises

**650,000** CHF  
Health and wellbeing

**90,000** CHF  
Values, power and inclusion

**80,000** CHF  
Enabling local actors

## Participating National Societies

Japanese Red Cross Society\*

Spanish Red Cross

# NATIONAL SOCIETY PROFILE

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**The Red Cross of Equatorial Guinea** was established in 1985 by a decree of the President of the Republic. This recognized the National Society as an auxiliary to the public authorities for activities in line with the Geneva Conventions throughout the country. It was admitted to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in 1995.

The National Society has 500 volunteers and 26 staff. It is represented in all eight regions of Equatorial Guinea, and is administratively divided into two regions. The island region includes the national committee in Malabo, one provincial committee in Luba, and two district committees in Baney and Riaba. The continental region includes four provincial committees (Coastal Province, South Central Province, Wele-Nzas and Kie Ntem), 10 district committees and one municipal committee in Nkue.

The Equatorial Guinea Red Cross strives to stay active in disaster response activities, and to provide first aid support to local events and to the general public. In March 2020, an explosion in Bata killed about 100 people and affected more than 700 families. The National Society's

immediate support included first aid, and it applied for assistance from the IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) to assist 500 people with cash for food. With support from the IFRC, the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross was also able to help reduce the spread of COVID-19, resulting in less morbidity and fewer deaths among the population. The National Society mobilized 230 volunteers and reached more than one million people through:

- Risk communication and community engagement, which raised awareness among the population
- Health services, such as distributing personal protective equipment in health centres
- Water, hygiene and sanitation activities and installing handwashing stations
- Livelihoods support and distributing food to the most vulnerable people

This plan will focus primarily on strengthening the National Society's capacities to ensure it is well prepared to face humanitarian challenges in Equatorial Guinea.

## IFRC NETWORK ACTION IN 2023

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### Joint situational analysis

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea is a Spanish-speaking country located on the west coast of Central Africa. It covers an area of 28,000 sq. km and has an estimated population of 1.4 million. Equatorial Guinea is made up of an island region and a mainland region. The mainland territory, Río Muni, is bordered by Cameroon to the north and Gabon to the east and south. The country's five small islands are Bioko, Corisco, Annobón, Elobey Chico (Small Elobey) and Elobey Grande (Great Elobey). Most of the population are concentrated in the provinces of Litoral and Bioko Norte, which account for 30% and 24.5% of the population, respectively. The districts of Malabo and Bata are the political and economic capitals of the country.

President Teodoro Obiang has been in power since 1979 and was re-elected for a seven-year term in 2016, with 93.7% of the vote. His political party, El Partido Democrático de Guinea Ecuatorial, holds absolute executive power. Since early April 2022, President Obiang had been in consultations with different parties, resulting

in Parliament giving its approval for bringing the presidential elections forward to 20 November 2022. On 21 November 2022, preliminary election results released by the Government showed the ruling party had won more than 99% of the votes counted to date in the presidential, legislative and municipal elections. Having been in office for 43 years, President Obiang has become the world's longest-ruling head of state and is now seeking to extend his rule.

Since the 1990s, Equatorial Guinea has been the third-largest producer of oil in sub-Saharan Africa, after Nigeria and Angola. However, its macroeconomic and fiscal situation has deteriorated, and the country showed a reduction in GDP between 2015 and 2021. Following the COVID-19 pandemic and seven consecutive years of negative growth, stronger hydrocarbon revenues resulting from higher production and prices improved the country's fiscal position in the first half of 2022. Real GDP was projected to grow by 3.2 per cent in 2022. Inflation stood at 3.3 per cent in July

2022 (compared with 1.8 per cent in 2021), because of higher global food and energy prices due to the conflict in Ukraine.

Equatorial Guinea ranks 145 out of 189 countries in the 2019 Human Development Index. GDP per capita was expected to reach US\$6,700 by the end of 2022. Unemployment was 9.2 per cent in 2020, and both unemployment and job insecurity are higher among women and young people. According to the [African Development Bank \(AFDB\) Equatorial Guinea Economic Outlook 2021](#), the poverty rate was estimated at 67% in 2020, having grown from 43.7% in 2011. This increase in poverty is largely attributed to a reduction in petroleum revenues since 2016. The country has a dual economy, with a wealthy political and social elite sitting alongside the majority of the population who subsist on agriculture. According to the International Monetary Fund, risks for the country's population include further sustained surges in international food prices, a resurgence of COVID-19 variants, a spike in marine piracy incidents, lower oil prices, further delays in addressing governance issues, and worsening banking sector stability indicators.

According to data from the World Bank, 75% of the population have access to sanitation, which is very high by regional standards, although only about half of the population have access to fresh water. Outside the main population centres of Malabo and Bata, people remain poor and lack access to even the most basic public provisions such as water and reliable electricity. This increases the risk of widespread health issues, especially for young children. According to the United Nations Children's Fund, about two in 10 children die before the age of five, often from diarrhea, cholera or other diseases linked to poor water quality. The country is also affected by HIV/AIDS, with a prevalence rate of 7.2 per cent among adults aged between 15 and 49.

As in other parts of Africa, Equatorial Guinea continues to face threats from natural hazards that adversely affect food security, health and livelihoods. In the last decade, droughts, floods, pests and epidemics have significantly affected the region, eroding resilience and contributing to people being displaced both internally and across borders.

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## Strategic priorities

### Climate and environmental crises

Like most Central African countries, Equatorial Guinea is vulnerable to hydro-meteorological hazards, which are exacerbated by climate change and compounded by environmental degradation and deforestation. The INFORM Country Risk Profile ranks Equatorial Guinea as a medium risk country with a score of 4.9 for natural hazards, particularly droughts and floods. As well as facing increased risks of droughts, floods and landslides, the coastal areas and islands of Equatorial Guinea are being increasingly affected by sea level rise, storm surges and coastal erosion.

Equatorial Guinea has 1.6 billion acres of tropical forest, covering 58 per cent of its land. Deforestation is estimated to be occurring at an annual rate of 0.9 per cent and is a primary factor in declining biodiversity. According to Global Forest Watch Equatorial Guinea 2021, the country lost 131,000 hectares of tree cover between 2001 and 2021, equivalent to a 4.9 per cent decrease in tree cover since 2000, and resulting in 85 MT of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. To mitigate this loss, the National Investment Plan REDD+ 2020 proposes a green economy model that aims to protect the forest and contribute to sustainable development.

At the same time, climate change is causing sea levels to rise. This is exposing Equatorial Guinea to flooding and coastal erosion, threatening its infrastructure and vital biodiversity reserves. The National Plan for Climate Change Adaptation prioritizes the resilience of ecosystems and communities, although any enforcement of environmental strategies and plans has been ineffective to date. According to the AFDB Equatorial Guinea Economic Outlook 2021, this is compromising the achievement of anticipated results.

Based on limited knowledge and forecast information, the country is expected to experience greater rainfall variability (general droughts, more rainfall and sunnier days), higher temperatures and rising sea levels, along with more frequent storms and storm surges. An analysis of climate data between 1970 and 2015 shows a temperature increase of about 1°C, which is consistent with increases observed worldwide. Trends for precipitation vary and are less clear than those for air temperatures.

The general lack of awareness around the importance of climate change is a major obstacle, although this is not unique to Equatorial Guinea. Understanding the risks

of climate change and the idea that increased sustainability can improve resilience are still unfamiliar concepts among much of the population.

## Main actions and areas of support

The Equatorial Guinea Red Cross is part of the [IFRC 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.

In line with the IFRC Pan-African initiative on Tree Planting and Care, and with support from the IFRC, the National Society will advocate with authorities for reforestation through programmes such as One Pupil, One Tree.

In 2023, the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross will:

- Train staff and volunteers on climate change issues, integrate environmental considerations into programmes and disaster management, and carry out training in tools, innovations and technologies available to address environmental issues
- Run public awareness campaigns on biodiversity and preventing disaster risks relating to climate change
- Use Red Cross clubs and schools to raise young peoples' awareness of biodiversity, climate change and steps to promote sustainability, by training focal points from 50 Red Cross clubs and 50 schools
- Engage National Society staff and volunteers in tree planting and care activities, in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders
- Set up a campaign to collect waste and plastic paper for recycling in Malabo and Bata (the pilot urban area) in collaboration with the local authorities

## Disasters and crises

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

Flooding is the natural hazard with the most significant impact in Equatorial Guinea. There is already a hotspot of potentially affected people in Litoral province, and it is anticipated that Wele-Nzas and the island of Bioko will also become highly affected by future climate conditions. The local economy is moderately exposed to floods. On a yearly average, the areas affected by floods produce about 0.14 per cent of the national GDP, corresponding to about US\$30 million per year.

In early March 2021, explosions in the military base of Bata resulted in a humanitarian crisis as no institution in Equatorial Guinea was prepared for such a disaster. A series of explosions were recorded in the armoury of the gendarmerie and the Nkuantoma military barracks in Bata, the country's economic capital. According to official data, 107 people died as a result of these explosions, and extensive damage was caused to residential areas and the military compound. More than 700 people were injured, including women and children in army barracks and residential areas near the military complex. The Government described the situation as catastrophic and called for international support to meet humanitarian needs. 615 injured people were admitted to local health facilities and a total of 19,000 people were affected. These included 4,500 displaced people and 8,000 people in need. According to assessments conducted by the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross at the start of the operation, more than 400 families had lost their homes or had them partially destroyed, raising problems of shelter and access to water and food.

The city of Bata is home to a regional committee of the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross and the Bata committee has 44 active volunteers, all of whom were deployed within the framework of this operation. As soon as the disaster occurred, the Bata regional committee responded, especially with providing first aid to victims and identifying people affected. With support from an IFRC DREF [allocation](#), the National Society identified 450 families to receive financial assistance in the form of vouchers. They were selected according to pre-established vulnerability criteria, with priority given to families whose houses had been completely destroyed, large families, families headed by women, and families that included young children, pregnant women or older people. Volunteers also provided psychosocial support to the people affected.

Since this catastrophic event, the National Society has reinforced its efforts to build its capacity in disaster response, in line with its auxiliary role.

## Main actions and areas of support

The Equatorial Guinea Red Cross has fairly limited capacity in disaster risk management, and there is no disaster contingency plan in place. The National Society plans to develop a risk map to indicate specific hazards, as well as contingency plans to be approved by the Government. Staff and volunteers will also need to be trained in disaster risk management. The focus on preparedness is in line with the IFRC's Pan-African Red Ready initiative. The IFRC will support the continued investment in cash preparedness and financial service provider procurement, scaling up multi-purpose cash, and linking cash assistance to complementary activities (Cash+). It will also work to mainstream protection, gender and inclusion and community engagement and accountability into the cash and voucher assistance sector.

In 2023, the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross will:

- Develop contingency plans that will address the impacts of climate change in targeted areas
  - Train 10 trainers in the IFRC [Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments](#)
  - Support branches to establish disaster risk management working groups with public authorities, possibly alongside training in coalition building for community resilience
  - Support branches to align National Society programming with public authorities' contingency and emergency plans
  - Coordinate activities with the national emergency operations centre
  - Engage with national meteorological and hydrological services to support branches to access climate information, understand it and use it for community-level planning, engagement and decision-making
  - Revise and develop contingency plans (linked to the floods and drought [Early Action Protocols](#)), based on available risk mapping, vulnerability and capacity assessments and climate information, and including cash and voucher assistance
  - Support branches and communities in pre-positioning activities for flooding and drought early action protocols
  - Establish and train community early warning early action groups in their roles and responsibilities, jointly with other stakeholders
- Simulate the revised and updated contingency plans with communities
  - Implement a cash and voucher assistance programme to support people affected by crises
  - Develop and implement standard operating procedures for cash and voucher assistance

## Health and wellbeing

The [National Equatorial Guinea Health Plan](#) reports that the main health issues in the country are malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. Malaria remains a serious public health problem, as it is the cause of 37.3% of deaths. Despite the efforts of the Government and its partners to fight the disease, records show that only 55% of children under five years of age and 62% of pregnant women sleep under mosquito nets impregnated with long-lasting insecticides. Only 15% of children with a fever receive anti-malarial treatment, as specified by the established treatment protocol.

According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), 66,000 people in Equatorial Guinea live with HIV/AIDS. It is one of the few countries that have robust estimates of the number of new HIV infections since 2015. UNAIDS and the Government provide free HIV/AIDS treatment, but there are often substantial gaps in treatment access between districts. There is a difference in treatment coverage of more than 15% between districts in Equatorial Guinea. These marked disparities between districts underscore the importance of focused, data-driven planning at a sub-national level to address local barriers and accelerate the scale up of services, especially in areas that are further behind.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), Equatorial Guinea is one of the countries most affected by tuberculosis. Between 2006 and 2014, the number of diagnosed cases of tuberculosis (of all forms) increased from 420 to 1,220. From 2014–2015, the number of registered cases of tuberculosis increased from 153 to 172, of which 10% were new cases in 2015 and 62% were recurrences.

Although the socio-economic profile of the country has changed in recent years, the average proportion of households using water from an improved source is just 56%. This proportion is higher in urban areas (82%) than in rural areas (33%). 60% of households (67% in rural areas and 52% in urban areas) do not have an improved toilet.

In terms of rolling out the COVID-19 vaccine, the district of Malabo had the highest percentage of vaccinated

people in 2022 (over 50% with three doses), followed by Bata (about 30% with three doses). Baney is the district with the third most vaccinated people (less than 5% with three doses).

### Main actions and areas of support

The Equatorial Guinea Red Cross's main objectives are to contribute to the progressive and sustainable improvement of health conditions for vulnerable communities throughout the country, and to strengthen the National Society's capacities in water, sanitation and hygiene.

In 2023, the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross will:

- Develop a strategy for health, water, sanitation and hygiene
- Advocate to be included in national plans and policies
- Advocate for blood donation and carry out two blood donation campaigns each year across the country
- Make anti-retroviral treatment available for patients who are stigmatized and unable to go to health centres to collect their treatment
- Continue raising awareness in the fight against HIV/AIDS
- Train 125 first aiders in the provincial committees of Centro Sur, Wele-Nzas and Nkie-Ntem
- Conduct training of trainers for first aid instructors in Malabo and Bata
- Provide first aid equipment to eight committees
- Create 45 first aid brigades throughout the country

### Migration and displacement

The Equatorial Guinea Red Cross does not carry out activities specifically aimed at vulnerable migrants and displaced people, however, the National Society serves their needs through its main programmes, reflected in the other strategic priorities of this plan.

### Values, power and inclusion

Equatorial Guinea experiences issues around inequality and the social exclusion of marginalized groups. There is a need for further investment in initiatives, including those that support socio-cultural integration, advocacy and awareness-raising, through networks for civil society, women and young people.

The catastrophic explosions of 2021 led to protection issues. As well as the people physically affected, there

were reports of unusual behaviour in children who had been traumatized by the blast. The explosion destroyed many schools just two weeks before the start of the school year, compromising the return to school for many children. Some families were separated and displaced immediately after the explosions, and some parents had little choice but to split up their children between friends and family members due to lack of space and resources. With children potentially unsupervised, or beyond the reach of their usual guardians, there were higher risks of protection issues. The Equatorial Guinea Red Cross targeted the most vulnerable groups throughout its response.

### Main actions and areas of support

The Equatorial Guinea Red Cross identified gender and diversity as a thematic priority in 2019, creating a department dedicated to the issues of gender and diversity. In 2023, the focus will be on institutionalizing the protection, gender and inclusion approach across all operations. The National Society will aim to adopt a policy on the topic, and follow it up with training, the establishment of a reporting and data collection system, and the implementation of pilot projects on gender-based violence. The National Society is doing its best to ensure that services are accessible to everyone, especially people from marginalized groups, without discrimination.

In 2023, the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross will:

- Create 40 Red Cross clubs on Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change in high schools and communities across the country
- Deliver Movement induction training courses for 120 volunteers, covering humanitarian values and principles
- Develop, produce and disseminate a new protection, gender and inclusion policy that includes the prevention of gender-based violence and the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation
- Train gender and diversity department managers at the headquarters, and establish eight regional focal points on protection, gender and inclusion in operations
- Develop and disseminate harmonized evaluation data collection and reporting tools for all committees, including data disaggregated by age, gender and disability

- Include messages on the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence in all the sensitization work it carries out
- Initiate awareness-raising campaigns on sexual and gender-based violence in 40 schools around the country
- Institutionalize community engagement and accountability into all working practices, by integrating it into programmes and operations
- Establish a mechanism for managing complaints, including sensitive ones, at a national level

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## Enabling local actors

National Societies in Central Africa face common challenges around resource mobilization, volunteer capacity building, institutional capacity building for managers and financial management. The Equatorial Guinea Red Cross is committed to institutional strengthening and investing in its development.

The National Society will work to improve its financial sustainability by investing in the core pillars of:

- Accountability and systems development
- Resource mobilization
- Vision and mandate

### Main actions and areas of support

In order to effectively support the National Society in its development work, to become the trusted partner of choice for local humanitarian action with the capabilities to act in the global network, the IFRC will:

- Support the National Society to review its strategic plan and statutes
- Advocate with partners for the development or strengthening of a mechanism for pooling efforts and coordinating actions on National Society development
- Advocate for the strengthening of youth participation in the decision-making processes of the National Society's governing body
- Train young people in decision-making issues
- Support the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure that results and outputs are achieved as planned, and that data is disaggregated by gender and age group as much as possible
- Support the development of risk management plans and monitoring mechanisms for their implementation

In 2023, the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross will:

- Revise, develop and disseminate its manual of administrative, logistical and financial procedures, through a local or international consultant, depending on resources available, or through IFRC support
- Develop a strategy and action plan for mobilizing resources
- Develop policies on preventing fraud, corruption, discrimination and harassment, on child protection, and gender and inclusion, while developing a national action plan and relevant staff and volunteer training
- Organize a training and awareness workshop for staff, managers and volunteers on resource mobilization techniques, and the importance of accountability
- Support insurance cover for National Society volunteers

Staff at the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross are severely lacking information technology capacity. Training staff in computer literacy is therefore crucial, along with establishing basic information technology infrastructure. In 2023, the National Society will:

- Train staff to use computers and the internet for six months
- Create email addresses for all staff and make sure they use email regularly
- Cover the costs of internet access for the national headquarters and committees
- Purchase ten laptops for key staff in the headquarters and committees



# THE IFRC NETWORK

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## The IFRC

The IFRC supports the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross from its country cluster delegation in Yaoundé, Cameroon, which also covers Cameroon, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe. IFRC support to the National Society centres on strategic and operational coordination, National Society development, humanitarian diplomacy, and strengthening its auxiliary role.

In 2021, the IFRC supported the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross through a DREF allocation for [explosions](#) in Bata. The National Society had not used the DREF for over a decade, and the IFRC offered the required support for the operation. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the IFRC has supported the National Society's COVID-19 response through its [Global Emergency Appeal](#).

As part of these operations, and through ongoing collaboration, the IFRC provides technical support to the National Society in a wide range of areas.

## IFRC membership

IFRC membership engagement in Equatorial Guinea is limited, and the IFRC aims to involve the National Society in more peer exchanges and relevant platforms. The National Society is part of three IFRC Pan-African initiatives focusing on Tree Planting and Care, Red Ready and National Society Development. These initiatives are reflected under the relevant sections of this plan.

The Equatorial Guinea Red Cross has a long-term partnership with the **Spanish Red Cross**. Other National Societies provide support through the IFRC.

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## Movement coordination

The IFRC liaises with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on regional and sub-regional areas of collaboration, including support to National Societies in Central Africa. There is closer coordination during emergencies. This is carried out in line with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) principles and the newly adopted [Seville Agreement 2.0](#).

The ICRC provides financial and technical support to the Equatorial Guinea Red Cross from its Yaounde delegation. It provides support in first aid and emergency response, structural support, information technology equipment, running costs, and participation in regional trainings and meetings.

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## Coordination with other actors

In line with its auxiliary role, the National Society collaborates closely with the authorities in Equatorial Guinea.

The Equatorial Guinea Red Cross is part of COMPREC, the Government structure responsible for disaster-related matters. As part of its response to the 2021–2022 floods,

the National Society held coordination meetings with the central Government, local authorities and multilateral partners. It also collaborates with a range of other actors, including United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Development Programme.

### 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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