



*Flooding in the municipality of Carrillo  
in the province of Guanacaste  
Credit: Costa Rican Red Cross*

## Who are we?

The Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance is a multi-sectoral partnership focusing on finding practical ways to help communities in developed and developing countries strengthen their resilience to flood risk.

### Our definition of resilience:

The ability of a system, community, or society to pursue its social, ecological, and economic development and growth objectives, while managing its disaster risk over time in a mutually reinforcing way.

**Vision:** Floods have no negative impact on people's and businesses' ability to thrive.

**Goal:** To increase social, political, and financial investment in community-based flood resilience-building through public, private, and third sector partnerships.



Significant flood damage to the road complicates access to the communities  
Credit: Costa Rican Red Cross

### Impact of flooding in Costa Rica

In Costa Rica, drivers of vulnerability such as unplanned population growth, poor distribution and use of land, and the mountainous and steeply sloping terrain have led to great ecological imbalances. One of the consequences is devastating flooding with sudden overflows.

In the plains, floods are mainly produced by prolonged rains where the water level rises slowly, causing losses mainly in crops and basic services. There are also very intense rains, which cause landslides, which can then turn into mudslides. Flooding is very frequent and causes recurrent damage to agriculture, housing, commerce, and vital lines of communication as well as isolation and loss of human life.

The La Estrella, Limoncito, Banano, Reventazón, Matina, and Pacuare rivers, in the Limón province, and the Tempisque river, in the Guanacaste province, are among the rivers with the highest frequency of flooding, with return periods between 1 and 5 years.

All this confirms the need to work on strategies to analyse and understand the causes and consequences of these events and to mitigate their impact.

### Alliance partner working in Costa Rica



**Cruz Roja Costarricense**

The Costa Rican Red Cross is a voluntary, private, and public interest humanitarian institution and an active member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It is dedicated to alleviating human

suffering in all circumstances and promoting mutual understanding, cooperation, and lasting peace among all people. It serves as an auxiliary to the public authorities in Costa Rica, supporting humanitarian activities in an impartial and independent manner.

The Costa Rican Red Cross has led the planning and execution of training activities at the regional level and has strategically incorporated the promotion and implementation of the Route to Resilience into its national, regional, and local planning. The Route to Resilience provides a guide for improving the approach to risk reduction and resilience in the nine regions of Costa Rica, mainly in the most vulnerable communities.

The purpose of the flood resilience project is to gather and use practical experiences in the country (at the national, regional, and local levels) through research to analyse national regulations, coordination mechanisms, and the regulatory framework for disaster risk reduction (DRR), with a focus on community flood resilience. The project includes a detailed study of national regulations, applying the Checklist on Law and DRR of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies as a baseline to develop an advocacy strategy.



The Costa Rican Red Cross supports communities in the municipality of Carrillo during flood emergencies  
Credit: Costa Rican Red Cross

The goal of the project is to benefit the communities in the country that are affected by disaster threats and impacts every year. To achieve this goal, it is essential to involve authorities at the municipal, regional, and national levels in the development of an instrument that allows them to advocate for better disaster risk management.

## Our objectives in Costa Rica

### General purpose:

Identify the applicable Costa Rican regulatory framework for DRR for floods, including recommendations and proposals for improvement, to guide compliance with binding agreements and initiatives for risk reduction, and to strengthen national legal frameworks.

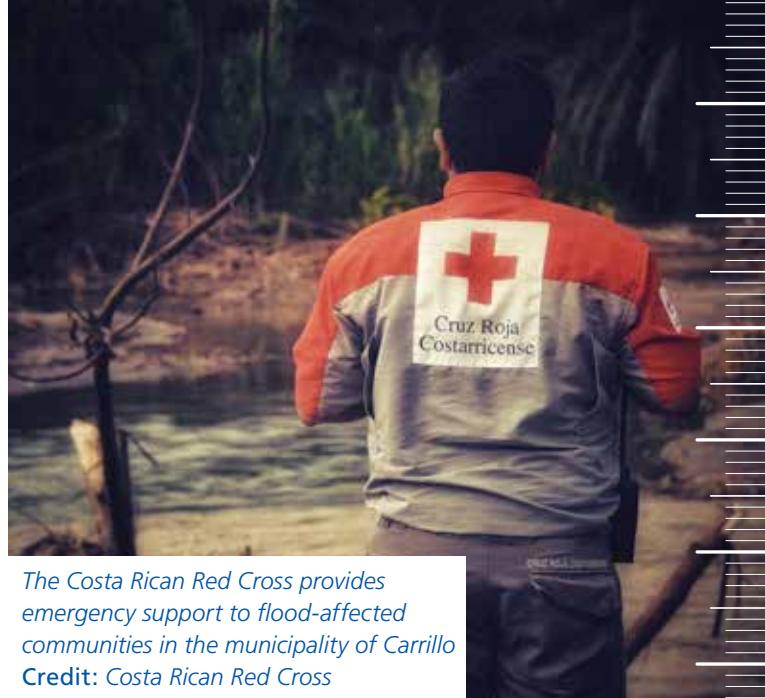
### Specific goals:

- Recommend the generation of policies, plans, guidelines, strategies, and established municipal frameworks in accordance with the comprehensive disaster risk management policy (GIRD, Gestión integral del riesgo de desastres).
- Achieve good practice and learning in disaster risk management, based on field experiences and analysis of specific contexts.
- Reinforce the coordination mechanism at the national, provincial, and municipal levels, between the different management mechanisms.
- Strengthen national, provincial, and municipal capacity for community resilience to floods.
- Improve the governance and regulatory disaster risk management framework.

## The communities we are working with

Many resilience-building actions can be taken at community level, as communities often know best how and where they need to build resilience. Working with communities, we can demonstrate tangible impacts on people's lives and learn from best practices that can help to shape policy at a higher level.

Under the flood resilience project, the Costa Rican Red Cross is currently working with seven municipalities in the Guanacaste and Limón provinces. In Limón, the project is working in Matina, Siquirres, and Talamanca. In Guanacaste, the project is working in Cañas, Bagaces, Carrillo, and Santa Cruz. These municipalities were selected because they are representative of the Pacific coast (Guanacaste) and the Caribbean coast (Limón). They also have important flood histories caused by the combination of the impacts of hydrometeorological events with conditions of vulnerability in the communities.



*The Costa Rican Red Cross provides emergency support to flood-affected communities in the municipality of Carrillo*  
Credit: Costa Rican Red Cross

## Duration of the Costa Rica flood resilience programme: April 2019 – August 2021



*The Costa Rican Red Cross delivers humanitarian aid to communities that are difficult to reach after heavy floods*  
Credit: Costa Rican Red Cross

## The Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities



*The Costa Rican Red Cross meets with the National Risk Management Directorate in San Juan de Tibás, San Jose*  
Credit: Costa Rican Red Cross

The Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities (FRMC) framework comprises two parts: the Alliance's framework for measuring community flood resilience and an associated tool for implementing the framework in practice.

### Uses of the FRMC:

- As the first measurement of resilience to be applied on a large scale; fully integrated into community programming
- To help analyse problems before seeking solutions
- To support impact measurement
- To generate data for empirical evidence on flood resilience

## The Flood Resilience Portals

The Alliance's Flood Resilience Portals are online spaces for sharing practical knowledge about why and how to build community flood resilience. They bring together the knowledge generated and exchanged through the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance and beyond.

 [www.floodresilience.net](http://www.floodresilience.net)

 [www.foinundaciones.com](http://www.foinundaciones.com)



In partnership with:



## Contact

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