



## A PATHWAY TO FLOOD RESILIENCE IN MEXICO

### IMPACT BRIEF ON THE FLOOD RESILIENCE PROGRAM

2018 - 2024

By leveraging the [Flood Resilience Measurement for Communities](#) (FRMC) framework, the program supported local populations to build resilience and integrated their insights and experiences into both local actions and national strategies. Local voices and lessons learned were documented and shared to support policy influencing and scaling up through the Red Cross network.

The [Mexican Red Cross](#) is a pivotal actor within the disaster management framework in Mexico. With the aim of strengthening community resilience and reducing the impact of floods, the Mexican Red Cross, together with the [International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies](#) (IFRC), formed part of the [Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance](#) (the Alliance).

Approximately 62% of the population in Mexico resides in flood-prone areas and floods represent the most frequent and damaging natural hazards in the country. As part of this program, the Mexican Red Cross strengthened resilience in rural communities of the state of Tabasco and urban and

peri-urban areas of the state of San Luis Potosí, primarily in the face of riverine flooding caused by heavy upstream precipitation, the impact of tropical cyclones and the management of hydrological infrastructure. Best practice and lessons learned have contributed to prompting broader impact at the subnational and national levels.

As part of the Alliance, the Mexican Red Cross has implemented a diverse range of evidence-based resilience building interventions and has scaled up best practice in collaboration with local communities and influenced policies and strategic plans in line with Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) experts and policymakers.



## Families have the knowledge and skills to protect their lives and livelihoods.

- First aid trainings.
- Local resilience fairs.
- Risk awareness raising activities through radio and social media.
- Family emergency plans and backpacks.

*We hadn't heard of emergency plans and we didn't have one, but now our Family Emergency Plan helps us to be better organised and to know what to do in the event of a flood.*

Romelia, program participant,  
Ranchería La Unión, Tabasco

**+129,000**

## lives improved

*New attitudes and behaviours that have a deep and sustained positive impact on people's lives.*

**+3,000,000**

## indirect reach

*Estimated population that benefits from community interventions, scaling up and influencing initiatives, as well as awareness raising campaigns.*



Resilience work carried out in communities in urban and rural contexts, as well as with government actors at all levels, academia, NGOs and others.



## Communities are more organised, committed and connected.

- Communication of FRMC results to key stakeholders.
- Community brigade formation and trainings.
- Community Emergency Plans and Early Warning System protocols.
- School-based flood preparedness activities.
- Strengthening community health through water and sanitation actions.

*It has been very useful for us to learn how to raise awareness to promote better hygiene habits in the community; for example, I learned how to communicate information in a practical, localised way.*

Martín, Representative of community health centre, Oxolotán, Tabasco



## Flood resilience is prioritised and implemented by diverse sectors in collaboration.

- Strategic partnerships at local, regional, and state levels.
- National Strategy for Resilient Communities.
- Training teachers as resilience replicators.
- Inter-institutional workshops.
- Replication through Red Cross programs and networks.

*Resilience doesn't exist independently; for us, resilience means generating synergies from and between communities, institutions and sectors.*

Brenda Ávila Flores, Lead, National Disaster Risk Reduction Program, Mexican Red Cross

# INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING

As part of the Alliance since 2013, the Mexican Red Cross has undertaken a process of institutional learning, resulting in important lessons learned:

- Creation of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Program.
- Increased ambition, strengthened capacities, and the replication of resilience-building methodologies.
- Greater national recognition and inclusion in national dialogues and initiatives.
- Enhanced adaptive management to navigate new contexts and unexpected challenges.

- Development of pathways to influencing and scaling up through knowledge management.
- Transition to the Zurich Climate Resilience Alliance to work in new contexts on flood and heatwave resilience.

*The Flood Resilience Program will always be one of our flagship initiatives that has encouraged us to grow and helped us to seek opportunities to connect with other actors and promote greater efficiency in providing humanitarian aid for the population.*

José Antonio Monroy Zermeño,  
General Director, Mexican Red Cross

## Dulce's story

Living in a small rural community in Tabasco, Dulce is a 32-year-old mother who has been closely engaged with the Flood Resilience Program. As a child, Dulce used to cross the river on rafts to collect firewood and spend her free time swimming and diving into the water. Over time, the river and the community have changed, and that has also led to different experiences of flooding.

In recent years, Dulce's house has been flooded numerous times, causing significant setbacks for

the economic stability of her family, especially through the damage of belongings, and the suspension of normal work activities. As a member of the 'Warrior Ants to the Rescue' community brigade, Dulce has participated in diverse trainings to support her family and neighbours in preparing for and responding to floods; *"we like to participate and we always say to our neighbours, let's go, we will achieve many changes here in the community, as long as we take on the challenge and work together,"* says Dulce.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

The successful development of the Flood Resilience Program in Mexico has marked a pivotal improvement in community resilience. However, as climate risks continue to grow it is important that our approaches remain dynamic and innovative; leveraging the lessons learned from previous experiences.



Ensure people are at the core of resilience-building actions.

- Promote community engagement through collaborative, inclusive and respectful work.
- Generate a sense of ownership of community activities by reflecting on the conditions of their environment.
- Leverage existing networks and groups to drive collective solutions at the local level.



Collaborate with stakeholders to improve outreach and advocacy in risk management and resilience efforts.

- Promote collaborative synergy among institutions and utilise networks across different sectors to work on shared goals.
- Highlight community capacities for local risk management.
- Connect communities with local stakeholders to ensure the long-term sustainability of initiatives.



Strengthen institutional capacities with a focus on long-term community resilience.

- Utilise existing capacities and tools within the National Society and prioritise institutional learning and innovation on resilience and community work.
- Adhere to fundamental institutional principles to ensure credibility and acceptance.
- Invest in knowledge management to share best practices for building resilience.



Expand the network of allies to strengthen community resilience practices.

- Create or identify collaborative networks of national and international allies that develop flood resilience practices.
- Leverage and integrate existing resources with local practices.
- Reflect on best practices applied in various contexts through knowledge exchanges.



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.  
Find out more: [www.floodresilience.net](http://www.floodresilience.net)



READ THE  
FULL  
REPORT  
HERE