



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023 & 2024

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# OUR VISION

**“To be the leading humanitarian organization in Papua New Guinea enhancing the lives of the most vulnerable in Papua New Guinea”.**

The Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNGRCS) aspires to be the leading humanitarian organization in the country, committed to enhancing the lives of the most vulnerable individuals and communities. Through our unwavering dedication, we aim to improve the well-being and dignity of those in need, particularly during times of crisis or hardship.

Our vision focuses on responding to the humanitarian challenges faced by Papua New Guinea’s diverse population, from natural disasters to health emergencies and social inequalities. We strive to ensure that no one is left behind, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups such as people living with disabilities, women and children facing gender-based violence, displaced persons, and those in rural or remote areas with limited access to essential services.

By providing life-saving assistance, disaster relief, healthcare,

and social services, we work to reduce suffering, protect human rights, and foster resilience within communities. Our commitment to neutrality, impartiality, and independence ensures that we are trusted and respected as a neutral organization that serves the needs of all, regardless of background or affiliation.

We believe in empowering communities, promoting humanitarian values, and building partnerships with local authorities, government bodies, and international organizations. Through education, advocacy, and direct intervention, we are dedicated to creating lasting positive change, ultimately contributing to the advancement of a more equitable and compassionate society for all people in Papua New Guinea.

As the leading humanitarian organization, our vision remains rooted in our core values of humanity, impartiality, and voluntary service, ensuring that we remain a beacon of hope for those most in need across the country.

# OUR MISSION

**“Enhancing the lives of the most vulnerable in Papua New Guinea by mobilizing the power of humanity and delivering services that recognize and built upon our diverse culture and unique environment”.**

The mission of the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNGRCS) is to enhance the lives of the most vulnerable people in Papua New Guinea by harnessing the power of humanity and delivering services that respect and build upon the country's rich cultural diversity and unique environment. We are dedicated to addressing the urgent needs of those facing the greatest hardships, whether due to natural disasters, health crises, social challenges, or displacement.

We strive to mobilize the support of communities, volunteers, and partners to provide immediate relief and long-term assistance. By working together, we aim to reduce suffering, protect human dignity, and promote the well-being of all people, especially marginalized groups such as women, children, and those living in rural or remote areas with limited access to essential services.

Our services are tailored to meet the specific needs of Papua New Guinea's diverse population, taking into account the local customs, traditions, and environmental context.

We aim to empower individuals and communities by promoting education, raising awareness, and fostering resilience in the face of challenges. This approach ensures that our humanitarian efforts are sustainable and have a lasting impact.

As a neutral and impartial organization, we are committed to ensuring that our services are available to everyone in need, regardless of their background or affiliation. Our work is grounded in the principles of humanity, impartiality, and independence, and we continuously strive to build partnerships with the government, local authorities, and other organizations to achieve our mission. By responding to emergencies, improving livelihoods, and advocating for human rights, we are working to create a more resilient and compassionate Papua New Guinea for all.

# OUR STRATEGIES

**Building on its experience, the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society aspires to be the leading humanitarian organization in Papua New Guinea by continuing to build on its internal systems and capacities to prepare for and respond to disasters. Maintain Community Engagements for Community Resilience Building and enhance partnerships engagements at all levels.**

The Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNGRCS) aims to be the leading humanitarian organization in the country by continually strengthening its internal systems and capacities to better prepare for and respond to disasters. Building on our extensive experience, we are committed to enhancing our operational readiness, ensuring that we can provide timely and effective support during emergencies, and minimizing the impact of disasters on communities.

Central to our strategy is the focus on community engagement and resilience building. We work closely with local communities to ensure they are prepared for potential crises, equipping them with the knowledge and tools needed to respond to and recover from disasters. Through educational initiatives, training programs, and awareness campaigns, we empower individuals and communities to take proactive steps in disaster risk reduction and recovery.

In addition, we recognize the importance of strengthening partnerships at all levels. Our strategy involves deepening collaborations with the government, local authorities, international organizations, and other stakeholders. By building strong partnerships, we ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach to humanitarian assistance, allowing us to leverage resources and expertise to better meet the needs of vulnerable populations.

Through these efforts, the PNG Red Cross aims to foster a culture of resilience, where communities are not only prepared for emergencies but also empowered to recover and thrive in the face of adversity. By continuing to enhance our internal capabilities, engaging with communities, and forging lasting partnerships, we are working to build a more resilient and responsive humanitarian network in Papua New Guinea.

# **7 FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES**

## **THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS MOVEMENT**

### **HUMANITY**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, born of the desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavors, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

### **NEUTRALITY**

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

### **IMPARTIALITY**

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

### **INDEPENDENCE**

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

### **VOLUNTARY SERVICE**

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

### **UNITY**

There can be only one Red Cross or one Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

### **UNIVERSALITY**

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL**

### **Halo olgeta!**

I take this moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to our partners, volunteers, and staff for their dedication and support in the face of many challenges.

The years 2023 and 2024 have been defining for us, not just in the work we've done, but in the trust, we've built and the lives we've touched across the country.

Papua New Guinea is no stranger to hardship. From natural disasters to health crises and social challenges, our communities are often the first to be affected and the last to recover. Yet through it all, we have remained present listening, responding, and standing alongside those in need.

This was only made possible through the support of many generous partners and the strength of our people.

I want to extend our deepest thanks to our Movement partners—the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and our key donors, including: **USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)** for their consistent backing through the Red Ready and CEA programs, **Netherlands Red Cross and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs** for funding the Chronic Crises project, **Australian Red Cross and DFAT**, for supporting our Strengthening National Society efforts and the Enga landslide response and recovery, **Japanese Red Cross Society**, for investing in our Locally Led Climate Action and Protection, Gender, and Inclusion programs, **Korean Red Cross**, for supporting our ongoing disaster response, **the Singapore Red Cross**, for its generous contribution, the **Empress Shoken Fund** and **the King's Trust Fund** which has helped us expand our humanitarian reach across the country.



**Janet Philemon**  
**Secretary General**

Your support has translated into real impact, with our emergency responses reaching over 5,000 people, community-based first aid training that saved lives, climate and environment programs that empower youth and women, and growing local capacity in disaster preparedness, health, and inclusion.

Our volunteers continue to be the heart of our work, they have shown courage, skill, and compassion. We are forever thankful for your tireless efforts.

Looking ahead, our mission remains clear: to be there for the most vulnerable.

We are working to rebuild our stockpiles, improve local resilience, and invest in mental health, community-based health, and long-term recovery, particularly in places like Mulitaka, where we are planning health, gardening, and inclusion programs for 2025.

We also know we must continue building a stronger, more accountable National Society. The RESET initiative, supported by our partners and guided by the National Council, will ensure we move forward with transparency, purpose, and unity.

Our commitment is to the most vulnerable people of Papua New Guinea, and we will continue to stand by them, in times of calm and in times of crisis.

Thank yu tumas!

**Janet Philemon**  
**Secretary General**

**INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RED CROSS & RED  
CRESCENT SOCIETIES**

**Fund Transfers to National Society Year 2023 –2024**

Date	Project Name	Donor Name	PGK
2023	Red Ready OFDA	IFRC / USAID BhA	268,780.00
2024	Red Ready BhA (Phase III)	IFRC / USAID BhA	310,123.01
		<b>Total</b>	<b>578,903.01</b>
2023	DREF_PNG Civil Unrest	IFRC	58,608.23
2023	CEA BHA Funds	IFRC/USAID BhA	208,465.86
2023	Chronic Crises Funds	IFRC / Netherlands RC	166,416.09
2024	Chronic Crises Funds	IFRC /Netherlands RC	<u>183,737.10</u>
		<b>Total</b>	<b>350,153.19</b>
2024	Strengthening NS	IFRC / ARC	101,160.10
2024	DREF Enga Landslide	IFRC	104,103.11
2024	Community WASH Awareness	King's Trust Fund	14,333.49
2024	DFAT Enga Response & Recovery	IFRC / ARC - DFAT	254,870.16
2024	Empress Shoken Fund	IFRC	113,700.00
2024	Localy Led Climate Action	IFRC / Japanese RC	371,279.00
2024	Disaster Response Project	IFRC / Korean RC	138,500.00
2024	Donation	Singapore Red Cross	160,000.00
		<b>TOTAL PROGRAM FUNDS 2023 &amp; 2024</b>	<b>2,245,610.29</b>

# GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governance plays a vital role in ensuring Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society's accountability and adherence to internal and national legal standards. The General Assembly serves as the highest governing body, meeting biennially and consisting of representatives from provincial branches across the country. During these assemblies, key leadership positions are elected, including the National Chair, Deputy Chair, National Treasurer, and members of the National Council.

The most recent General Assembly, held from July 26–30, 2023, in Port Moresby, was a significant event for the National Society. During this session, the incoming members of the National Council were elected and introduced. These new leaders have played a pivotal role over the past 18 months in guiding the Society's work, ensuring that its activities remain aligned with the mission and values of the organization. Their leadership has been crucial in reinforcing the Society's commitment to humanitarian principles, while maintaining transparency and accountability throughout its operations.

Through this governance structure, the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society ensures effective decision-making and upholds its pledge to serve vulnerable communities across the country. The current National Council members have been instrumental in leading the RESET initiative, which aims to uphold accountability and transparency at all levels within the organization through a consultative process.

The next General Assembly will take place in June 2025, with the National Council's term running for two years until 2027.

This structure ensures continuity of leadership and accountability, allowing the Red Cross to effectively carry out its mission in Papua New Guinea.

In February 2024 the National Council took decisive action against the then Secretary General, when questions were raised regarding compliance with the Society's policies. Following his suspension, an initial investigation was mounted and he was subsequently removed. The National Treasurer, who had served as the Secretary General from 1996 to 2001, was appointed Caretaker while a new SG was recruited. During this time, the Council became aware of the many legacy issues, some going back decades, that were outstanding and realizing this was a significant encumbrance on any new SG, the Council determined to avoid this situation. Given the National Treasurer's wealth of institutional knowledge, she was contracted for one year with the mandate to clear up as many of the legacy issue as possible. The Council also established a position for a Deputy SG for one year, with the incumbent moving to the position of SG in July 2025.

The Council were aware of the systemic cultural issues across the Society and took the initiative to invest in and reset the PNGRCS culture and values, clear up existing internal issues and re-set the accountability standards and understanding of ways of working for the future was developed. The National Society applied for and were successful in receiving funding through the International Federation of the Red Cross Capacity Building Funds. Parallel to this the Australian Red Cross assisted in developing a three-year road map to strengthen the Society's finance systems.



# Finance and Audit Committee Report

In June 2023, the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNGRCS) elected four members to form a dedicated Finance and Audit Committee. This committee is tasked with providing expert advice on all financial matters affecting the Society. The Chairman of the Committee is the National Treasurer, who plays a crucial role in overseeing the financial integrity of the organization.

The Finance and Audit Committee serves a term of three years, with the possibility of being re-appointed for up to two additional terms, ensuring continuity and expertise in managing the Society's financial affairs. The primary function of the committee is to monitor and assess the financial health of the organization, review audit reports, and ensure compliance with financial regulations and best practices. By doing so, the committee supports the PNGRCS in maintaining transparency, accountability, and effective use of resources.

To ensure the committee's effectiveness, it is required to meet at least three months before the National Council meetings. These meetings provide an opportunity for committee members to review financial reports, discuss any financial challenges, and offer recommendations for improvements. Through these regular meetings, the Finance and Audit Committee plays an integral role in safeguarding the financial sustainability of the Society and upholding its commitment to responsible financial management. The committee's oversight ensures that the PNGRCS can continue to fulfill its humanitarian mandate with the utmost integrity and efficiency.

# Annual Report – 2023 & 2024

## Overarching Strategy: PNGRCS Develops Strong Humanitarian Partnership Influence and Network

Overarching Strategy: PNGRCS Develops Strong Humanitarian Partnership Influence and Network Humanitarian diplomacy is persuading decision makers and opinion leaders to act, at all times, in the interests of vulnerable people, and with full respect for fundamental humanitarian principles.

As an auxiliary to the Public Authorities in the humanitarian field and guided by the Fundamental Principles, the National Society works towards ensuring that it promotes its humanitarian agenda and influence partners to support work we do in the country to provide support to vulnerable people.

We will fully utilise Humanitarian Diplomacy to improve recognition of the Movements Fundamental Principles and its mandate as an Auxiliary to the Public Authorities, all decision makers and leaders at stakeholders, partners and to the public. We will strengthen partnership with the Government of PNG and private sectors to increase humanitarian access and space.



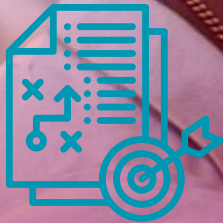
## Outcomes

### Enhanced Humanitarian Diplomacy

#### Outputs

- Improved communication and dissemination of Red Cross Principles and mandate and its auxiliary status to partners and the public
- Strengthened partnership with Government
- Strengthened partnership with private sector
- Strengthening operating structures with Branches





# OUR THREE Strategic GOALS:

Our strategic goals are based on our Fundamental Principles and are aligned to all members of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. They also contribute to major local and global humanitarian and development frameworks including the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Grand Bargain, the International Health Regulations and the Paris Agreement for Climate Change, alongside other major compacts and alliances we are committed to and to which the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement makes a clear and direct contributions.



# GOAL 1:

## PNGRCS and People in PNG Evolve Readiness and Response for Crisis and Disasters including Climate and Environmental Crisis

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### Outcome

**Effective disaster risk reduction and management including climate change program**

### Outputs

- Increased National Society capacity in disaster management to be better prepare to respond to disasters and crisis.
- Strengthen community resilience to mitigate, prepare and respond to any disasters or crises

## **Progress by the National Society against objectives – Climate Change**

- ▶ The Disaster Management coordinator was appointed and participated in the Anticipatory Action/EAP writeup workshop and PGI training in Fiji.
- ▶ An Anticipatory Action plan for drought had been drafted and will be implemented through the Chronic Crises project.
- ▶ The Youth and Volunteer Development Officer coordinated with UNDP and other NGOs for the coral reef restoration activity on the world environmental day. Two volunteers (two male) attended the activity.
- ▶ The Climate and Environment officer was trained on eVCA and Nature-Based Solutions in Fiji with other Pacific NS colleagues.
- ▶ The climate and environment officer participated in the Pacific Climate Hub workshop in Suva, Fiji, along with other Pacific national societies to gain knowledge and exchange experiences.
- ▶ 15 volunteers (three females, 12 males) participated in the environment clean up session and the PNGRCS HQ fence refurbishment. This activity was part of promotion of environmentally friendly awareness and messaging.
- ▶ Joint mangrove planting event was conducted on World Mangrove Day, which was celebrated on 26 July 2024. The NCD/Central branch organized for mangrove planting activities with a community, who had been advocating on mangrove planting. A total of 20 volunteers and HQ and IFRC staff attended the event. The event involved mangrove planting and raising awareness on the important of mangrove with the community members.
- ▶ The Youth and Volunteer officer and national Youth Representative participated in a Y-Adapt training in Micronesia. An information sharing on the Y-Adapt training was done with staff from the HQ office and IFRC PNG CD. And a training session was also conducted with nine (3 males & 6 females) volunteers from the NCD/Central branch.
- ▶ Japanese Red Cross funded new project: Locally Led Climate Action and PGI, which started since April 2024.



## Progress by the National Society against objectives – Disaster Preparedness

- ▶ Under the Red Ready project, a total of 64 participants, mainly volunteers and community members, WASH and COVID-19 activity - 22 male, 18 female; or a total of 35 male and 29 female) had participated in the Integrated Vulnerable Capacity Assessment (IVCA) assessment, and WASH and COVID-19 community assessment exercise in Madang and Milne Bay.
- ▶ EVCA Training: In 2023 and 2024, PNGRCS continued to strengthen its disaster response capacity by enhancing its preparedness programs. The organization conducted a series of community-based disaster risk reduction (CBDRR) initiatives, aimed at equipping local populations with the tools and knowledge necessary to prepare for and respond to disasters. These initiatives focused on building resilient communities, improving early warning systems, and promoting sustainable disaster risk management practices.
- ▶ A total of 39 volunteers and 2 staff (23M – 18F) were trained to facilitate the eVAC program in communities.

Community	Males	Females	Total
Milne Bay	6	8	14
Madang	5	10	15
Eastern Highlands	9	6	15
Western Highlands	15	6	21
Total	35	30	65

- ▶ A total of four trainings on Enhanced Vulnerability Capacity Assessment (EVCA) was facilitated in four branches; total 65 participants from Eastern Highlands (6 Female & 9 Male), Western (6 Female & 15 Male) Highlands, Milne Bay (8 Female & 6 Male), and Madang (10 Female & 5 Male). The trainings were conducted under the Red Ready phase III and Chronic Crises projects. The trainings conducted equip volunteers with skills and knowledge on topics related to community entry, response to disasters, community plans.
- ▶ Milne Bay and Madang branches supported their communities to develop the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) plans based on the IVCA assessments which had been done.

PNGRCS and IFRC PNG CD continue to participate in the monthly DMT (Disaster Management Team) Secretariate meetings, Highlands Humanitarian Hub and Enga Provincial coordination meeting in relation to the Enga Landslide. These meetings were held with other development partners and government relevant departments in relations to disaster and emergency response and management.

The Disaster Management (DM) Coordinator attended the DM Coordination workshop in Suva facilitated to strengthen disaster response and management skills through practical simulations and in-depth programmatic discussions. Key outcome of the meeting were:

➤ **Strengthen Operational Preparedness and Response:**

- Equip participants with the knowledge and tools to effectively manage disaster response operations,
- Clarify roles and responsibilities within disaster response teams to ensure efficient coordination and execution.

➤ **Enhance Understanding of Programmatic Aspects of Disaster Management:**

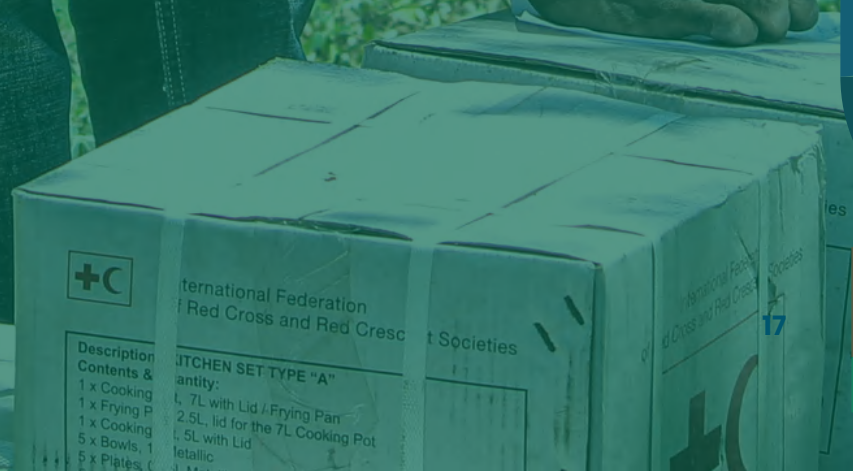
- Improve planning, reporting, and financial management skills,
  - Promote protection gender and inclusion (PGI) and community accountability within disaster management programs.
- A total of 7,404 pieces and set of Households Items (HHIs) mainly blankets, kitchen set, mosquito net, shelter tool kits and tarpaulins were procured through the Chronic Crises project, which was funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) through Netherlands Red Cross. The HHIs were be prepositioned in two key branches in Madang and East New Britain provinces that will be able to support any emergency response within their reach in a timely manner.
- Warehouse container refurbishment at Western Highlands Branch in Mt Hagen has progressed well with concrete footings, floor, damaged container maintenance and house roofing trust completed. Overall, 90 per cent of work completed and 10 per cent pending to be completed.





## Disaster Response

PNGRCS responded to five emergencies in 2023 and two in 2024; reaching 5,603 people and distributed over 9,000 reliefs items/NFIs.



- PNGRCS responded Yumi Yet fire in Port Moresby in which 39 households were affected. Twelve families were relocated within Yumi Yet estate. Three boxes and two bags of donated clothes and 12 hygiene kits were distributed to those fire victims.
- East Sepik Earthquake with 7.1 magnitude occurred on 3 April 2023. Eleven people were injured, and more than 800 houses were damaged and destroyed within multiple districts<sup>[1]</sup>. PNGRCS Madang Branch volunteers reached 931 people and 370 households (Ketrol, Kmbaamba, Maura, Yaboe, Nanten, Banimata, Ratan and two other villages) and provided relief items, such as 80 tarpaulin, 100 kitchen sets, 418 mosquito nets, 100 hygiene packs, 390 water containers and 128 blankets.



**Response in East Sepik Earthquakes.** Photo File: PNGRCS Madang Branch

- Gabagaba district in Central Province was hit by floods after unusual and unexpected heavy rain falls on 16 May 2023. Many areas and roads were under water and access was totally cut. Four houses were totally destroyed and another four partially destroyed. Distributions to the 20 families living in eight houses were hygiene kits and household kits (cooking pots, towels, water containers, buckets).
- PNGRCS responded to civil unrest – election related violence in the Highlands Region of PNG. IFRC Provided funding support for the NFIs a total of 5,487 NFIs were distributed to 3,030 people who affected and displaced.

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Photo: NCD volunteer Aikari Muri speaking with a victim of the flood.





# Responding to those affected by the civil unrest in the highlands

After hearing about the displaced population in 2022, Western Highlands Branch Emergency Response Team was activated to help the affected people. They conducted needs assessments in order to plan for humanitarian aid to assist with immediate need. With funding from the IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF), 588 families (3,088 people) in Jiwaka and Western Highlands were assisted.

Distributions of relief items done in communities affected include the following relief items:

Shelter Kits	Tarpaulins	Blankets	Mosquito Nets	Jerry Cans (10 Litres)	Hygiene Kits	Buckets	Sleeping Mats	Basin Bowls
47	504	1011	556	507	73	13	13	13

Distributions done in PNG Red Cross Western Highlands Province Branch Office include the following relief items:

Buckets	Tarpaulins	Blankets	Mosquito Nets	Basin bowls	Jerry Cans (10 Litres)
9	504	1011	556	507	73

- Mt Bagana Volcanic eruption – In response to the eruption of Mount Bagana in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. Branch volunteers supported the response in evacuation centers in Torokina and Wakunai; providing relief items which included; 215 tarpaulins, 210 collapsible jerry cans, 575 blankets and 178 pieces of kitchenware.



- Mount Ulawun eruption in West New Britain Province – 2023 The West New Britain Branch volunteers with support from staff from HQ responded. Following the initial assessments, relief items were distributed to support 58 Households (343 individuals – 209M 134F). The distribution included 72 Tarpaulins; 120 Mosquito nets; 44 hygiene kits; 109 Jerry cans and 119 blankets. In addition, 3 bales of mosquito nets and 13 boxes of face masks were given to the Ulamona Health Centre and 3 bales of mosquito nets and 8 boxes of face masks were given to the Bialla Health Centre.



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- 2024 - PNGRCS Madang branch volunteers responded to East Sepik flooding disaster with funding support from the British Red Cross – King Charles III foundation funding. Since funds received was small, PNGRCS was only able carry out an assessment on the situation and a few WASH activities. Coordinated through the IFRC and the British Red Cross.





# Mulitaka Landslide

On Friday, 24 May 2024, at approximately 03:00 a.m., a devastating landslide occurred in Yambali village, located within the Maip Mulitaka Local Level Government (LLG) of Lagaip-Porgera District, Enga Province. Initial reports from the provincial government and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) indicated a number of fatalities.

As the PNGRCS did not have any stock of relief items and the International Community; UN organisations, INGO's and international agencies rushed in with support we took our time to devise a longer term strategy for support. We finally reached the communities in June and established relations. Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) training for volunteers involved in the Mulitaka response was essential. A total of 21 participants (16 males and 5 females) attended. The PGI training is conducted to ensure that the volunteers focus on the needs and rights of all community members, especially vulnerable groups.

Mental Health, Psychological, and Social Support (MHPSS) have been an integral part of the ongoing response. Given the security challenges in organizing traditional in-house training sessions, the response team has adopted a more informal approach using storytelling sessions with affected individuals. This method has proven effective in allowing those who have experienced trauma to openly share their experiences and feelings. So far, 48 people, (29 men and 19 women) have participated in these sessions.

We also managed to establish data on the most vulnerable households, that will be the main recipients of our support. We are continually monitoring the state of the communities and will supply the 289 households once they are re-settling. This has allowed us time to re-stock and we have in total, 300 household Non-Food Items (NFIs) in Mt Hagen ready for distribution.

In 2025 we will also conduct some recovery activities in the community. The Volunteer Assessment Team held a debriefing session with community leaders to discuss the Red Cross approach and gained support required from the community leaders. Activities still pending for the Mulitaka response is the training of local health workers, teachers and community members Community-Based First Aid (CBFA).

This training is scheduled to take place in 2025 and will equip local personnel with critical first aid skills, enabling them to respond more effectively to emergencies within their communities. This training is a vital component of building local capacity and ensuring long-term resilience in the area. Other activities planned for recovery are: backyard gardening and sewing of re-usable menstrual pads. The Mulitaka response is holistic approach, addressing not only the physical needs of the affected population but also their mental health and community capacity building for future emergencies. Photo File: PNGRCS



## **GOAL 2:**

### **PNGRCS leads Resilient Communities against Growing gaps in Health and Wellbeing**

PNG faces several health issues ranging from Malaria, TB, HIV, cancer, and the occasional outbreak of epidemics like Polio and Measles due to less routine immunization and the non-availability of health infrastructure as per need.

The rates for child mortality remain high, more than 50% of cause of under-five deaths is malnutrition, more than 50% of children aged 6 to 59 months are stunted, and maternal mortality is four times higher than other Pacific islands, the highest in the Pacific Region and second highest in the Asia Pacific region (215 deaths per 100 thousand live births). Immunization coverage has been around 60% and not been changed for a decade. Access to health care services in PNG, especially in rural communities, is limited due to distance, cost and insufficient health facilities. One testimony from the World Bank Survey in 2018 stated that "health care costs are cited as one of the main reasons the poor do not visit health facilities in case of illness."

Basic needs such as water and sanitation are often not met. 87% of people live in the rural areas and out of those populations, only 39% of people have access to basic water sources, less than 15% of people in rural areas access to basic sanitation, only 46% of schools have basic water supplies and basic sanitation.

The PNGRCS will continue focusing on First Aid (FA) as the PNGRCS' core service. First aid is the first and immediate assistance given to any person with either a minor or serious illness or injury, with care provided to preserve life, prevent the condition from worsening, or to promote recovery. The PNGRCS aims to increase a number of certified first aid instructors at the HQ and branch levels to reach more volunteers and community members through our Community Based First Aid (CBFA) and to provide Commercial FA for organizations as an income generating activity.

## **Outcomes**

- Enabling and enhancing the delivery of more services
- Increased availability of First Aid training
- Effective support through distribution of PPEs across provinces

## **Outputs**

- Enhance Community health program
- Quality First Aid Training program delivered
- Enabling and enhancing the delivery of more services

## **First Aid**

A major milestone was reached late in 2024, when PNGRC joined the IFRC Global First Aid Reference Centre. A Level C instructor from Solomon Islands Red Cross Society facilitated a refresher First Aid training and ToT for seven staff and volunteers (5 male, 2 female) from PNGRCS. This is the first step in building a strong First Aid base for the National Society. The aim is to be self-sufficient in validating our instructors and having at least one FA trainer in each branch to conduct both commercial and community based first aid. The seven FA trainees have passed the ToT and are now certified Pacific FA instructors.

The First Aid (FA) programme is one of core functions and income generating activities to support the PNGRCS budget and provide some income for branch activities. The FA unit has been working with the communities and private sector to provide both community-based FA and commercial FA. A First Aid business development strategy was drafted with support from Australian Red Cross.

**A total of 2,329 (1733 males / 596 females) obtained their First Aid Certificates and a total of 164 (76 males / 88 females) had their CPR certification revalidated.**



## **Progress by the National Society against objectives**

- TOT training was facilitated in four branches East New Britain, Madang and Milne Bay, funded by IFRC under the Red Ready Project; where a total of 14 (7 male/ 7 female) new trainee facilitators were certified; Western Highlands and AROB funded by ICRC, with a total of 6 (4 male / 2 female). These new certified CBFA trainees co-facilitate in the CBFA trainings.
- Community Based Health & First Aid training was facilitated in Madang; Milne Bay and East New Britain branches. A total of      Community members were trained. The trainings conducted was to provide the skills and knowledge on how to apply first aid in the community and health awareness on communicable diseases.

## **WASH**

- Branch volunteers from East New Britain and Milne Bay conducted WASH in schools, which reached a total of 965 schoolchildren and 44 teachers. WASH was s 50 community members in Madang and Milne Bay Provinces under the Red Ready project. Hygiene information from the WASH program is also part of the CBHFA training.

## **PFA & MHPSS**

- A First Aid instructor attended and completed the regional Psychological First Aid (PFA) ToT and a PFA session was conducted at the CEA training with IFRC Regional MHPSS advisor. Twenty participants (9 Male and 11 Female) had attended the training.
- Training MHSSP was conducted With Western Highlands volunteers for intervention following the Mulitaka landslides. (*See the report under the Mulitaka response*).






## **Community Engagement and Accountability**

To build trust in communities, we need to understand and act on community feedback and local knowledge. Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) is a key approach that recognizes and values all community members as equal partners. By actively engaging with communities, we create space for dialogue, transparency, and trust, making our programs more effective and sustainable.

Through CEA, we not only empower communities to take part in decisions that affect them but also provide them with the opportunity to hold us accountable for our actions. By ensuring transparency in our work, we create a foundation of trust that strengthens the bond between the Red Cross and the communities we serve. Additionally, CEA helps us improve the quality and relevance of our programs by making sure that they reflect the realities and aspirations of the communities we work with.

### **We Continue to build the capacity of our Volunteers in Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), which will be integrated into all programs.**

-  16 participants (7 males and 9 females) attended the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) Training, alongside 4 staff members from the Head Office (2 males and 2 females).
-  Perception survey on Community Engagement and Accountability in COVID-19 project was conducted to address vaccination hesitancy. A total of 111 staff and volunteer (42 Female, 58 Male, and 1 unknown) had responded to the survey.
-  PNGRCS and IFRC PNG CD have engaged WHO and UNICEF in terms of public health in emergency and immunization activities including COVID-19 vaccination as part of coordination and potential collaboration.

- Under the CEA project, a total of 737 community feedback was collected, on the topic of COVID-19 and vaccine. Volunteer survey was conducted and collected 111 responses. IFRC Regional CEA team provided a full technical support and visited PNG to conduct the CEA training and community feedback sessions.
- CEA project baseline assessment result/context analysis report was published at Community Engagement Hub.



## **GOAL 3:**

### **PNGRCS promotes and mobilizes for Values, Power and Inclusion**

Gender equality remains a concern, with sexual and domestic violence rates extremely high and an estimated 69% of women experiencing assault during their lifetime. Poor economic growth is considered a direct result of governance inconsistencies, land development challenges due to inadequate land reforms, and a continued breakdown of law and order.

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- Joint celebration with the RCRC Movement partners (PNGRCS, IFRC and ICRC) during World Red Cross Day. The day was also celebrated at the branches with the theme for 2024; "Keeping Humanity Alive". A local radio station had also invited PNGRCS and IFRC on one of their programmes to talk about the World Red Cross Day. A special celebration was held with students from the Special Education school in Port Moresby, who presented songs using sign language and also spoke the PNG national pledge using sign language.
- The Disaster Management Coordinator, who is the PGI Focal person, attended a Pacific Regional Anticipatory Action Write-up workshop in Suva. Planning of PGI integrated activities will be focused in 2024.
- The Youth representative attended the Pacific Leadership meeting in Fiji in February and the eleventh Asia Pacific Regional Conference in Hanoi, Vietnam.
- Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) Building Trust project, Endline survey conducted in five branches in Autonomy Region of Bougainville, East New Britain, Madang, Morobe and NCD Central. A total of 558 people were interviewed during the survey. The project also conducted community feedback in six branches (East New Britain, Madang, Milne Bay, Morobe, Bougainville and NCD/Central) and reached 1,052 (589 Male; 463 Female) people and developed four case studies in terms of COVID-19 vaccination and PNGRCS trust.
- A total of 33 people attended the launch of the CEA Guideline was held on 27 March 2024, with development partners, branches representatives, IFRC PNG CD and PNGRCS staff.
- PNGRCS team had opportunity to do more awareness and publicity on the work of the Society, sharing of information about programming and emergency responses in PNG through participation in the Radio shows on the CEA project. It was estimated that around 10,000 people listening to this radio programme.





# OUR THREE ENABLERS

An Enabler is something which helps to position and propel an organization forward towards realising its mutually agreed and prescribed objectives or goals.

For an organisation to thrive it needs to have the foundational infrastructure, in Red Cross we call this a **“Well-Functioning National Society”**. The three actions under the enabling approach are interlinked and all contribute to a Well-Functioning National Society

These includes those attributes that enable an organization to run efficiently. Strengthening our foundations with a focus on trust and volunteerism to ensure that the National Society is a strong and effective local actor; connecting, influencing and working together and with other partners and harnessing our collective voice for humanitarian action. We must be future fit through digital transformation and with more independent and sustainable financing.

We will **enhance governance** through strengthening the foundational infrastructure (including policies, systems, structures, competencies and capacities) to ensure we are able to fully realise our auxiliary role and engage with the public authorities and civil society to influence and deliver effective humanitarian outcomes.

### Goal

To strengthen and improve the PNGRCS internal organizational capacity and delivery mechanism to be an accountable, effective and responsive organization.



# Enabler 1

## Engaged - with renewed influence, innovate and digital

Enabled-with renewed influence, innovate and digital" is a call for PNGRCS leaders to be re-equipped and re-energised with innovative initiatives with the help of latest digital technology to influence, to improve and contribute to better outcomes for the PNGRCS HQ and Branches.

### Outcomes

- Effective engagement including the use of technology
- Better communication, better informed and improved outcomes

### Outputs

- Strengthen internal and external communication for better engagement and improved performance.

## Progress by the National Society against objectives

- A Business Development plan has been developed which has been guiding PNGRCS in any fundraising activity to generate internal revenue to support the operations function of the national society. The main focus has been on the Commercial First Aid (CFA) Business plan which has potential to increase income revenue for the national society.
- A Business Development Manager was recruited in August 2023 to assist in formulating the business development plan. A fundraising dinner for PNGRCS disaster response was held with more than 160 people from corporate sector, UN agencies, embassies and the RCRC movement partners attending the event, which netted approximately K100,000 for the Society.
- PNGRCS General Assembly (GA) was conducted between 24 and 29 July 2023 in Port Moresby with IFRC and ICRC presence. The pre-GA workshops covered Red Cross Induction, role of headquarters and branches, finalised the volunteer procedures, obtained governance support for the development of a National Disaster Response Team. A proposal put to GA on the concept of Regionalisation received little support. However, the GA agreed in principle and ask for more information to be given at the 2025 GA. The GA held the GA with the presentation of reports and the election of the new National Council office holders and members.
- PNGRCS attendance to the PNG Disaster Management Team (DMT) monthly meetings, which is led by UNDP as the coordinating hub. Through these meetings, mainly on high level discussions are made relating to any emergency response and for better coordination into preparedness and repositioning with other humanitarian partners in the country.
- PNG RCS has continued to participate in WaSH and NFI cluster meetings for the Mulitaka landslide response both online and in person in Mt. Hagen. PNGRCS also participates in the Highlands Humanitarian Hub (HHH) meetings for the highland's region of PNG. During Enga landslide response, PNGRC Western Highlands branch has hosted the HHH meetings. In addition, PNGRCS has provided a transportation to Care International and save their lives while they were stuck in the middle of tribal clashes in Mulitaka, Enga.
- PNGRCS and IFRC PNG CD have started joining the Gender Equality and Women Empowerment Technical Working group hosted by the PNG Govt. Department of Community Development and Religion. Through this participation, the RCRC movement visibility and understanding of Govt. strategy have been increased.
- PNGRCS Secretary General (SG) and Youth Representative participated the eleventh Asia Pacific Regional Meeting between 20 and 23 November in Hanoi, Vietnam. All cost for PNGRCS SG and Youth Representative, such as traveling cost, accommodation, allowance, and insurance, were supported by the IFRC secretariat and IFRC Strengthening National Society project funded by ARC. The Ha Noi Call for Action and Youth Commitments 2023 were endorsed and all Asia Pacific NSs committed to implement upcoming four years.

## PNG RED CROSS ANNUAL REPORT 2023 & 2024

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- PNGRCS Youth Representative attended the Pacific Youth Forum and was a panel representing a voice from the Pacific NS Youth.



- The Statutory Meetings of International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Geneva: PNGRCS delegation formed with National Chairman, Secretary General and Youth Representative travelled to Geneva to attend three statutory meetings, namely IFRC General Assembly, Council of Delegate and International Conference in October 2024 (Statutory Meetings – Power of humanity);

- PNGRCS Autonomous Regional of Bougainville (AROB) Branch Officer, Aidah Kenneth was awarded the Restoring Family Link (RFL) medal. The National Chairman received the medal on behalf of Aidah who could not travel to Geneva due to Visa issues.
- PNGRCS's Media Development Initiative also played an important role in advancing the organization's engagement strategy. One of the highlights of this initiative was a panel discussion on "Volunteering for Development" held at the Stanley Hotel in Port Moresby. This event gathered 37 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and 78 participants to discuss the vital contributions of volunteer organizations to development in Papua New Guinea (PNG). The discussion was a collaborative effort involving PNGRCS, its movement partners—the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)—as well as organizations such as Y-Peer, Soroptimist International – Port Moresby, and the National Volunteer Service of PNG. The event underscored the importance of volunteerism in PNG's development and demonstrated the power of collaboration among various stakeholders.
- PNGRCS has also made significant strides in managing its Social Media Platforms. On Facebook, the organization's following has increased to 8,100, a growth of 200 followers. Engagement on the platform has also improved, with 800 posts attracting attention and interaction from the community. On LinkedIn, PNGRCS saw remarkable growth, with its followers increasing to 1,068, a surge of 500 followers. The organization also reached a major milestone by surpassing 10,000 followers on LinkedIn, expanding its reach and influence in the digital space.
- Our communication efforts also include participation in seven calendar events, such as radio talkback shows and online campaigns. These events allow PNGRCS to engage directly with the public, raise awareness about its activities, and foster deeper connections with its audience. The publication of feature interviews further strengthens PNGRCS's visibility and commitment to transparency, keeping stakeholders informed about the organization's progress and ongoing projects.
- The PNGRCS has been actively involved in shaping the legal framework that governs humanitarian work, particularly in the context of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). In partnership with the National IHL Committee, the organization has been contributing to the design, editing, and proofreading of the IHL Handbook in both English and Pidgin versions. This effort, which is being coordinated with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), aims to make vital humanitarian law more accessible to communities in PNG. The milestone of this project is particularly significant, as it coincides with the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions, the core legal document governing the protection of civilians during armed conflict.

## **Aidah Kenneth with the her Restoring Family Links Medal**



- The Secretary General Attended the International Law Pacific Conference and Round Table in Wellington NZ this was the first in many years and reinvigorated the role of National Societies working alongside their governments to promote IHL.
- Through these various initiatives, PNGRCS is making clear progress in strengthening its engagement strategy. The organization is positioning itself as a leader in the humanitarian sector in PNG, using digital tools and innovation to improve communication, enhance service delivery, and better respond to the needs of its communities. As the Red Cross continues to evolve, these efforts are expected to lead to even more effective and meaningful outcomes for those who rely on its services.



# Enabler 2

## Accountable – with an agile management and a renewed financing model

By ensuring trust and accountability, we can increase communication and feedback mechanism with the people and communities we serve, improve reporting system and quality with our donors, partners and the public and others across the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and develop, revise and utilize a set of policies, guidelines and manuals to ensure transparency. We must strengthen organizational structure and Governance, Human Resources, Finance and Audit and Logistics systems that support and reinforce integrity and compliance at all levels of the National Society.

We must identify and mobilise diversified financing by maximising local revenue, reinforcing the position of the National Society as a key humanitarian and volunteer organization with primary accountability to local stakeholders.

Through agile actions, we will invest more in our capacity at branch and community level and embrace a culture of ethical practice and place personal and institutional accountability at the heart of all of our work.

## Outcomes

- National Society transparency, accountability and compliance

## Outputs

- Strengthen National Society Management and financial accountability
- Strengthen governance systems to improve National Society accountability

# Progress by the National Society against objectives

- Finance Committee TOR was developed. Based on the TOR, PNGRCS initiated the recruitment of the committee member in May 2023 and completed the process in June 2023 with 4 committee members (M:3, F:1) selected, successfully establishing the Committee. The First Finance Committee Meeting was chaired by the National Treasurer in July 2023. The meeting agenda included the finance papers going before Council; the committee provide summary advice on these papers and supported accountability of finance and due diligence of processes. A schedule was agreed with meetings being held quarterly, two days prior to the meeting of the National Council.
- Key documents developed in this reporting period were Auxiliary Role Guidance, the Volunteer Procedures, was been developed during the General Assembly and the National Strategic plan 2030, was endorsed at the GA in July 2023.
- Working progress on the PNG Red Cross Law have started in this reporting period. Initial consultation with the Constitutional Law Reform Committee has been done to ascertain the process. This was briefly discussed at the GA, however the visiting IFRC delegate explained that in Indonesia, the process took seven years.
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- PNGRCS has continued to facilitate training and orientation of Red Cross Fundamental Principles during community-based activities, meetings with potential partners/stakeholders and importantly with the volunteers.
- Between 2023 and 2024 five branches completed the Branch Organisation and Capacity Assessment (BOCA). The assessment is a crucial way to learn about gaps and opportunities in which the HQ can be able to provide supports to build branch capacity based on the assessment outcome. Operational function continues to be a gap within the branches in which further support should be provided to ensure that the branches can fulfill their key roles and responsibilities and execute their programming in their respective branches.

- Four-hundred volunteers have been covered by insurance through IFRC certificate of insurance for volunteer accident programme by support from the Red Ready project.
- IFRC PNG CD has provided several technical supports on finance development, logistics, CEA, climate change and environment, disaster management, MHPSS and IM with support from IFRC.
- A project planning workshop was held between 1 and 3 May 2024 by PNGRCS with support from IFRC PNG CD. In total, 20 participants (nine male, 11 female) including selected staff and volunteers from the branches and HQ staff participated in the planning workshop. The aim was to have Branches voices included into the activities while they were to implement; develop detailed implementation plans and budgets for the projects implemented in 2024 and ensure more branch participation and engagement in the process. The IFRC PNG CD team also presented a session on the Unified Plan and its report and how each project is linked to the different Strategic Priorities in the IFRC and the PNGRCS Strategic Plans 2030.
- PNGRCS Logistics Officer and IFRC Administration/Procurement officer had attended IFRC APRO one-week training on procurement from the 3 to 6 December 2024 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The training provided the officer with crucial insights into the procurement process, offering new perspectives in the role and had broadened understanding of procurement and being confident to apply these learnings on logistics and procurement within PNGRCS.
- Australia Red Cross (ARC) FD specialist has been working closely with IFRC PNG FD coordinator on developing and implementing the FD Action Plan. Also, ARC FD specialist has supported FD coordinator and PNGRCS finance team to participate in the Pacific Finance Network meeting.
- Based on the finance development (FD) assessment and recommendation by IFRC APRO NSD coordinator, PNGRCS has developed the FD action plan supported by IFRC FD coordinator and Australian Red Cross FD specialist. This FD action plan is part of the greater NSD roadmap and the PNGRCS Finance Committee has provided inputs and engaged for an implementation.
- PNGRCS has re-joined the Pacific Finance Development Network and enjoyed a peer-to-peer knowledge sharing.
- PNGRCS Deputy Secretary General (DSG) position has been newly created as part of the NSD roadmap. DSG has attended the Movement Induction Course (MIC) in China in November 2024 and increased her understanding of the RCRC Movement, Governance and leadership. This trip was jointly supported by IFRC and ICRC.
- IFRC PNG Senior Finance Officer and FD Coordinator has been working with PNGRCS Finance team on improving knowledge on finance management, acquittals, budget versus actual expenses and MYOB: a software solution that helps managing finances, accounting, payroll, and inventory, for example.
- IFRC PNG FD Coordinator travelled to Mt Hagen (Western Highlands Branch (two male)) and East New Britain (eight female and seven male) to provide a basic finance training at the branch level. Those two missions were collaborated with DREF and Red Ready II project.
- IFRC PNG and PNGRCS have managed to have a regular finance meeting on a monthly basis to discuss specific topics and information sharing. IFRC APRO FD coordinator and ARC FD specialist has been attending this meeting as technical advisors.

- On behalf of PNGRCS, IFRC HoD attended the Core Costs and Financial Sustainability (CCFS) Initiative design workshop in Fiji to discuss and design a second phase of Pacific CCFS Initiative. The workshop aimed to achieve following objectives and ensure to be more flexible, long term and efficient:
  - Engage diversity of thought, ideas and experiences of CCFS to explore where it has come from and what its future could look like,
  - Drive the big picture, long-term thinking around financial sustainability for NS in the Pacific,
  - Link reflections and lessons of the initiative to forward-thinking and insights.
  
- PNGRC National Society Development Roadmap began in September, with support from IFRC. PNGRCS national council and SG requested a process / programme to tackle ongoing issues and reset, refresh and rebuild the PNGRCS. IFRC NSD consultant was recruited to support the process and work on the PNGRCS NSD Roadmap. NSD consultant visited twice in September and December for information gathering, planning, documentation and preparation of a reset workshop in January 2025. All work has been led by PNGRCS and coordinated among PNGRCS council and SG.
  
- The roadmap has a focus on culture, leadership, integrity and accountability and resourcing change to reset the PNGRCS foundations back to a zero-starting point. Resetting the foundations will become a primary focus of time and effort of the PNGRCS national council and management, with the backing of the IFRC PNG secretariat through to the 2025 national General Assembly in June 2025. A brief summary of six practical focus areas for the roadmap are below:
  - ① Reset of Organisational Culture at the Administration/Headquarter level,
  - ② Reset of Branch Culture and process (membership/volunteers at the branch level),
  - ③ Management Systems Reset,
  - ④ Legacy Issue Taskforce (The Task Force),
  - ⑤ Improved governance processes (national council performance),
  - ⑥ Secretary General Transition.



# Enabler 3

## Trusted, Valued and Owned

We support ethical practice to gain the trust of and support of beneficiaries, volunteers and stakeholders through existing statutes, policies and other instruments. Monitoring compliance will become an annual action to ensure that we remain on track.

Our action will put a greater focus on the development of branches to ensure services are led and developed by local actors and in ensuring they have a sustainable resource mobilisation and a stronger voice in any decisions being made about operations in their own territory. Through this Strategy for the next decade, we hope to inspire and mobilise more youth and volunteers. We must continue to invest in expanding the inclusiveness and diversity of all volunteers and the opportunities available to them, in engaging with the energies and talents of self organizing groups and in connecting all volunteers across countries and regions through, for example, digital volunteering and online action.

## Outcomes

- Effective approaches to improve National Society credibility

## Outputs

- Strengthen National Society accountability to enhance services to beneficiaries, and gain the support of volunteers and stakeholders
- Enhanced National Society (NS) resource mobilisation for sustainability

## Key Outputs of the Strategy:

- 1 Strengthening National Society Accountability to Enhance Service to Beneficiaries and Gain Support from Volunteers and Stakeholders:** PNGRCS's efforts to foster trust and accountability will have a direct impact on its ability to serve its beneficiaries effectively. By continuously improving the transparency of its operations and decision-making processes, PNGRCS will enhance its credibility among stakeholders, ensuring that resources are used efficiently and that services are delivered to the highest standard. In addition, by engaging volunteers and stakeholders in meaningful ways, the organization will generate stronger support for its work, which is essential for maintaining its impact and reach.
- 2 Enhancing National Society Resource Mobilization for Sustainability:** PNGRCS understands that the key to ensuring long-term sustainability is a strong, diversified resource base. This includes financial resources, as well as human resources in the form of volunteers. PNGRCS will continue to build and improve its resource mobilization strategies, focusing on both traditional methods and innovative approaches, such as digital fundraising and partnerships with other organizations. This will allow PNGRCS to better serve its beneficiaries and strengthen its position as a key player in humanitarian efforts in Papua New Guinea.

# SIGNIFICANT HIGHLIGHTS



## 34th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent:

Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent serves as a critical platform for PNGRCS to engage with 191 National Societies, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and various state actors. Attending this conference are the National Council Chairperson, the Secretary General, and the National Youth Representative, ensuring that PNGRCS is actively involved in discussions surrounding humanitarian issues and global responses to challenges.



## Youth Engagement in Climate Change:

Climate change is one of the most pressing global challenges, and its effects are projected to worsen over time. Recognizing the critical role of young people in driving awareness and action on this issue, PNGRCS is empowering youth to take the lead. In October 2024, nine volunteers from the National Capital District and Central Province participated in the Y-ADAPT program, a youth-driven initiative designed to build resilience and promote climate change adaptation. This program will not only enhance youth leadership but also contribute to the wider global efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change.



# SUCCESS STORIES

## Success story from using alternative MHPSS process as need assessment in Enga Landslide Response

With the Mulitaka landslide response, PNGRCS was fortunate to have two female volunteers from affected areas in Mulitaka and those two have been active in liaising with the PNGRCS Field Coordinator in providing situational information on the ground with regard to security and activities. Based on that information, the Field Coordinator has updated Disaster Management Coordinator and SMT at HQ to make inform decisions on security, staffs' safety and safe response activity planning and implementation during the on-going security situation in Mulitaka.



## Community Engagement and Accountability in Covid-19: Unfolding apprehension in Morobe

Following the successful implementation of community engagement and accountability (CEA) in COVID-19 initiative in Madang Province, a pivotal step was taken to replicate the approach in Morobe Province. Recognizing the significance of extending the positive impact achieved in Madang, a CEA Officer from the headquarters (HQ) and the Senior CEA Officer from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Nepal flew down to Morobe Province to conduct similar activities. The collaborative effort aimed to adapt the lessons learned and best practices from Madang, ensuring the seamless integration of community engagement and accountability principles in Morobe. The experience gained from Madang Province served as a valuable foundation, emphasizing the importance of involving local communities in the process to foster trust, transparency, and sustainable development.



The case study examines the integration of Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) principles in Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea, as part of the COVID-19 response. Building on the success of a similar initiative in Madang Province, this effort aimed to engage local communities, counter misinformation, and promote vaccine awareness through face-to-face interactions.

A team, including a CEA Officer from HQ and a Senior CEA Officer from IFRC Nepal, led the initiative. Volunteers engaged locals in discussions about COVID-19 vaccines, routine immunization, and hygiene promotion. A total of 190 feedback responses were collected (103 males, 86 females, 1 non-binary). Engagement took place across four communities: Disability Homes of Papuan Compound, Admin Compound, Ol Lae Airport, Yalu Monzi Community, and Bumbu Suburb.

Some misinformation and vaccine hesitancy were such a challenge. Some individuals believed vaccines were linked to cult activities, religious punishment, or laboratory failures. Social media and word-of-mouth spread misinformation. Also, declining motivation to follow preventive measures due to prolonged restrictions and fear. Besides, many relied on local traditions for protection against COVID-19.

### **Positive Takeaways:**

Community participation and ownership played a crucial role in increasing engagement and building trust within the community. Tailored communication using local languages significantly improved understanding, ensuring that key health messages were accessible and relatable. Collaboration with community leaders and women's groups further expanded outreach, leveraging existing networks to strengthen the impact of the initiative. Integrating multiple health topics, such as vaccination and hygiene, in discussions proved to be an effective approach, maximizing the utility of community meetings. Trusted local figures, including health workers, were instrumental in countering misinformation, as their credibility helped reinforce accurate information. Additionally, establishing a feedback mechanism enabled real-time adjustments, allowing the initiative to be responsive to community concerns and evolving needs.

### **Challenges & Areas for Improvement:**

Overloading communities with information often led to confusion, making it challenging for individuals to fully grasp key health messages. Resistance to change, particularly regarding vaccine acceptance, remained a significant barrier, requiring targeted approaches to address fears and misconceptions. Additionally, logistical constraints hindered the smooth implementation of activities, limiting the reach and effectiveness of the initiative. Vaccine hesitancy persisted, highlighting the need for tailored strategies to counter misinformation and build public confidence. Despite these challenges, the initiative successfully enhanced the visibility of the PNGRCS and initiated discussions on establishing a national feedback and response mechanism. Moving forward, future programs should prioritize simplifying health messages, addressing resistance through community-driven approaches, and improving logistical planning to ensure sustained and meaningful engagement.

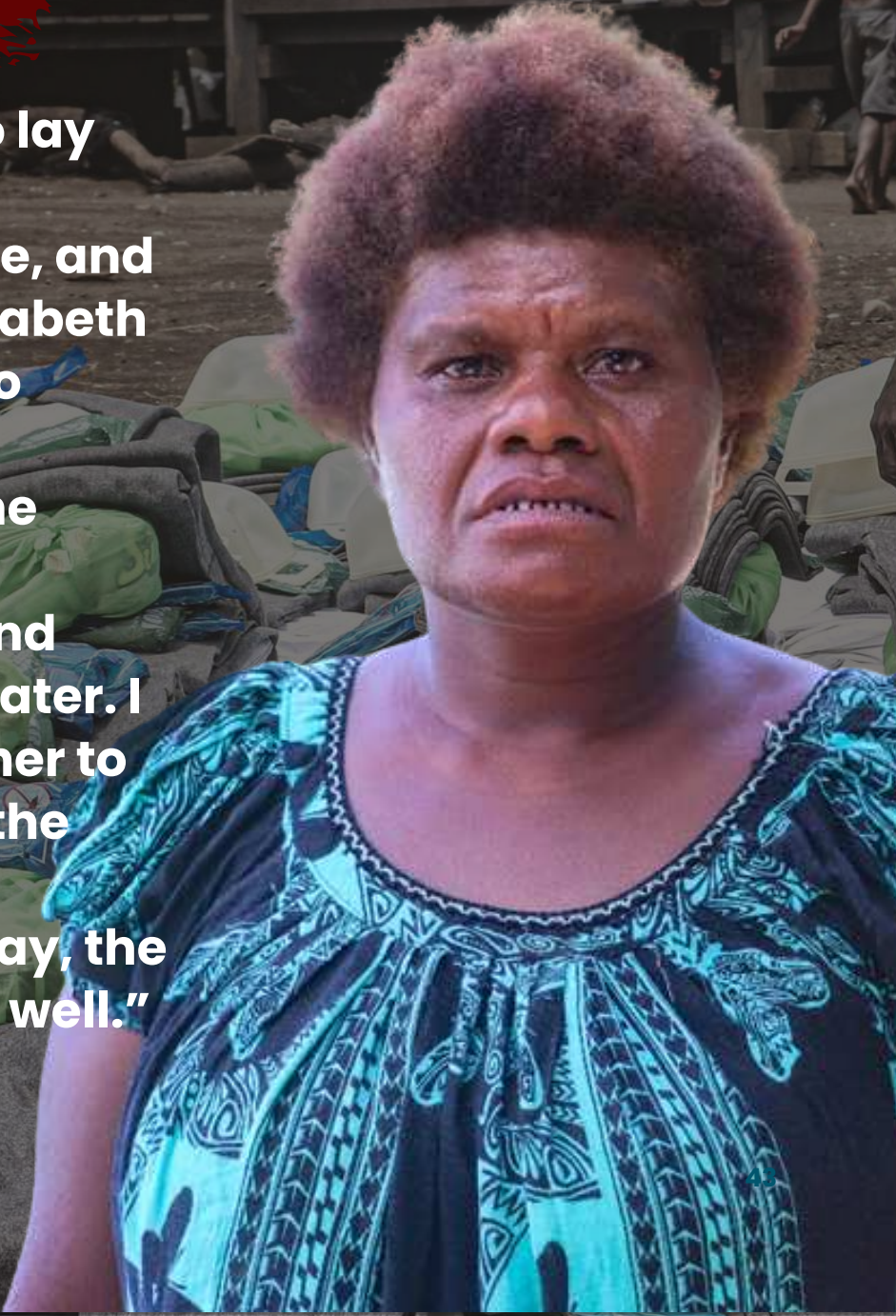
Despite these efforts, vaccine uptake remained a challenge. In June 2021, over 300 people were vaccinated within a month, primarily those requiring it for work or travel. However, misinformation and stigma quickly led to a decline in vaccinations, with reports of aggressive resistance, including attacks on vehicles displaying vaccine advertisements. By November 2023, only four per cent of PNG's population had completed the full vaccine series. Key lessons from this initiative highlight the effectiveness of leveraging local partnerships to enhance trust and the role of community-driven vaccination sites in improving accessibility. However, overcoming vaccine hesitancy remains a major obstacle, exacerbated by fear, religious beliefs, and limited access to healthcare facilities.

Looking ahead, PNGRCS recognizes the need for continued engagement to address persistent misinformation and distrust surrounding COVID-19 vaccines. The 2024 PNG Endline Survey emphasizes the importance of increased awareness efforts, particularly among community leaders, teachers, and parents. PNGRCS plans to intensify its outreach efforts by refining its messaging and expanding engagement initiatives to encourage routine immunization uptake. Strengthening funding support and sustaining collaboration with local organizations will be essential in ensuring long-term public health benefits.



# Mother of 6 Uses First Aid Skills to Help Community

**“I told the man to lay the baby down, checked the pulse, and started CPR,” Elizabeth recalls. “After two rounds of chest compressions, the baby regained consciousness and spat out all the water. I advised the mother to take the child to the health centre for observation. Today, the baby is alive and well.”**



Elizabeth recently participated in a Health and Community-Based First Aid (CBHFA) training conducted by the Papua New Guinea Red Cross Society (PNG Red Cross) under the Locally Led Climate Change and Adaptation and Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) funded by the Japanese Red Cross Society through the International Federation of Red Cross PNG mission office in PNG. This training didn't just equip her with skills—it has empowered her to save lives and promote health and safety in her Island village. Elizabeth is one of 37 participants who recently participated in the training.

### **Elizabeth saves a 1-year-old boy**

In early January, during a high tide, a tragic incident occurred on the shores of Mualim Island. A toddler, just a year and a half old, was playing on the beach with other children when the waves grew stronger and swept the child into the deep sea. A woman walking along the shore, saw the child floating in the sea and let out a desperate scream for help, alerting the nearby community. The child's mother realizing the baby was hers, rushed to the water, pulled the baby out from the sea in a desperate attempt to save the boy's life but he had already drowned.

In a moment of panic, she handed the baby to a nearby man, who held the child upside down in an attempt to expel the water out of the child's body—a common but dangerous misconception on the island. Fortunately, Elizabeth was at home when she heard the screams and shouting, she ran as fast as she could to the scene.

**“I told the man to lay the baby down, and quickly checked the pulse, and started CPR,” Elizabeth recalls. “After two rounds of chest compression, the baby regained consciousness and spat out all the water. I advised the mother to take the child to the health centre for observation. Today, the baby is alive and well.”**



*Elizabeth Hensel with the boy she saved from drowning and his mother at Mualim Island*

## **Climate Change Is a Growing Threat in the Islands**

Elizabeth's story is not just about her heroism; it's also a stark reminder of the challenges her community faces. Rising sea levels are swallowing their island, inch by inch.

"The sea is moving inward, and the island is becoming smaller," Elizabeth explains. "But our population is growing, so the density is increasing. We have nowhere to go because this is our customary land."

The Papua New Guinea Red Cross, with support from the International Federation of Red Cross, is carrying out the PNG Locally Led Climate Action Project across four provinces in Papua New Guinea. This project aims to address climate change and promote community-based disaster risk reduction activities. It also focuses on various activities to empower women and youths on gender equity, food security and environment sustainability.



Mualim Island, Duke of York, East New Britain

The impacts of climate change are felt daily. Families in the Island now pay K10 monthly to rent land on the main island for backyard gardening, as their own land size decreases making no space for planting food crops. Children risk their lives canoeing to school on neighboring islands, battling rising tides and unpredictable weather. "When the sea levels rise, it becomes harder and riskier for our children to commute," Elizabeth says. "We are trapped between the sea and the sky."

## **Promoting community Health and Safety**

Elizabeth's Health and first aid skills have made her an advocate in her island community motivated by struggles of the past. She now educates other mothers on the importance of never leaving children unattended.

**“Before we received the training, we lost three babies while trying to refer them to the nearest hospital,” she shares. “It takes 45 minutes by dinghy or 1-2 hours by canoe. Now, we can save lives immediately. We regret not having this knowledge sooner.”**

The training also covered childbirth, a critical skill in a community where 2-3 babies are born each month. “Before, mothers would struggle to deliver babies as the nearest health centre is on another nearby island,” Elizabeth explains. “Now, we have the knowledge to help deliver babies safely here if we are not able to go to the health centre on time.”

Elizabeth’s story is a powerful reminder of the importance of locally led climate adaptation and building resilience in isolated communities. “We would like to undergo similar trainings in the future, especially on climate change and PGI,” she says. “Refresher trainings would also help us retain and expand on what we have learned.”



PNGCS and IFRC staff, volunteers and Honoka Ota from the Japanese Red Cross at the certificate presentation for the 37 participants.



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