

MOPAN ASSESSMENT REPORT

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)



MOPAN

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PREFACE

INTRODUCING MOPAN

The Multilateral Performance Network (MOPAN) promotes an effective multilateral system, trusted to deliver solutions to evolving global goals and local challenges. As of 1 July 2026, it comprised 20 members (Figure 1).

MOPAN members share a common interest in assessing the performance of the major multilateral organisations they fund, given their mandate, operating model and the contexts in which they work. A MOPAN assessment report provides an organisation's diagnostic assessment, or snapshot, and tells the story of its current performance within its mandate.

FIGURE 1: MOPAN MEMBERS AS OF 1 JULY 2026



A MOPAN assessment report seeks to provide a snapshot diagnostic of an organisation's performance, within its mandate. MOPAN's mission and vision are described in Box 1, below.

BOX 1. MOPAN's MISSION AND VISION

MOPAN is a network of members who assess multilateral organisations, shape performance standards, and champion learning and insights to strengthen development and humanitarian results and promote accountability.

Capitalising on the Network's unique cross-multilateral system perspective and expertise, MOPAN members work together to deliver relevant, impartial, high-quality and timely performance information as a public good through an inclusive and transparent approach.

MOPAN's performance information mitigates risks, informs decision-making and supports change, helping to increase knowledge and trust amongst all stakeholders, and ultimately to achieve a stronger and better performing multilateral system.

MOPAN's shared vision is to promote an effective multilateral system, trusted to deliver solutions to evolving global goals and local challenges.

MOPAN's assessments provide a comprehensive overview of organisational effectiveness, including how an organisation is positioned to address its current and future challenges. They support MOPAN members in their governance and decision-making for the multilateral organisations they fund. They also support the leadership of multilateral organisations in implementing reforms that reflect multilateral good practices.

MOPAN also produces a range of analytical insights into the multilateral system. For the full range of its performance evidence and analysis, see <https://www.mopan.org>.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

MOPAN assessments are conducted through a rigorous and collaborative process to ensure that the findings are based on a strong evidence base and resonate with an organisation and its stakeholders. It draws on multiple lines of evidence (documents, survey, and interviews) from sources within and outside an organisation. Evidence from these different sources is triangulated to identify findings and determine ratings against MOPAN's indicator framework using MOPAN's methodology 3.1, which is based on international best practice. This assessment applies an adaptation of the MOPAN framework for MOs working in Crises. Additional information about the process is provided in Chapter 4 of this report and in MOPAN's methodology manual.

This assessment report includes 5 Sections:

- **Executive Summary;**
- **Chapter 1:** Introducing the ICRC, which provides key information about the organisation being assessed, including its mandate, governance structure, business model and operations;
- **Chapter 2:** Conclusions and considerations for the future for the organisation and its stakeholders;



Venezuela

Caracas, Cota 905.
A participant in
the agricultural
production project
set up by the ICRC
arranges his lettuce
harvest.

Photo:
© Edinson Vivas | ICRC

- **Chapter 3:** Assessment findings, which describes the findings of the assessment against MOPAN's framework and Key Performance Indicators; and
- **Chapter 4:** About this Assessment, which provides additional information about the methodology and approach, including timelines for implementation and key activities.

The report is complemented by a set of Technical Annexes available online. Annex A describes the underlying analysis feeding into the assessment ratings. Annex B provides the overall list of documents used. Annex C provides the results of MOPAN's partner survey.

HISTORY OF MOPAN ASSESSMENTS FOR THE ICRC

The ICRC has not been assessed previously by MOPAN. This report provides a baseline for future assessments.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The MOPAN assessment of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was conducted under the overall strategic guidance of Suzanne Steensen, Head of the MOPAN Secretariat. It was managed by Jolanda Profos with support from Gaia Castori.

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The report was prepared for publication by Camille Hewitt, proofread by Christopher Mooney and graphic design by Baseline Arts Ltd.

The external partner survey was managed by Corentin Beudaert-Ugolini from the MOPAN Secretariat.

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Finally, MOPAN is grateful to all Steering Committee representatives for supporting the ICRC assessment, and to its member countries for their financial contributions, which have made the report possible.

Ukraine

Villages of the Kryvyi Rih district, Dnipropetrovsk region. ICRC supports strengthening residents' food security.

Photo: © Veronika Lobanska | ICRC



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations	MO	Multilateral Organisation
ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data	MOPAN	Multilateral Performance Network
AI	Artificial Intelligence	NA	Not Applicable
CFO	Chief Financial Officer	NE	No Evidence
CHF	Swiss Franc	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo	NR	Not Rated
DSG	Donor Support Group	NSIA	National Society Investment Alliance
EC	European Commission	ODA	Official Development Assistance
GIS	Geographic Information System(s)	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
HDP	Humanitarian–Development–Peace (nexus)	OIOS	Office of Internal Oversight Services (United Nations)
HQ	Headquarters	OPS	Operations (Department)
HR	Human Resources	PAC	People and Culture (Department)
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	PAM	Project and Activity Management
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative	PfR	Planning for Results
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross	PSEAH	Prevention Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
IDP	Internally Displaced People	QA	Quality Assurance
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	SDT	Support and Digital Transformation (Department)
IHL	International Humanitarian Law	SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation	SG80	Secretary-General's 80th anniversary reform initiative (United Nations)
IT	Information Technology	UN	United Nations
KPI	Key Performance Indicator	UN80	United Nations 80th anniversary reform initiative
LDP	International Law, Policy and Archives (Department)	US	United States
MAXQDA	Qualitative data analysis software	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
MfR	Managing for Results		
MI	Micro-Indicator		
MMP	Mobilization, Movement and Partnerships (Department)		

**INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE
OF THE RED CROSS**
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





ICRC Headquarters, Geneva

Photo: © Mohammad Khan, Fania

INTRODUCING THE ICRC

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is the founding institution of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and an organisation with a unique mandate under the Geneva Conventions. Founded in 1863 in Geneva, the ICRC is formally charged under the Geneva Conventions (ratified by 196 states) with protecting and assisting victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence, and with promoting respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Unlike other organisations assessed by MOPAN, the ICRC's mandate, access, and authority derive directly from binding international humanitarian law, rather than from an intergovernmental agreement establishing and governing the organisation. The ICRC functions as guardian of IHL, engaging governments, armed forces and non-state armed groups on compliance with the laws of armed conflict, while protecting and providing humanitarian assistance to victims, including in contexts that are difficult for most international humanitarian actors to access.

The ICRC operates under the seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality. As the Movement's founding institution, the ICRC has some statutory responsibilities, including recognising new National Societies and upholding and promoting the Fundamental Principles. It sees neutrality as not a passive stance but as an operational asset that enables the ICRC to maintain dialogue with approximately 60% of around 450-armed groups globally and to operate across front lines in contexts where few other international actors are present. The organisation is distinct from UN agencies, International Finance Institutions, Vertical Funds, Partnerships and traditional I/NGOs. It is a self-governing Swiss association whose Assembly, comprising 15-25 co-opted Swiss nationals (plus the President and VP), sets institutional strategy and provides oversight. Its current Institutional Strategy (2024-27) is organised around eight orientations, five focused on humanitarian relevance and impact, and three on organisational fitness.

With 15 889 staff (93% deployed in the field in 63 delegations and missions covering over 90 countries) the ICRC is a direct implementer at scale. Its operations are funded entirely by voluntary contributions. Governments and the European Commission provided 85% of the CHF 1.736 billion received in 2025. The ICRC applies a "plan-implement-fund" model, meaning programming decisions are driven by assessed humanitarian need rather than available funding. This architecture is in place to preserve impartiality but exposes the organisation to structural cash-flow risk.

THE ICRC'S TRAJECTORY OVER THE ASSESSMENT PERIOD

This assessment examines the period covered by the ICRC's 2024-27 Institutional Strategy, while drawing on relevant trends since 2022-23. It is the first MOPAN assessment of the ICRC and can serve as the baseline against which to measure progress if future ones take place.

The assessment period has been defined by a sharply deteriorating global conflict landscape and a collapse in humanitarian funding. A record number of armed conflicts was reported in 2024,¹ with conflict-related fatalities rising to 239 000, the highest annual total in recent decades.² Alongside a steady accumulation of simultaneous conflicts and crises, global humanitarian finance plummeted from a peak of USD 26.81 billion in 2023 to USD 14.85 billion in 2025.³ The funding collapse has catalysed a fundamental debate about the future architecture of humanitarian action. The 2025 Humanitarian Reset, led by the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, and the UN80 reform initiative

1. Palik, J., Rustad, S.A. and Tollefsen, A.F., 2025. Conflict Trends: A Global Overview, 1946-2024. *PRIO Paper*. Oslo: Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), available at: prio.org; International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 2024. *International Humanitarian Law and the Challenges of Contemporary Armed Conflicts: Digging deeper*. Geneva: ICRC. Available at: icrc.org.

2. Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED), cited in *The Washington Post*, "Data shows global conflict surged in 2024" (2025) [link](#).

3. OECD/DAC, April 2026, A historic decline in foreign aid: Preliminary 2025 ODA data link.

have put questions of system efficiency, localisation and the role of principled independent actors at the centre of international policy discussions. These multilateral reform efforts have direct implications for the ICRC's operating model in pursuit of its mandate and shape the context in which this assessment's findings and considerations should be read. The ICRC entered the second half of its strategy period at a moment of severely contracting financial resources across its largest operational regions.

The global decline in humanitarian funding came fast on the heels of the ICRC's own financial crisis in 2022-23.

At the end of 2022, the ICRC had a CHF 117 million deficit, driven by reduced donor funding, inflation and insufficient cash-flow risk management. The planned budget of 2023 had to be drastically reduced due not only to that deficit, but also to the realisation of a CHF 380 million shortfall for 2023. These impacts combined to trigger a contraction in ICRC staff levels of approximately 1 800 positions (a 14% reduction), the closure of 26 field structures, and the scaling-back of operations across multiple delegations in 2023. The organisation's response included the elevation of the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) position to Directorate level, real-time financial monitoring, a revised treasury policy and an enhanced Financial Oversight Board. With these reforms, the ICRC achieved surpluses of CHF 311 million and CHF 291 million in 2023 and 2024 respectively at consolidated level. The structural funding challenge nevertheless persists: in 2025, the ICRC had a CHF 113 million deficit at consolidated level, in the external context of a more than 50% cut in US aid spending and significant aid reductions by most other traditional donors that year. The ICRC is reducing its budget with a further 16.9% in 2026. It is not alone: a system-wide mapping of 31 multilateral organisations by MOPAN in 2025 found that 77% of major UN agencies announced deep budget shortfalls, with the humanitarian and health sectors disproportionately affected.⁴

Of particular long-term concern is the erosion of respect for IHL in several contemporary conflicts. Growing non-compliance by parties to conflict risks weakening the normative framework within which the ICRC operates and may affect the organisation's ability to deliver on its mandate. The extent to which the ICRC can adapt its operating model, maintain access and influence, and continue to promote respect for IHL in an increasingly complex geopolitical environment will be an important factor in determining its performance in the coming years.

The 2024-27 Institutional Strategy, and the leadership transition to a new Director-General (from April 2024), represent a deliberate effort to stabilise and modernise the organisation. The current strategy is built around "a determination to centre on what lies at the heart of ICRC's mandate", with the belief that clarity of focus is the best way to prepare for meaningful impact. The strategy's distinctive feature is that it elevates enabling functions (financial resilience, digital transformation, people and culture) to the level of strategic orientations alongside humanitarian delivery priorities, signalling a recognition that institutional effectiveness is inseparable from operational impact. The first implementation phase (2024-25) included the launch of a Global IHL Initiative,⁵ investments in staff recruitment and onboarding redesign. The deliberate return to a generalist (polyvalent) delegate model, reversing a period of proliferating specialist roles, has been welcomed at field level as improving integrated programming and clearer mandate communication.

ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The ICRC is a credible, principled and field resilient organisation. Stakeholders consistently highlighted the ICRC's ability to sustain humanitarian operations in some of the world's most dangerous and inaccessible contexts as one of its defining strengths. Its own financial crisis in 2022-23 was a turning point: the robust institutional response, while

4. Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) 2025, *Mapping of Multilateral Organisations' Response to the Current Funding Environment, Multilateral Effectiveness in a Shifting Landscape*, MOPAN, Paris, [link](#).

5. *The Global Initiative to Galvanize Political Commitment to International Humanitarian Law* was launched on 27 September 2024 by Brazil, China, France, Jordan, Kazakhstan and South Africa, together with the ICRC. The initiative seeks to develop concrete and actionable recommendations across seven thematic workstreams, culminating in a High-Level Conference on Humanity in War in 2026. [Link](#).

painful, has resulted in significant governance, financial management and organisational reforms. Stakeholders consistently credit this recovery as evidence of meaningful institutional learning. The challenge ahead is to sustain that quality with significantly fewer resources, in an era of an unprecedented number of conflicts globally and funding contraction.⁶ The ICRC's governance reforms and liquidity position place it in a comparatively resilient position relative to many other organisations working in the humanitarian space, but the pressures affecting the sector are usually severe and are likely to persist for some time.

Across the MOPAN framework, the ICRC's performance reflects the strengths of a clear, legally grounded mandate under the Geneva Conventions and a distinctive operating model. At the same time, the assessment reveals structural vulnerabilities, above all in funding stability and results measurement, that require sustained attention to maintain pace with external changes. The relationship with National Societies and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies remains intrinsic to how the organisation views its global network and how it engages both at the global policy level and local levels. A clear division of responsibilities is set out within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement under the Movement's Statutes. However, there is scope for the ICRC and its Movement partners to leverage the Movement's combined presence in a more systematic manner, particularly in transition and recovery contexts. As a localised operating model becomes increasingly important across the humanitarian sector, the ICRC faces the challenge of maximising the value of its Movement partnerships (particularly with National Societies) while preserving the direct operational presence that underpins its mandate and access to conflict-affected populations.

A credible, principled and field resilient organisation

A key source of the ICRC's comparative advantage as a humanitarian organisation is its combination of a clear legal mandate, a principled operating model, and a unique role in promoting respect for IHL that is recognised in the Geneva Conventions. Its neutrality enables access to populations and engagement with parties to a conflict⁷ that other international humanitarian actors are not always able to reach. Its principled model is deeply embedded at all levels of the organisation, operationalised through training, institutional culture and robust guidance on humanitarian principles in practice. The assessment rates the ICRC's strategic management as strong, with a well-grounded strategy, effective governance and deeply internalised humanitarian principles. It has reinvigorated its IHL normative role through the Global IHL Initiative (a collaborative effort with states designed to galvanise political commitment and develop practical recommendations to strengthen respect for the rules of war), expanded dialogue on autonomous weapons, cyber warfare and AI, and the 75th Geneva Conventions anniversary platform, reflecting its distinctive mandate and comparative advantage. This institutional strength is a significant asset as the ICRC enters the second half of its strategy period at a time of expanding conflict and contracting global funding.

The 2022-23 crisis was an institutional turning point

The ICRC's substantive response to its 2022-23 financial crisis has rendered the organisation significantly sharper and better governed in 2026 than it was three years ago. The surpluses generated in 2023 and 2024, the ability to maintain flexible funding at around 45.5% in 2025, and markedly improved donor transparency together reflect genuine institutional improvement. The cumulative workforce reduction (from a peak of 22 488 staff in 2022 to 15 889 by May 2026) carries material risks to institutional memory, succession planning and technical capacity that will require active management. The ICRC's operational management is effective, although there are some gaps in value-for-money evidence and uneven operationalisation of scale-up trigger mechanisms. Structural vulnerabilities persist: over the past three years (2023-25), an average of 85% of contributions came from governments

6. The Uppsala Conflict Data Program recorded 61 active state-based conflicts in 2024, the highest number since records began in 1946 (Davies, S., Pettersson, T., Sollenberg, M. and Öberg, M. 2025 "Organized violence 1989–2024, and the challenges of identifying civilian victims", *Journal of Peace Research*, 62(4), pp. 1223–1240. [Link](#)) while total conflict fatalities rose from 188 000 in 2023 to 239 000 in 2024 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute SIPRI, 2025 *SIPRI Yearbook 2025*, Chapter 2: Armed Conflict and Conflict Management. [Link](#)).

7. 'Parties to the conflict' is a term used in International Humanitarian Law to denote any state or organised non-state group engaged in hostilities, regardless of the group's official recognition.

and the European Commission. In 2025, the top five donors alone provided 52% of all ICRC funding. While reliance on state funding remains high, the proportion of funding from private sources rose sharply from around 4% in 2021 to about 13% in 2023, fell back to roughly 8% in 2024, and was up again at 12% in 2025, caused by both increases in private funding and governments scaling back contributions.

The ICRC's comparatively strong governance reforms and liquidity reserves provide meaningful near-term resilience against the broader system-wide funding contraction described above, but they do not insulate the organisation from a structural shift in the global ODA environment that is unlikely to reverse in the medium term. It has also refocused on its core mission in the face of funding cuts. In a funding environment where it needs to "do less, with less", it is operating with greater focus, efficiency and institutional clarity. It has re-centred on its humanitarian mandate, with a focus on emergency response and moving away from resilience programming to systems resilience delivered in protracted crises and development-adjacent contexts.

Strong field delivery, with scope for further partnership

With 89% of staff in the field and strong conflict sensitivity practice, the ICRC's relationship management and programming are effective. Of stakeholders surveyed, 85% viewed the quality of country-level decision-making as strong. As the founding institution of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the ICRC operates a Movement-first philosophy, in which National Societies are intended to be primary partners in planning, implementation and accountability rather than simply delivery vehicles. Interviews, particularly at delegation level, suggest that in some contexts the relationship between the ICRC and National Societies is perceived as a predominantly project-driven and operational (or, as they describe it, "transactional") relationship. While National Societies' capacity strengthening is within the IFRC's mandate, the ICRC supports their institutional strengthening and emergency preparedness and response. The 2022 refreshed Seville Agreement 2.0 sets out the principles for operational and functional collaboration between the Movement components and works to clarify the role of National Societies as stronger convenors, when the context allows, although there is greater potential of the Movement as a force multiplier.

Relationships with National Societies are perceived to remain largely at field level, and localisation commitments have not yet been translated into concrete operational shifts or multi-year funding to partners (noting that the ICRC itself receives 80% of its funding annually, and of the multi-year funding it receives only half is unearmarked).⁸

Substantial output-level results are reported, but significant outcomes remain under-measured and under-reported, constrained by the sensitive nature of the ICRC's mandate

The overall finding on the ICRC's results is one of substantial output-level achievements, constrained by structural factors inherent to the mandate: the confidentiality requirements that limit what can be measured and reported, and the methodological challenge of capturing the value of normative and preventive work.

Outcome- and impact-level evidence, particularly for protection and prevention programming, remains limited due to structural and methodological constraints. While the ICRC notes that considerable efforts are underway, it has not yet developed a credible and systematic methodology for measuring and demonstrating the value of some of its most significant contributions. This challenge has persisted across the assessment period, as explored in detail under KPI 8 (monitoring systems) of the MOPAN assessment framework. The organisation's most significant humanitarian outcomes, grounded in its mandate and legal authority, are structurally under-reported in results reporting due to the operational confidentiality that makes the ICRC's work possible: these include preventing

8. The ICRC has committed to "actively participating in thought-leadership on localisation and decolonisation of aid". Source: ICRC, "ICRC launches 2024-2027 institutional strategy," 2023, available at [link](#); see also ICRC, *Institutional Strategy 2024-2027*, strategic orientation 5 ("A new humanitarianism for a changing world"), [link](#). The strategy's fifth orientation commits the ICRC to strengthening local partnerships and to engaging at the most local level with affected communities to design responses together with them, while building on its practice of partnering with local institutions.

violations of IHL through confidential dialogue, securing access through principled relationship-building with armed parties, and facilitating prisoner releases as a neutral intermediary. The Analysis and Evidence function and the new Evaluation Office are important investments, but neither has yet resolved this performance reporting gap.

Output reporting shows strong achievements, with output targets met or exceeded in most areas and an implementation rate of 88% in 2025 (up by 1% from 2024). To illustrate the wide range of the ICRC's recorded results achievements, in 2025, it facilitated 1.46 million phone calls between separated family members, visited 678 337 detainees, reached 3.09 million people with food security support and supported 669 hospitals.⁹

Some areas continue to require attention: Community-accessible reporting and complaint mechanisms on sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH), remain inconsistent at field level despite strong policy frameworks at headquarters; a dedicated whistleblower protection policy is not yet in place.

The central challenge ahead is sustaining the quality of delivery across all dimensions as the organisation absorbs a further 16.9% budget reduction in 2026, in an era of an unprecedented number of conflicts and a structural contraction in the global humanitarian funding environment.

BOX 2. NOTABLE ICRC PRACTICES

- **The “plan-implement-fund” model:** programming driven by humanitarian need rather than available funding, this model is designed to preserve programmatic integrity and impartiality. As evidenced by the 2022-23 crisis, this model requires robust liquidity management and strong financial governance to function sustainably.
- **The ICRC's engagement with armed non-state actors:** The ICRC reported dialogue with around 60% of the 450 armed groups it identified as being of humanitarian concern globally in 2024. The ICRC has built a principled, structured framework over decades, grounded in its mandated role under the Geneva Conventions, which other actors are not in a position to replicate.
- **The Analysis and Evidence function:** while relatively new (established four years ago) it has the potential for institutional innovation, integrating Geographic Information System (GIS) capacity, protection evidence frameworks and outcome-monitoring data into one common programme cycle methodology.
- **The recent strengthening of the independent evaluation function,** with the establishment of an Evaluation Office: while reporting directly to the Director-General, the Evaluation Office has programme discretion and is developing into a strong entity for institutional learning, positively noted by stakeholders.
- **Transparency:** The ICRC's donors describe the organisation's donor engagement as more proactive and open since the 2023 financial crisis. Members of the Donor Support Group (DSG) praised the thematic DSG fora as a model of accountable relationship management.

9. ICRC, *Annual Report 2025*, [link](#), p.18.

BOX 3. MAIN STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Main strengths

- The Geneva Conventions mandate provides the ICRC with a distinctive role and operational access in armed conflict that no other humanitarian organisation has. The mandate's anchor in neutrality, impartiality and independence sustains the trust that the ICRC's delivery of mandated tasks depends on. Confidential protection, IHL prevention and access brokering sit at the core, and dialogue with multiple armed groups globally reaches populations others cannot. A reinvigorated IHL role on autonomous weapons, cyber and AI keeps the treaty-based mandate current.
- Post-crisis reforms have restored financial solvency and strengthened financial resilience. With 30-45% of contributions unearmarked or loosely earmarked, well above sector norms, and donor engagement that includes well-received DSG forums, the ICRC protects both rapid-response capability and flexible funding.
- The 2024-2027 strategy sets clear priorities under tight resources, and the return to a generalist delegate model has sharpened programming and country-level decision-making.
- The Analysis and Evidence function and an independent Evaluation Office are strengthening evidence-based programming and safeguard learning in ways many peers lack, while the post-2022 IT overhaul has cut cybersecurity risk and built a base for future digital investment.

Areas for improvement

- Dependence on a handful of government donors is an acute vulnerability, exposed by 2025 budget reductions and a further 16.9% reduction for 2026, during a particularly challenging external operating environment. Limited public visibility of the ICRC's results in pursuing its core protection mandate constrains both influence and the scope to diversify beyond traditional government donors.
- The ICRC still cannot fully measure or communicate the outcomes of some of its most important work. Efforts are underway, but gaps persist, and uneven digital transformation, field tools, and analytics limit monitoring and accountability.
- Workforce cuts since 2023 have eroded institutional memory and are affecting surge capacity and morale.
- The traction with and quality of reporting against PSEAH policy implementation at delegation level varies.
- There is no dedicated whistleblower protection policy and the willingness to report misconduct depends on the culture of openness and trust within each delegation.
- Evidence from the interviews at delegation level suggests that National Society relationships are in some contexts predominantly delivery and project-driven, with challenges in governance and resilience to sustain response where ICRC operations are contracting. The 2024-2027 Institutional Strategy's broader localisation commitments have yet to translate into operational shifts or multi-year partner funding; without these, the Movement's ability to realise its potential as a force multiplier remains constrained.

FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

The ICRC enters the second half of its 2024-2027 strategy period navigating converging pressures: a contracting funding environment, an expanding humanitarian needs landscape, a fragmenting geopolitical order, and profound questions about the future of the international humanitarian system. The following seven considerations are addressed to ICRC senior management, MOPAN members, Donor Support Group (DSG) members and wider ICRC stakeholders. They reflect the assessment team's judgement on the most strategically significant issues for the near and medium term.

Consideration 1: Urgently diversify donors

The significant global reduction of aid funding from traditional donors in 2025 exposed the ICRC's reliance on a small number of government donors. The 2026 mid-strategy review is a natural moment to bring revised diversification targets before the Assembly. MOPAN members and the ICRC's DSG should expect and facilitate time-bound progress on: Gulf, Asia and Latin America donor engagement; private sector fundraising; and multi-year flexible commitments.

Consideration 2: Invest in capturing and communicating the value of protection outcomes

Not all the ICRC's most distinctive humanitarian contributions are systematically represented in its results architecture. This gap affects its ability to demonstrate value to donors, defend its cost structure against efficiency demands, and contribute evidence to sector-wide debates about what "good" humanitarian performance looks like. The ICRC's Analysis and Evidence function should be tasked with developing methodologies for documenting preventive outcomes and the impact of confidential engagement. MOPAN members should be prepared to provide patient, flexible funding to support this investment, recognising that measurement of the ICRC's most significant impacts is challenging and will require methodological innovation.

Consideration 3: Develop and resource a human capital strategy that can balance the dual pressures of further budget cuts and strategic talent demands

The cumulative impact of workforce reductions since 2022 creates material risks to operational capacity, institutional memory and staff wellbeing. Priorities include the following: active knowledge management at senior delegation level; mental health and psychosocial support infrastructure; and targeted acquisition of digital and data talent.

Consideration 4: Accelerate digital transformation with explicit attention to its implications for data protection in conflict settings

The digital transformation agenda is well-founded, with tangible progress, but remains operationally uneven. Field staff report inadequate tools, connectivity and inter-operability of systems. The ICRC handles some of the most sensitive personal data in the humanitarian sector. The 2026 budget review is an opportunity to ring-fence digital transformation and data protection investments from efficiency cuts across the board.

Consideration 5: Strengthen the Movement partnership model as a force multiplier for capacity and reach in an era of constrained resources

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement represents an underutilised asset in an era of resource constraints. National Society relationships in operational contexts are often perceived to be vertical and focused on direct implementation and delivery rather than genuinely collaborative. The Directorate should develop, in consultation with National Societies and the IFRC, a concrete plan for deepening equitable partnership in the operational contexts most affected by the 2026 budget reductions.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Village of Nakiele, South Kivu Province, DRC. ICRC staff member Rubin Ombeni Sumuni speaks to representatives of armed groups in the village.

Photo: © Hugh Cunningham Kinsella | ICRC



Consideration 6: Engage substantively in the Humanitarian Reset and system-wide reform agenda from a position of principle and influence

The 2025 Humanitarian Reset and the UN80 initiative constitute significant structural reform processes for the humanitarian system. Their focus on effectiveness, localisation, streamlining co-ordination, reducing bureaucracy and protecting life-saving action is in close alignment with the ICRC's core institutional characteristics, including its principled independence from UN structures, its comparative advantage in direct implementation, and its commitments to localisation. The ICRC's de-prioritisation of nexus and recovery activities raises important questions about whether and how needs previously addressed through these approaches will be met by other actors. As these reform processes evolve, the ICRC has a key institutional role in ensuring that considerations of IHL and principled humanitarian action remain central to system-wide reforms, informed by its mandate and by its operational experience in securing humanitarian access and protecting civilians.

Consideration 7: Use the 2026 mid-strategy review to integrate MOPAN assessment findings into institutional adaptation

The 2024-2027 Institutional Strategy's first implementation phase concluded in 2025. The 2026 mid-point review provides an opportunity to integrate the findings of this MOPAN assessment (the first in the ICRC's history) into the organisation's change management process. MOPAN members and the Assembly should expect: (i) a transparent assessment of progress against each of the eight strategic orientations; (ii) explicit acknowledgement of the areas for improvement identified in this report; (iii) revised, credible targets for funding diversification and results measurement; and (iv) a management response to this assessment's considerations that is time-bound and tracked. For the DSG, the mid-strategy review is also an opportunity to align members' bilateral dialogue with the ICRC around the shared priorities identified in this report, reducing fragmentation and increasing the coherence of the donor engagement that remains the ICRC's primary source of financial and political support.

METHODOLOGY

This assessment applies the MOPAN 3.1 Adapted Methodology for MOs working in crisis-affected contexts, further adapted during the inception phase to reflect the ICRC's distinct legal status, mandate and operating principles¹⁰. Key adaptations include: reframing cross-cutting issue indicators to reflect IHL rather than development and 2030 Agenda commitments; removing the IDP indicator, since IDPs are amongst civilian populations that the ICRC responds to;

¹⁰ MOPAN Adapted Framework for MOs working in Crises, MOPAN, [link](#).

adapting governance indicators to reflect the ICRC's Swiss civil law Assembly; merging sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH) indicators into a unified SEAH indicator; and adapting partnership and results indicators to reflect the ICRC's direct-implementation model and Movement-first partnership philosophy. Full framework adaptations are in Annex A.

The assessment covers 12 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) across five performance areas:

- Strategic Management (KPIs 1–2),
- Operational Management (KPIs 3–4),
- Relationship Management (KPIs 5–6),
- Performance Management (KPIs 7–8) and
- Results (KPIs 9–12).

KPIs 1–8 are scored at element level (0–4 scale, averaged to micro-indicator (MI) and KPI level). KPIs 9–12 are based on meta-analysis of evaluation evidence and performance reporting.

The overall assessment relied on three evidence streams: a document review (500 documents, cut-off December 2025; with select key information updated into Spring 2026), a stakeholder survey (17 November – 17 December 2025, distributed in English, French and Spanish, covering ten country/regional sample contexts), and 190+ ICRC staff engaged at HQ (81), and at delegations level (excluding South Sudan) (42) and external stakeholders (70), including a country visit to South Sudan (November 2025). Chapter 4 of this report describes the methodology in greater detail.

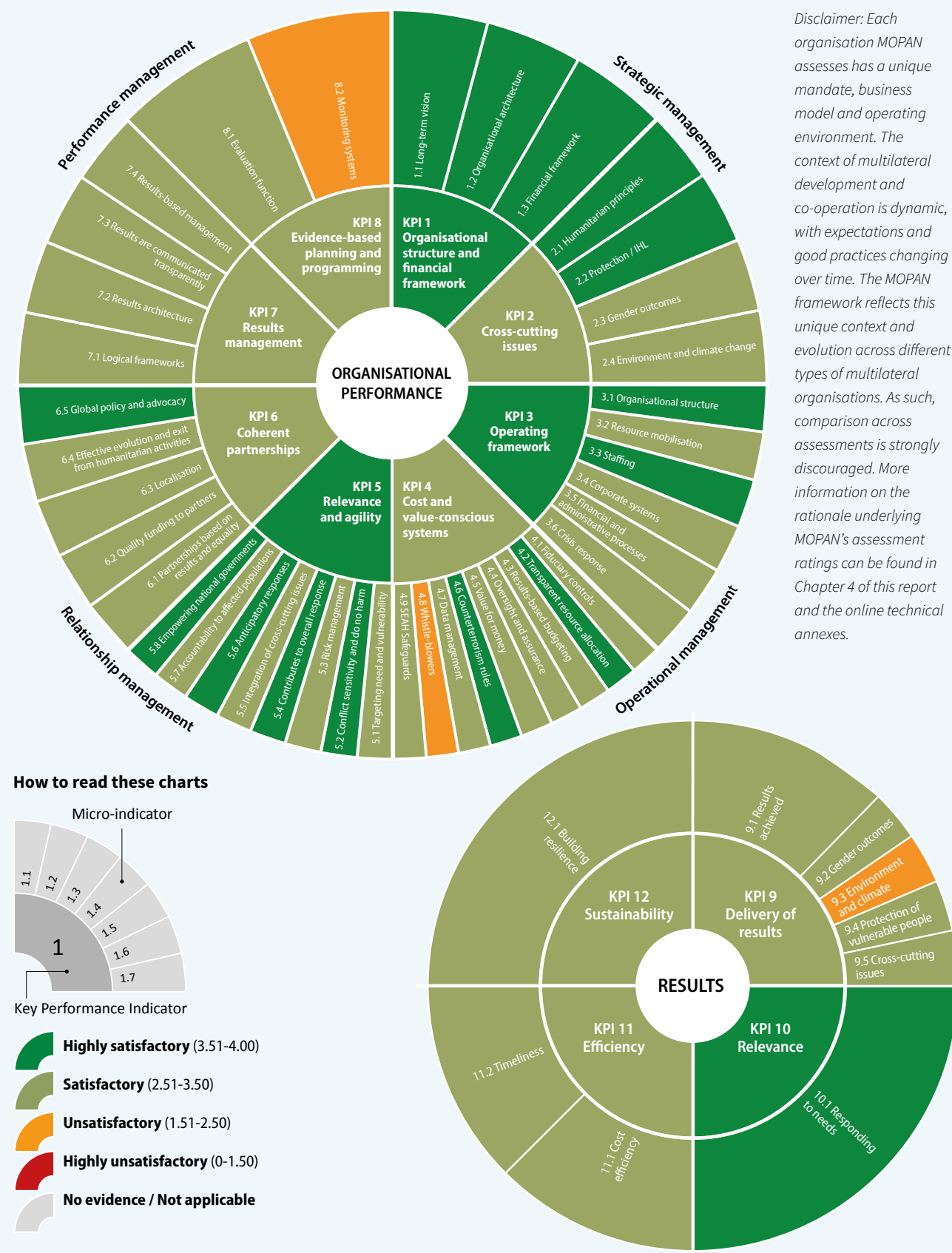
The colour wheel overleaf provides a visual breakdown of scores at KPI and micro-indicator level.



**Yerevan, Armenia,
ICRC delegation**

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) English-Armenian Glossary was presented to the academic community, with the participation of representatives from institutions committed to advancing IHL education
Photo: © Knarik Serobyan | ICRC

FIGURE 2. THE ICRC'S PERFORMANCE RATING SUMMARY



INTRODUCING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS





High-level visit to Syria

Three-day official visit in 2025 by ICRC president Mirjana Spoljaric to Damascus, Aleppo and Idlib. Photo: © Stephen Ryan | ICRC

MISSION AND MANDATE

Mandate and strategic objectives

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is a humanitarian organisation founded in Geneva, Switzerland in 1863; it is 82 years older than the United Nations. Its mandate is formally rooted in the Geneva Conventions, which charge it with protecting and assisting victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence, and with promoting respect for and implementation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). This legal foundation grants the ICRC a distinct authority and legitimacy to operate in conflict settings where access is often restricted for other actors.

The ICRC's mandate encompasses three principal areas of activity: (i) protecting and assisting conflict-affected people, including civilians, detainees, people separated from their families, and the wounded and sick; (ii) ensuring that parties to conflict uphold the rules of IHL; and (iii) promoting IHL globally, including through legal commentary, dialogue with states and armed groups, and humanitarian diplomacy. As a guardian of IHL, the ICRC also develops and interprets the law, giving it a unique position of normative authority among humanitarian organisations.

The ICRC and its Movement partners operate under the seven Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement:

- **Humanity;** preventing and alleviating human suffering wherever it may be found.
- **Impartiality;** aid is given solely on the basis of need, without discrimination.
- **Neutrality;** the ICRC does not take sides in conflicts or engage in political, racial, religious or ideological controversies.
- **Independence;** the ICRC preserves its autonomy to act in accordance with its principles.
- **Voluntary service;** the Movement is not driven by profit but by commitment to help.
- **Unity;** only one National Society per country, open to all.
- **Universality;** all National Societies have equal status and responsibilities.



Afghanistan

Camp in Kunar, Chawky District. ICRC assistance to affected communities.
Photo: © Zabiullah Shinwari | ICRC

BOX 4. ICRC MODES OF ACTION

The ICRC deploys three complementary modes of action to fulfil its mandate:

Raising awareness of responsibility

- The ICRC conducts confidential dialogue with and representations to authorities and armed groups, using a graduated approach: beginning with direct persuasion (appeals to legal obligations), escalating to mobilising external actors (seeking outside support) and, as a last resort, public denunciation — a step taken rarely and only when other approaches have been exhausted.

Support

- Providing technical and material support to enable authorities to discharge their humanitarian responsibilities.

Substitution

- The ICRC directly provides services such as medical aid and food distribution when no other actor can fulfil that role.

Confidentiality underpins all modes of action, enabling honest engagement with all parties and protecting both staff and communities.

Source: ICRC (n.d.) Our modes of action, <https://www.icrc.org/en/our-modes-action>

The ICRC is thus unique among humanitarian organisations in its history, mandate and mission.

Institutional strategy 2024-2027

The ICRC’s current Institutional Strategy covers 2024-2027 and is organised around eight strategic orientations, grouped into two clusters: five aimed at strengthening relevance and impact, and three focused on bolstering organisational readiness and efficiency. These are accompanied by six cross-cutting thematic approaches spanning security management, accountability to affected populations, communication, climate and conflict, gender/diversity/inclusion, and impact/evaluation/learning.

TABLE 1. ICRC INSTITUTIONAL STRATEGY 2024–2027: EIGHT STRATEGIC ORIENTATIONS

Cluster	Strategic orientation
Strengthening relevance & impact	1. Upholding the centrality of protection and the role of neutral intermediary
	2. Promoting IHL as a global political priority
	3. Enhancing response impact in acute and protracted phases of conflict
	4. Affirming identity within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
	5. A new humanitarianism for a changing world
Bolstering organisational readiness & efficiency	6. Optimising risk management and financial stability
	7. Accelerating digital transformation
	8. Enhancing skills, trust, cohesion and responsibility

Position in the international humanitarian system

The ICRC occupies a singular position in the international humanitarian system. It is formally registered in Switzerland under Article 60 of the Swiss Civil Code and enjoys special status equivalent to that of an international organisation, granting it international legal personality. It is neither a United Nations agency nor a traditional non-governmental organisation (NGO) but holds permanent observer status at the UN General Assembly, enabling it to engage with multilateral fora while preserving operational independence. That independence is the legal and operational foundation of the ICRC's ability to engage with all parties to a conflict without being seen as an instrument of any political agenda.

The ICRC is the founding institution of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, a global humanitarian network comprising 191 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies active in almost every country, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).¹ National Societies focus primarily on domestic humanitarian response and community services; the IFRC supports their development and collective action internationally in the case of disasters and other crises. The ICRC occupies a constitutionally distinct role within this Movement: it holds a mandate to operate in armed conflict under the Geneva Conventions, functioning as an independent, neutral institution rather than a membership-based federation, and co-ordinating the Movement response together with the host National Society. The ICRC, IFRC, and National Societies share the same Fundamental Principles and Red Cross/Red Crescent emblem, but each has separate governance, funding, and areas of operational responsibility as outlined in the statutes of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The ICRC has won the Nobel Peace Prize four times (1917, 1944, and, jointly with the IFRC, in 1963; its founder, Henry Dunant, was also awarded the first Nobel Peace Prize in 1901), in recognition of its distinctive combination of humanitarian action and stewardship of the humanitarian norms that seek to preserve humanity in armed conflict.

Operationally, the ICRC maintains dialogue with over 60% of the approximately 450 armed groups that operate globally, enabling access to conflict-affected populations in settings where other actors cannot operate.² This breadth of engagement across 130+ active conflicts underscores its comparative advantage in crisis-affected environments.³ Within the broader humanitarian system, the ICRC works alongside UN agencies, NGOs and other multilateral actors, but does so on its own terms. It participates selectively in inter-agency co-ordination mechanisms (engaging where it considers it can add value without compromising its neutrality) and deliberately maintains operational independence from the cluster system and other UN-led co-ordination structures. In practice, this means the ICRC often operates in the same theatres as UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF and OCHA, but through alternative rather than integrated structures, a model that preserves principled access while sometimes limiting information-sharing.

The global funding crisis that has reshaped the humanitarian system since 2023 affects the ICRC directly but also differently from most of its peers. Relying exclusively on voluntary contributions, the ICRC is fully exposed to reductions in donor funding. At the same time, as an organisation whose access depends on neutrality and independence rather than on being part of the UN system, it is less exposed to the political dynamics that have led some donors to reduce contributions to UN agencies specifically. The 2025 Humanitarian Reset and the UN80 reform process, which are restructuring how the broader system operates, may be seen as both a challenge and an opportunity for the ICRC; a challenge because the contraction in system-wide funding affects its own resource base, and an opportunity because the Reset's emphasis on principled action, localisation, and reducing bureaucratic overhead aligns closely with the ICRC's own operating model and comparative advantage. The ICRC is well positioned to be a leading voice in these debates, advocating for the preservation of humanitarian space and the centrality of IHL compliance.

1. International Committee of the Red Cross (2024) *The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement*. Geneva: ICRC. [link](#).

2. Bamber-Zryd, M. (2024) 'ICRC engagement with armed groups in 2025', *ICRC Humanitarian Law & Policy Blog*, 30 October 2025. [link](#).

3. International Committee of the Red Cross (2025) *Humanitarian Outlook 2026: A world succumbing to war*, Geneva: ICRC. [link](#).

GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Unlike intergovernmental organisations whose member states are represented on executive boards, the ICRC is governed by an Assembly of between 15 and 25 co-opted Swiss nationals.

Overall, the ICRC's governance rests on four principal bodies: Assembly, Assembly Council, Office of the President, and Directorate (see Table 2).

TABLE2. ICRC GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND DECISION-MAKING

Body	Composition	Key Functions
Assembly	15–25 co-opted Swiss nationals; 4-year renewable terms (up to 3 terms)	Supreme governing body; sets institutional strategy; approves budgets and financial accounts; appoints Director-General and key officers
Assembly Council	5–7 Assembly members including President and Vice-President (Gilles Carbonnier)	Subsidiary body; supports financial and HR management; takes urgent decisions on behalf of the Assembly
Office of the President	President (Mirjana Spoljaric Egger) + Vice-President(s)	External relations; chairs Assembly and Assembly Council; proposes institutional strategy
Directorate	Director-General (since Apr 2024) + six Department Directors	Executive body; implements strategy; oversees day-to-day management and field operations

Source: ICRC (n.d.) The governing bodies of the ICRC, <https://www.icrc.org/en/governing-bodies-icrc>

Evaluation and oversight

The ICRC's evaluation function has strengthened in recent years, with an Evaluation Office established in 2022 and reporting to the Director-General. The Data Protection Office and Ethics, Risk and Compliance Office provide additional oversight. These functions remain relatively new and are still building capacity and institutional authority but represent a meaningful structural investment in accountability. Formal independent oversight functions include the Internal Audit Unit, the Data Protection Commission, the Audit and Risk Commission, and the Recruitment and Remuneration Commission. The Ombuds Office and Global Independent Board of Appeal provide staff recourse mechanisms.

Leadership and liaison with governing bodies

The Directorate serves as the ICRC's executive arm and comprises the Director-General and the directors of six departments: the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), who leads Finance and Administration, and the directors of International Law, Policy and Archives; Mobilisation, Movement and Partnerships; Operations; Support and Digital Transformation; and People and Culture.⁴ The CFO has a direct reporting line to the Assembly, reflecting the importance placed on financial governance following the ICRC's 2022-2023 financial crisis. The Directorate ensures coherence between headquarters and field operations and adapts to evolving humanitarian challenges.

4. International Committee of the Red Cross (2024) *The ICRC Directorate*. Geneva: ICRC. [link](#).

Statutory meetings and external engagement

The principal formal mechanisms through which state donors and MOPAN members can influence Movement-wide priorities and the ICRC's institutional posture are the two statutory meeting processes.

Firstly, **the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent** brings together the world's largest humanitarian network and nearly every government. At this Conference, states (as parties to the Geneva Conventions) and Movement components undertake joint commitments to advance humanitarian action. Convened every four years (most recently in Geneva in October 2024), it is where institutional priorities, normative positions and Movement-wide commitments are formally set, and where external stakeholders have direct standing to shape outcomes.

Secondly, **the Council of Delegates**, which is held every two years and attended by Movement components only, sets common strategies and ensures alignment within the Movement on approaches to global humanitarian issues. In years when the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent takes place, there is a significant preparatory process during which National Societies engage with their host governments to shape the positions and pledges that states bring to the Conference. This process represents the primary structured opportunity for MOPAN members to engage with the ICRC through their government delegations. Engagement outside this cycle relies primarily on bilateral channels and the DSG mechanism described below.

DONORS

Key donors and the Donor Support Group

The ICRC's primary donors are sovereign states and the European Commission. All contributions are voluntary; no assessed contributions or mandatory dues exist. In 2025, 72 governments and the European Commission collectively provided 85% of total contributions.

The **Donor Support Group (DSG)**, established in 1998, provides the ICRC's principal government donors (those contributing at least CHF 10 million in cash) with expanded access to information on the organisation's work and priorities. Together they contributed over 76% of the ICRC's funds in 2026. Currently, the DSG membership is made up of 24 bilateral donors and the European Commission, which is among the five largest donors together with the US, Germany, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The remainder of the funding comes from individuals, foundations, legacies, private companies and associations, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and UN agencies, the World Bank and NGOs (see Table 5 for details).⁵ The ICRC continues to engage with International Financial Institutions, including the World Bank, primarily focused on protracted crises. This engagement remains nascent but signals a potentially important evolution in the ICRC's resource mobilisation model.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Key structures and responsibilities

The ICRC's operational footprint as of December 2025 comprised 63 delegations and missions in 90+ countries across the five geographical regions of Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, and the Near and Middle East, supported by headquarters functions in Geneva. This structure reflects a deliberate emphasis on field presence and proximity to affected populations, which is central to the ICRC's operating model.

The Operations Department, the largest and most operationally diverse, is organised around regional directorates and houses technical programming units spanning protection (including detention and family links); economic security; health, water and habitat; weapon contamination; engaging with armed and security forces; and humanitarian

5. International Committee of the Red Cross (2025) *ICRC Annual Report 2024: Financial Report*. Geneva: ICRC [link](#).

diplomacy. The Mobilisation, Movement and Partnerships Department leads global engagement with all partners including Movement partners, government donors and private sector stakeholders, while also overseeing resource mobilisation and external communications.

BOX 5. DEPARTMENTS OF THE DIRECTORATE

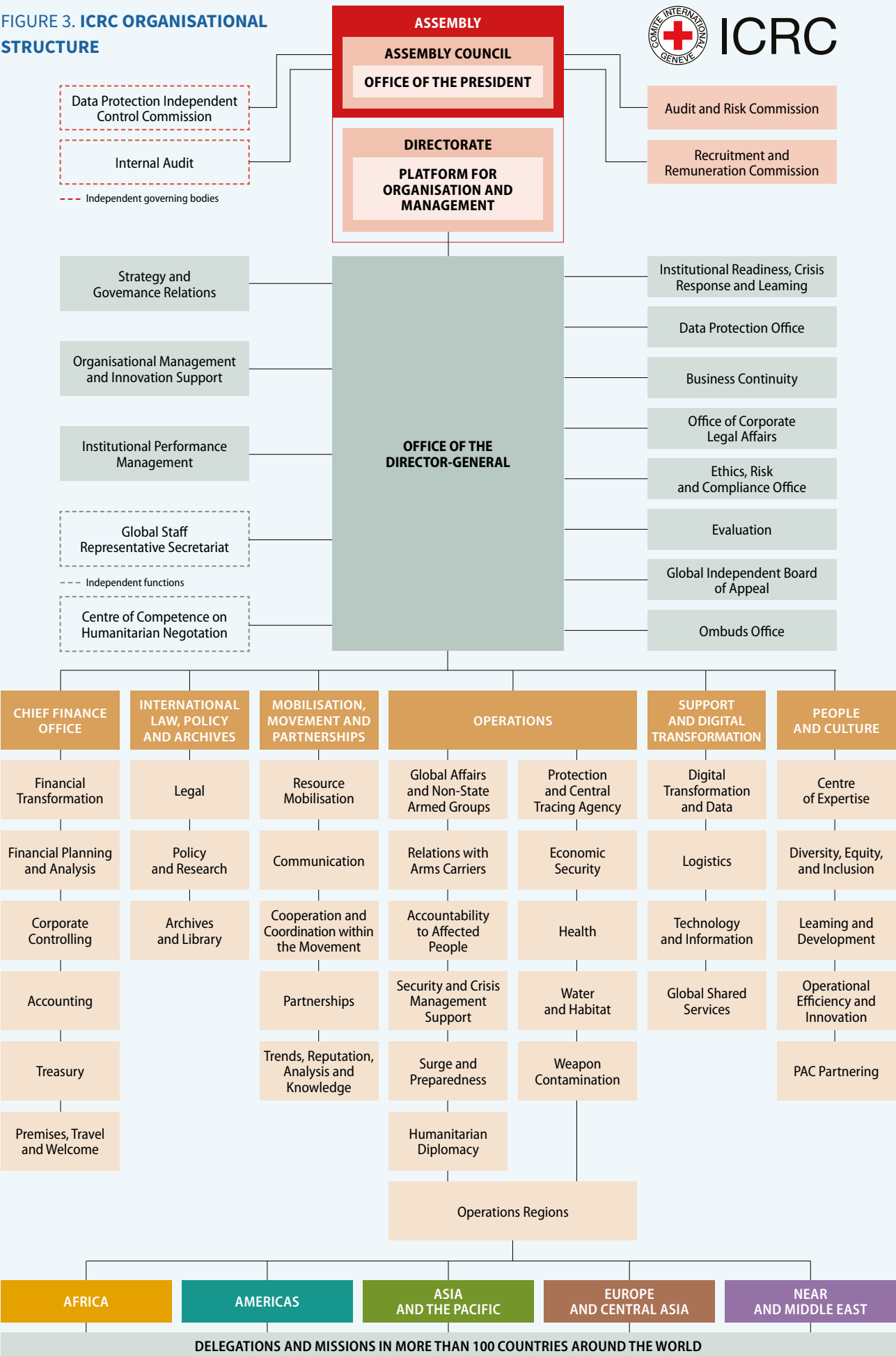
- Finance and Administration (Under the CFO): Financial governance, planning, treasury, accounting and corporate controlling. The CFO reports directly to the Assembly.
- International Law, Policy and Archives (LDP): Legal division, policy and research, archives. Leads the ICRC's normative role as custodian of IHL.
- Mobilisation, Movement and Partnerships (MMP): Resource mobilisation, communication, Movement co-operation, partnerships, trends and knowledge.
- Operations (OPS): Programme delivery across all regions. Includes protection, economic security, health, water and habitat, humanitarian diplomacy, crisis management and field logistics, weapon contamination and engaging with armed and security forces and accountability to affected populations, analysis and evidence.
- Support and Digital Transformation (SDT): Digital transformation, logistics, technology and information, global shared services.
- People and Culture (PAC): Recruitment, workforce development, diversity equity and inclusion, operational efficiency and organisational learning.



Hisor, Tajikistan

ICRC training for members of executive secretariat and heads of branches of Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan. Photo: © Shoguna Sobir | ICRC

FIGURE 3. ICRC ORGANISATIONAL
STRUCTURE



Source: ICRC Annual Report 2024.

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGES OVER THE ASSESSMENT PERIOD

The assessment period, which covers the 2024-2027 strategy and provides some context from 2022-2023, has been marked by significant organisational change. In 2023, the ICRC underwent its most substantial contraction in recent history, driven by a severe financial shortfall. Approximately 1 800 staff were made redundant (a 14% reduction in headcount) and 26 field structures were closed, including delegations in Mauritania, Malaysia and Greece. Operations in field offices including Dakar, Nairobi, Amman, Bangkok and Panama City were substantially scaled back.

In 2024, a new Director-General took office, and the Directorate was restructured to support implementation of the 2024-2027 strategy. Structural reforms included updates to financial regulations, an enhanced Financial Oversight Board, and a revised centralised Analysis and Evidence function to promote evidence-based programming. In mid-2025, the ICRC announced a further 16.9% budget reduction for 2026, signalling continued organisational adjustment in response to a severely constrained funding environment. Changes are planned to the organisational structure set out above, including reducing the number of directorates. These changes had not been completed at the end of the assessment's evidence gathering period.

ICRC's accountability architecture includes the Planning for Results (PfR) and Managing for Results (MfR) frameworks, which provide the operational structure for translating strategic orientations into delegation-level programming plans and tracking implementation. The PfR framework was updated following the 2024 restructuring and has been positively received at delegation level.

Staffing

Staffing is a central dimension of the ICRC's operational model, given its direct-implementation model and the extent to which humanitarian access and outcomes depend on the quality, continuity and safety of its personnel in the field. In May 2026, total staffing stood at 15 889, comprising 1 041 staff at Geneva headquarters and 14 199 deployed across delegations in the field, and 649 staff located in the Shared Service Centres — meaning approximately 93.45% of all staff are based outside headquarters.

This ratio reflects the ICRC's operational philosophy: proximity to affected populations and direct access to parties in conflict are essential to enable it to fulfil its mandate. Field staff encompass a wide range of professional profiles, including protection delegates, economic security specialists, health professionals, water and habitat engineers, logisticians, communications officers and support functions. The balance between international mobile staff and locally recruited national staff (which shifted toward a higher proportion of national staff following the 2023 reductions) has cost efficiency advantages but carries implications for the organisation's operational model and its capacity to maintain institutional knowledge across delegations. The ICRC is actively reviewing this balance as part of its 2024-2027 staffing strategy.

The ICRC experienced significant staffing volatility over the assessment period. Following a peak headcount of 22 488 in December 2022, the organisation's 2023 financial crisis triggered its largest workforce reduction in recent history: approximately 1 800 positions were eliminated, a 14% reduction, bringing headcount to 19 369 by end-2023. Contraction continued into 2024, with staffing falling to approximately 17 300 at the start of the year. A modest recovery to 17 978 was recorded by early 2025, although the 16.9% budget reduction for 2026 placed renewed pressure on staffing levels.

TABLE 3. ICRC STAFFING LEVELS 2022–2025

Period	HQ Staff	Field Staff	Total Staff	Total Staff
Dec 2022	~1 200 (est.)	~21 300 (est.)	22 488	Pre-crisis peak
End 2023	~1 100 (est.)	~18 270 (est.)	19 369	~1 800 redundancies; 26 structures closed
Early 2024	934	16 423	17 300 (approx.)	Continued downsizing; 97 delegations
Early 2025	1 008	16 970	17 978	Stabilisation; 97 delegations and missions
Early 2026	1 041	14 199	15 889*	16.9% budget reductions with downsizing to 63 delegations and missions

Note: *This total includes staff working at the Shared Service Centre (649 staff).

Source: ICRC Annual Reports and Appeals 2023–2025 and ICRC data.

Key staffing challenges over the assessment period include managing the human impact of large-scale redundancies while preserving institutional memory and technical expertise; sustaining surge capacity in contexts of escalating or concurrent crises; retaining and recruiting diverse and skilled staff in a competitive humanitarian labour market; and implementing the 2024–2027 strategy’s emphasis on enhanced skills, trust, cohesion and responsibility. The ICRC has invested in redesigning its recruitment, onboarding and training processes to reflect these priorities, and has preserved resources to implement this work accordingly. Overall, the assessment finds that the ICRC’s management of the 2023 restructuring was substantive and reflected genuine institutional learning, particularly in the second phase which incorporated more structured communication and knowledge-transfer processes. However, the full impact on institutional capacity, field proximity and staff morale is still unfolding, and will require sustained monitoring through the second half of the strategy period.

FINANCES AND OPERATIONS

Financial model

The ICRC operates a needs-based, “plan-implement-fund” budgeting model: programming decisions are made on the basis of assessed humanitarian need and operational capacity, with fundraising undertaken subsequently. This model preserves neutrality by separating programming from funding, but it exposes the organisation to structural cash-flow risks when donor contributions lag behind expenditures, a vulnerability that materialised acutely in 2022–2023. Following on from its 2023 financial crisis, the ICRC introduced: a revised liquidity reserve policy; an enhanced Financial Oversight Board with early-warning functions; real-time financial dashboards; and a revised treasury policy. These measures substantially reduce (though cannot eliminate) the structural cash-flow risk of the model.

All contributions to the ICRC are voluntary. States and the European Commission provide the largest share, with the remainder coming from National Societies (who have also been affected by the decline in global funding), foundations, private companies, and other public and private donors. The ICRC applies a 6.5% overhead on field expenditures to fund its headquarters. The organisation distinguishes between unearmarked contributions (full flexibility – 32.0% of the contributions in 2025), loosely earmarked contributions (regional or thematic – 13.5%), and tightly earmarked contributions (specific projects or countries – 54.6%).

The ICRC reported an annual income of CHF 2.04 billion in 2024, which for comparison is approximately 6% of the total income of the IFRC network (CHF 33 billion in 2024 for the IFRC secretariat plus 191 National Societies).⁶

6. To note that the CHF 33 billion IFRC network figure includes National Society domestic fundraising and government grants to individual National Societies; it is not strictly comparable to ICRC’s internationally mobilised budget, therefore. Source: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2025) *Regular Resources 2024*. Geneva: IFRC, https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/2025-09/IFRC_Regular_Resources_2024.pdf.

Budget trends

Following a CHF 117 million deficit in 2022 (around 4% of total planned expenditure), driven by reduced donor funding, inflation-driven cost increases, and insufficient cash-flow risk management, the ICRC implemented sweeping financial reforms and budget reductions (illustrating the potential vulnerability of the plan-implement-fund model). These included a new CFO position elevated to Directorate level, enhanced financial monitoring and reporting systems, and a revised treasury policy (which included for the first time real-time management of bank accounts). The reforms produced surpluses of CHF 311 million (2023) and CHF 291 million (2024), restoring liquidity. For 2025, however, major donor shifts and a collapse in global humanitarian funding are projected to result in a CHF 113 million deficit, which the organisation expects to absorb from accumulated liquidity reserves.

TABLE 4. ICRC FINANCIAL RESULTS 2022–2026 (PROJECTED)

Year	Contributions (CHF m)	Staff Costs (CHF m)	Other Expenditure (CHF m)	Result (CHF m)
2022	2 553	–1 068	–1 602	–117
2023	2 418	–1 042	–1 065	311
2024	2 038	–877	–942	291
2025	1 736	–912	–937	–113
2026 (projected)	1 800	–823	–852	+25

Source: ICRC (2024) *ICRC Annual Report 2023*, <https://www.icrc.org/en/report/icrc-annual-report-2023>; ICRC (2025) *ICRC Annual Report 2024*, <https://www.icrc.org/en/report/icrc-annual-report-2024>; ICRC (2026) *ICRC Annual Report 2025*, <https://www.icrc.org/en/report/icrc-annual-report-2025>



Tantéga, Atakora Department, Northern Benin

Distribution of seed kits by the ICRC and the Benin Red Cross (BRC) to strengthen community resilience against food insecurity.

Photo: © Yapo
Ange-Eustache | AGBE

Income: Sources and trends

Governments and the European Commission increased their share of ICRC contributions between 2022 and 2024, from 77.3% in 2022 to a peak of 89.7% in 2024, after which they dropped to 82% in 2025. Private and National Society contributions fluctuated in the same period, with an increase in 2025 (see Table 5 below). In 2025, the top five donor countries provided 52% of all contributions. This significant concentration risk is a strategic concern that the ICRC's Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2027 explicitly seeks to address through donor diversification. Progress to date, particularly in growing contributions from emerging donors in Asia, Africa, the Gulf and Latin America, and from private sources, has been limited.

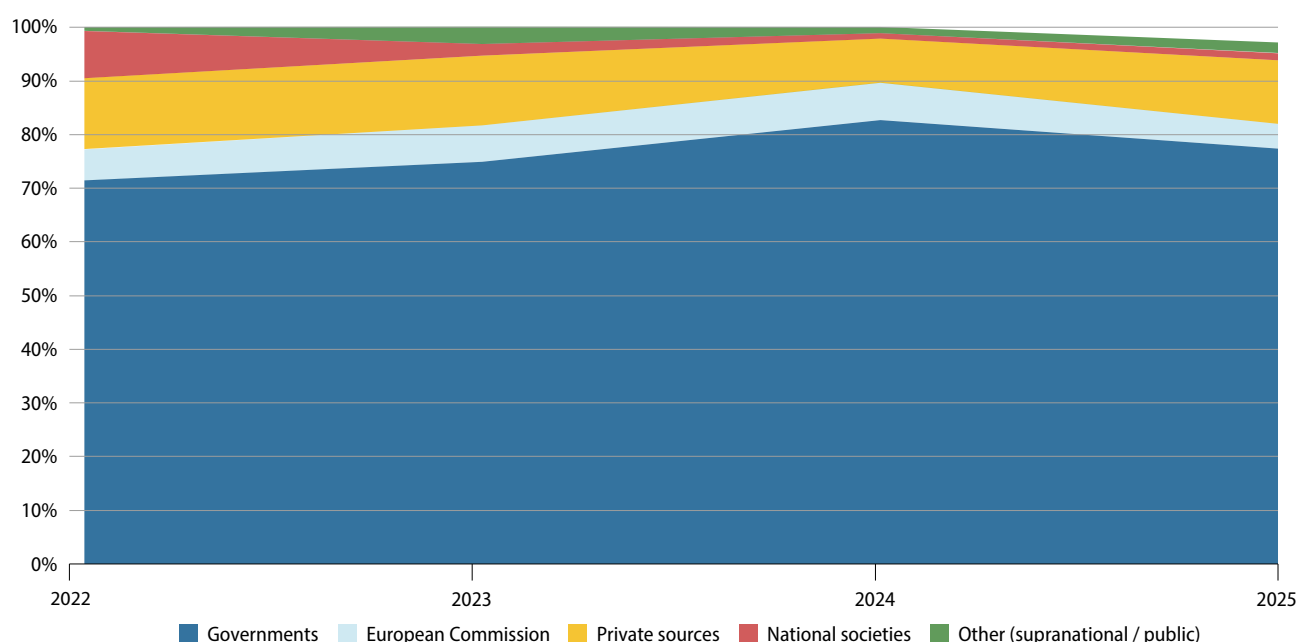
Flexible funding (unearmarked or loosely earmarked) is essential to the ICRC's operational model. In 2025, it accounted for 45% of total cash contributions (CHF 558 million unearmarked + CHF 233 million loosely earmarked), enabling the organisation to respond rapidly to emerging and escalating crises.

TABLE 5. CONTRIBUTIONS BY SOURCE, 2022-2024

Source	2022 (CHF m)	% 2022	2023 (CHF m)	% 2023	2024 (CHF m)	% 2024	2025 (CHF m)	% 2025
Governments	1 820	71.4%	1 811	74.9%	1 683	82.7%	1 343	77.4%
European Commission	151	5.9%	164	6.8%	142	7.0%	132	4.6%
Private Sources	337	13.2%	314	13.0%	167	8.2%	204	11.8%
National Societies	221	8.8%	48	2.1%	20	1.0%	24	1.4%
Other (supranational / public)	22	0.7%	81	3.3%	26	1.1%	33	1.9%
TOTAL	2 553	100%	2 418	100%	2 038	100%	1 736	100%

Source: ICRC (2024) *ICRC Annual Report 2023*, <https://www.icrc.org/en/report/icrc-annual-report-2023>; ICRC (2025) *ICRC Annual Report 2024*, <https://www.icrc.org/en/report/icrc-annual-report-2024>; ICRC (2026) *ICRC Annual Report 2025*, <https://www.icrc.org/en/report/icrc-annual-report-2025>.

FIGURE 4. SOURCE OF FUNDING (2022-2025)



Source: Figures provided by the ICRC.

Expenditure: Distribution and trends

Field operations represent the dominant share of ICRC expenditure. In 2025, field programme expenditure totalled CHF 1.72 billion, with essential services (food, water, livelihoods, health) accounting for 63% of field spending, protection 20%, prevention 10%, co-operation with National Societies 7%, and general costs 1%.

The ICRC's strategic plan has renewed its focus on protection, its core mission. The organisation's expenditure reflects this with a 4 percentage points increase from 2022 to 2025 — accounting for 16% of total expenditure in 2022 to 20% in 2025. See Table 6.

FIGURE 5. FIELD OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE ACROSS PROGRAMMATIC AREAS, 2025

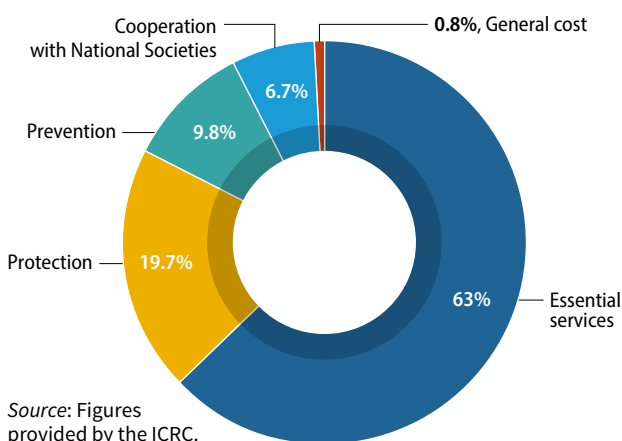


TABLE 6. FIELD OPERATIONS EXPENDITURE ACROSS PROGRAMMATIC AREAS 2022-2025

Year	Protection	Essential services	Prevention	Co-operation with National Societies	General cost
2022	16%	70%	8%	5%	1%
2023	18%	65%	9%	6%	1%
2024	19%	63%	10%	7%	2%
2025	19.7%	63%	9.8%	6.7%	0.8%

Source: ICRC Annual Reports 2022-2025, <https://blogs.icrc.org/cross-files/annual-reports/>

The ten largest operations absorbed the majority of resources, led by Ukraine (CHF 167 million), Israel and the Occupied Territories (CHF 113 million), Syria (CHF 104 million) and Yemen (CHF 101 million).

TABLE 7. TOP 10 ICRC FIELD OPERATIONS BY EXPENDITURE, 2025

Rank	Operation	2025 Expenditure (CHF m)
1	Ukraine	157.8
2	Israel, West Bank and Gaza Strip	154.4
3	Yemen	100.5
4	Afghanistan	98.6
5	Syrian Arab Republic	97.7
6	Democratic Republic of Congo	89.6
7	South Sudan	85.1
8	Somalia	68.5
9	Nigeria	61.4
10	Ethiopia	56.9

Source: Provided by the ICRC, OECD nomenclature used (2025)

Financial outlook

The ICRC's financial environment remains challenging. The 2025 budget appeal of CHF 2.17 billion faces an estimated CHF 113 million deficit, driven by the withdrawal or reduction of contributions from major donors including the United States, and announced reductions from Germany, the United Kingdom and ECHO. Total global annual overseas development assistance spending fell 9% between 2023 and 2024. Preliminary data show a further drop of 23.1% between 2024 and 2025.⁷ Reductions are expected to continue in 2026, placing severe pressure on all major humanitarian organisations. A MOPAN system-wide mapping of 31 multilateral organisations confirms that this is a structural contraction: 77% of major UN agencies have announced deep budget shortfalls, with budget reductions ranging from 30-60%, particularly in voluntary funding streams.⁸ Humanitarian agencies are disproportionately affected. The ICRC's own trajectory mirrors this system-wide shift from a “do more with less” paradigm to a reality of “doing less with less”. Efficiency measures alone, while necessary, are insufficient to offset cuts of this magnitude, as the MOPAN mapping demonstrates across the multilateral system as a whole.⁹

In response, the ICRC announced a further 16.9% budget reduction for 2026 in mid-2025. Its revised Resource Mobilisation Strategy (2025-2027) identifies four orientations: securing the funding base, reducing funding concentration, improving funding quality, and strengthening strategic anchoring. The organisation enters this period with a relatively strong liquidity position accumulated through surpluses in 2023 and 2024, and with systemic financial reforms in place, providing a degree of resilience in the near term.

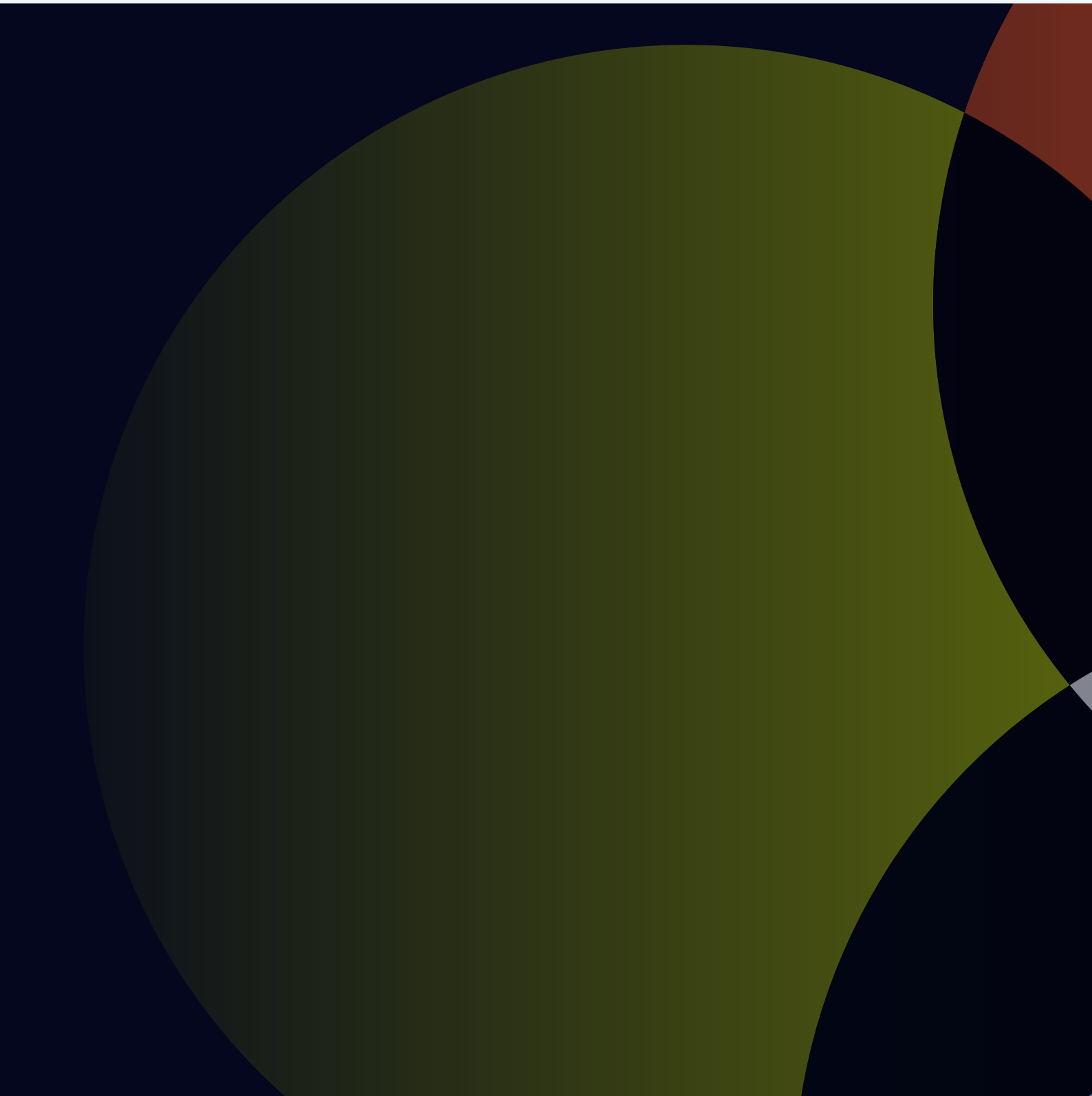
BOX 6. KEY FINANCIAL INDICATORS AT A GLANCE (2025)

- Total contributions: CHF 1.74 billion
- Total budget (field + HQ): CHF 2.08 billion /Actual expenditures CHF 1.84 billion
- Overall result: CHF -113 million deficit
- Implementation rate: 88% (field 88%, HQ 91%)
- Flexible funding share: 45% of contributions
- Overhead rate: 6.5% on field expenditures
- Staff (as of May 2026): 15 889 (1 041 at HQ, 14 199 in delegations and field missions and 649 in Shared Service Centres)
- Country presence: 63 delegations and missions covering over 90 countries in five operational regions

7. OECD. April 2026, *Preliminary official development assistance levels in 2025*, [link](#).

8. Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) 2025, *Mapping of Multilateral Organisations' Response to the Current Funding Environment, Multilateral Effectiveness in a Shifting Landscape*, MOPAN, Paris, [link](#).

9. OECD. April 2026, *Preliminary official development assistance levels in 2025*, [link](#).



CONCLUSIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE





International conference

Participants at the 4th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in Geneva. Photo: © Timothée Calamé | ICRC

This chapter describes the conclusions of the assessment and how the ICRC has adapted to its evolving strategic, policy and operating context. It highlights the strengths, good practices, risks and constraints that influence the ability of the organisation to play its role in the international humanitarian system and deliver results in line with its mandate. The chapter concludes by exploring the ICRC's future trajectory and sets out consideration for the organisation in responding to emerging challenges. As this is the first MOPAN assessment of the ICRC, these conclusions serve as a baseline against which future progress can be assessed. The conclusions build upon the ratings and findings presented in detail in Chapter 3.

SECTION 1: AN ORGANISATION NAVIGATING EXCEPTIONAL PRESSURES: CONTEXT ANALYSIS

Over the assessment period, the ICRC has faced a convergence of significant humanitarian, financial and geopolitical pressures. According to the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme, state-based armed conflicts reached 61 in 2024, the highest since records began in 1946, while the ICRC's own count of armed conflict broadly defined exceeded 120, a figure that has more than doubled in the past 15 years.¹ ACLED recorded 233 597 conflict-related fatalities in 2024, a 30% increase on the previous year and among the highest annual totals in recent decades.² Protracted conflicts in Sudan, the DR Congo and across the Sahel generated displacement on a scale that severely challenged the international humanitarian system.³ Conflict in the Middle East has further escalated in 2025 and 2026, affecting millions across the region.

Beyond intensifying operational pressures, recent events have brought into focus **the erosion of respect for IHL in several contemporary conflicts**. Growing non-compliance by parties to conflict risks weakening the normative framework within which the ICRC operates and may affect the organisation's ability to deliver on its mandate. The extent to which the ICRC can adapt its operating model, maintain access and influence, and continue to promote respect for IHL in an increasingly complex geopolitical environment will be an important factor in determining its performance in the coming years. These developments have unfolded alongside a marked decline in the organisation's financial resources as it moved into the latter phase of its strategy.

Geopolitical tensions have simultaneously increased humanitarian needs and complicated the conditions for principled humanitarian action. The restrictions on humanitarian access, and the increasing targeting of humanitarian workers and infrastructure in conflicts including Gaza, Sudan and Ukraine have tested the ICRC's operating principles in profound ways. The organisation's commitment to neutrality, impartiality and independence — the principles that underpin its access and credibility — has come under pressure from multiple directions, including differing expectations from parties to conflict, scrutiny of its confidential engagement model, and an increasingly complex operating environment.

There has been particular focus on the ICRC's bilateral engagement with states that may themselves be party to, or actively enabling, conflicts in which serious IHL violations are alleged. The organisation's longstanding and traditional advocacy approach, based on confidential bilateral dialogue, poses difficulties when the parties in question are also among the organisation's financial supporters.

Technological change is rapidly transforming the nature of warfare, creating new normative and operational challenges for the ICRC. The proliferation of autonomous weapons systems, artificial intelligence in military decision-making, misinformation and the use of cyberspace as a domain of conflict has posed challenging questions around the application of IHL. Addressing these challenges falls squarely within the ICRC's mandate, but requires

1. Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), "Sharp increase in conflicts and wars", Uppsala University Press Release, 11 June 2025, [link](#); and ICRC, *ICRC Annual Report 2024* (Geneva: ICRC, 2025) [link](#).

2. Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED), cited in *The Washington Post*, "Data shows global conflict surged in 2024" (2025) [link](#).

3. Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP), "Sharp increase in conflicts and wars", Uppsala University Press Release, 11 June 2025, [link](#).



Erbil, Iraq

Omar, 25, stepped on a landmine while he was herding his flock. The explosion cost him his leg. The ICRC centre provided him a prosthesis and physical rehabilitation

Photo: © Mike Mustafa Khalaf | ICRC

additional legal, technical and diplomatic capacity. Some stakeholders have raised questions about whether existing legal frameworks remain sufficient for emerging technologies, although reforms to the Geneva Conventions do not appear likely in the near term.

The ICRC's 2023 financial crisis marked a structural inflection point that continues to shape the organisation.

A CHF 117 million deficit at the end of 2022, driven by reduced donor funding, inflation and inadequate cash-flow risk management, triggered the most significant contraction in the ICRC's recent history. Approximately 1 800 staff were made redundant, 26 field structures were closed, and operations were scaled back across multiple delegations. While the immediate crisis was resolved through a combination of budget cuts, fundraising and financial governance reforms, generating surpluses of CHF 311 million (2023) and CHF 291 million (2024), the episode left an enduring mark on staff morale, institutional capacity and the organisation's proximity to affected communities in some contexts. This highlighted the vulnerability of the ICRC's plan-implement-fund model that commits to programming based on assessed need before funding is confirmed; a principled but structurally risky model when donor funding becomes unpredictable, and one that requires effective management and systems that are now more evident in the ICRC than they were in 2022.

The 2025 funding reductions signal a further and potentially more durable deterioration in the global humanitarian funding environment. The United States (historically the ICRC's largest single donor) implemented a 90-day freeze on all overseas aid in early 2025 followed by steep aid cuts. France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom also announced reductions to Official Development Assistance (ODA) budgets. Global humanitarian funding fell from a peak of USD 26.81 billion in 2023 to USD 14.85 billion in 2025.⁴ For the ICRC, this translates into a projected CHF 150 million deficit in 2025. While this is manageable in the near term given accumulated liquidity, a further 16.9% budget reduction for 2026 will impose additional constraints on staffing and operations. Navigating such instability will require both diversification of funding and tighter budgetary control.

4. OECD/DAC, April 2026, *A historic decline in foreign aid: Preliminary 2025 ODA data* [link](#).

The ICRC has responded to these pressures through a combination of strategic prioritisation, institutional reform and adaptive management. The 2024-2027 Institutional Strategy represents a substantive effort to modernise the organisation while reaffirming its foundational principles. Two institutional crises (the 2022-2023 financial shortfall and a serious data breach) generated important lessons that have shaped the strategy. The financial crisis led to significant changes to the financial governance architecture, while the data breach led to a comprehensive review and reinforcement of its global IT infrastructure, data protection controls and cybersecurity standards. The current strategy's distinctive feature, elevating enabling functions (financial resilience, digital transformation, people and culture) to the level of strategic orientations, signalled a recognition that institutional effectiveness is inseparable from humanitarian impact. The appointment of a new Director-General in April 2024 and a restructured Directorate have provided renewed executive leadership. A centralised Analysis and Evidence function, updated financial governance mechanisms (including elevating the CFO position to Directorate level) and the Global IHL Initiative, are recent but potentially important institutional reforms, the effectiveness of which will be tested in the coming years. The ICRC has also focused back on its core mandate in the face of funding cuts. In a funding environment where it needs to “do less, with less”, it has sought to operate with greater focus, efficiency and institutional clarity and has re-centred to its humanitarian mandate, moving away from resilience programming to systems resilience in protracted crises and development-adjacent contexts.

The ICRC in operation

BOX 7. HIGHLIGHTS FROM AN ICRC DELEGATION

The MOPAN assessment team undertook a field visit to the ICRC South Sudan delegation in November 2025 to gain a better understanding of how the ICRC delivers its operations and humanitarian activities on the ground. The visit included meetings with ICRC staff, humanitarian agencies and government officials in Juba, as well as a visit to the sub-delegation in Yei.

The ICRC has been present in Juba since 1980 and opened a delegation in South Sudan in mid-2011 to respond to the needs of people affected by armed conflict and other violence.

The MOPAN team examined how the delegation manages its day-to-day operations and conducts its annual planning process, to prioritise responses to humanitarian needs in a highly fluid operational context. Through interviews with management and staff from each department, or metier, the assessment developed a thorough understanding of how the delegation functions and, importantly, how the ICRC engages with Movement partners present in the country. This included direct discussions with the South Sudan Red Cross (SSRC) in Juba and the branch in Yei, as well as with the IFRC and partner National Societies. The assessment explored the impact of the ICRC's 2023 financial crisis on the delegation, and assessed the delegation's implementation of due diligence, risk management and compliance requirements.

The South Sudan delegation demonstrates how the institution has adapted to both internal and external challenges. Structural changes and staff reductions following the 2023 financial crisis have resulted in a smaller operational footprint. To maintain the delivery of critical assistance to remote areas, the ICRC has introduced more flexible logistical and programmatic arrangements. A shift towards more generalist roles within the delegation has improved efficiency, while retaining essential protection and technical expertise. Structural and operational changes introduced since 2022 helped buffer the delegation against further reductions in 2025, as it was already operating at a reduced scale. Lessons learned from the financial crisis have also led to more consistent monthly financial monitoring. Staff receive training on due diligence and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), and interviews confirmed a strong understanding of these requirements.

The ICRC's positioning in the multilateral architecture

The ICRC occupies a singular position in the humanitarian system, not only because of its mandate or operating model, but because of more than 160 years of accumulated institutional history, doctrine and practice. Critically, this positioning is dynamic, not static. During the assessment period, the ICRC has been making deliberate and consequential choices about where to develop its comparative and collaborative advantage, and where to allow others to lead. Five dimensions are particularly relevant in understanding this repositioning.

- Legal and normative authority:** The ICRC is formally mandated by the Geneva Conventions, treaties ratified by 196 states, to protect and assist victims of armed conflict. As guardian of IHL, the ICRC has been playing a recognised role in developing, promoting and supporting the implementation of IHL since 1864. Its commentaries on the Geneva Conventions are the primary reference for IHL interpretation. During the assessment period, the ICRC engaged states, technology companies and armed non-state actors on a range of contemporary IHL issues including autonomous weapons, artificial intelligence and cyber operations, and in September 2024 co-launched the Global IHL Initiative with six founding states. By February 2026, 109 states had formally joined and over 130 had participated in consultations, making this one of the most significant multilateral IHL processes of recent years.
- Operational independence:** The ICRC does not participate in UN co-ordination mechanisms in the same way as UN agencies, given its position that principled independence is a prerequisite for access to all conflict parties. In practice, it engages selectively but substantively with many partners including UNICEF, WFP, WHO, UNHCR, DPKO and OCHA on a range of engagements. This includes, for example, engagement with UNHCR on displacement protection and the civilian character of sites (including camps and other settlements for refugees); with UNODC on detention standards; with UN peacekeeping operations on civilian protection and IHL compliance — a relationship growing in significance as peacekeeping mandates contract; and with OCHA around the 2025 Humanitarian Reset, which ICRC has approached as an opportunity to protect principled humanitarian space within an evolving co-ordination architecture. As the number of armed conflicts has grown and the funding architecture for principled response has come under strain, the ICRC's ability to operate where others cannot has become simultaneously more valuable and more contested.
- Strategic prioritisation:** Perhaps the most consequential development of the assessment period is the ICRC's decision to sharpen its focus on protection in active conflict situations and to step back from humanitarian-development nexus activities, where needs have evolved toward recovery and resilience. The ICRC reports that its priority is to make sure it can respond to crises, while keeping the ambition to work in protracted crises (DRC, Syria, South Sudan etc.) with a specific focus on essential services' resilience to shocks and support to service providers to enhance their capacity to respond to recurring crises. This reflects a strategic judgement that the ICRC's comparative advantage lies primarily in the acute conflict phase, and that other actors (IFRC and National Societies, development agencies, civil society) are better placed to lead once emergencies stabilise. In several contexts, the ICRC has had to explain this shift to affected communities and facilitate transition planning. The quality of those transitions has been uneven. The assessment notes the importance of the ICRC being transparent with donors and partners about the extent of this shift and the implications for other actors.
- Movement leadership:** As the founding institution of the Movement, the ICRC has co-ordination responsibility for the IFRC and 191 National Societies. The Seville Agreement 2.0 has clarified the division of labour, with the ICRC co-convening with host National Societies in armed conflict and internal strife, and IFRC in disasters and other crises. In practice, this boundary is not always clear; as the ICRC has scaled back in some contexts, National Societies may absorb new responsibilities as part of the transition process. The Movement represents the ICRC's most significant potential force multiplier, complementing the organisation's mandate and extending its capacity to deliver a range of activities.

- **Institutional history and culture:** Founded in 1863, the ICRC is one of the world's oldest humanitarian organisations, predating the United Nations by 82 years and most of its peer institutions by many decades. This history is a source of active operational and analytical advantage. The ICRC's Geneva headquarters houses one of the most significant humanitarian archives in existence, spanning conflicts from the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 through to contemporary theatres of operation. These archives, maintained and curated by the organisation's dedicated archival function within its International Law, Policy and Archives (LDP) department, contain delegate correspondence, prisoner of war records, tracing mission documentation and diplomatic communications accumulated across 160 years of engagement in armed conflict. This institutional memory serves an operational function: when the ICRC engages a contemporary armed group, it can draw on documented precedents across different historical contexts. The culture of confidentiality that pervades the organisation, often noted as a constraint on transparency, is itself a product of this deep history, transmitted through training, mentorship and institutional socialisation in ways that cannot be replicated through policy alone. This depth of culture, doctrine and institutional memory represents a form of organisational capital that is unparalleled.

SECTION 2: CONCLUSIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT

This assessment finds the ICRC to be a credible, principled and resilient organisation that delivers vital humanitarian impact in the world's most dangerous contexts. Its performance across the MOPAN framework reflects the value of a clear, legally grounded mandate and a distinctive operating model. At the same time, it also reveals some structural vulnerabilities, in funding stability and results measurement, which require sustained attention if the organisation is to maintain its effectiveness in an increasingly demanding environment. The following sections set out the key themes from the assessment, organised around organisational strengths, good practices and areas for improvement.

Organisational strengths

The ICRC's comparative and collaborative advantage is its unique combination of legal mandate, principled operating model and normative authority. It is the only humanitarian organisation formally mandated by



Afghanistan

Mazar Dara, Noorgal district, Kunar province. Emergency relief efforts by the ICRC and the Afghan Red Crescent for communities devastated by the earthquakes in eastern Afghanistan. Photo: © Mohammad Masoud Samimi | ICRC

international treaty to protect and assist victims of armed conflict. This legal foundation, rooted in the Geneva Conventions and the Statutes of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, grants the ICRC access to parties in conflict, detainees, and contested territories that are closed to virtually all other international actors. The principle of neutrality is also an operational asset: it enables the ICRC to maintain dialogue with over 60% of approximately 450 armed groups globally, to facilitate the release of hostages and detainees, and to provide medical care and food in areas where other humanitarian organisations cannot operate. The ICRC's recognised standing as the guardian of IHL is derived from its treaty-based mandate and its role over more than 160 years in developing, interpreting and promoting the laws of armed conflict. This has given the ICRC a distinctive capacity to influence discussions and practice among states, armed groups and technology companies through legal persuasion, authoritative commentary and advocacy in ways that purely operational organisations cannot replicate. The assessment finds that this principled model is deeply embedded across all levels of the organisation and consistently operationalised through training, guidance, performance management and institutional culture.

The ICRC's response to its 2023 financial crisis demonstrates meaningful institutional learning and genuine improvements in governance. The “plan-implement-fund” model, while structurally exposing the organisation to cash-flow risk that requires careful management, has successfully preserved the integrity of programming decisions from donor pressure. The elevation of the Chief Financial Officer position to Directorate level, real-time financial monitoring systems (for example, through dashboards), a revised treasury policy, active cash management with real time oversight of all bank accounts, and an enhanced Financial Oversight Board collectively represent a substantive upgrade in financial governance and a much-improved approach to managing cash-flow risk. The generation of CHF 311 million (2023) and CHF 291 million (2024) surpluses, following a CHF 117 million deficit in 2022, demonstrates the effectiveness of these reforms. Flexible funding, maintained above 39% of contributions, has allowed the ICRC to adapt rapidly in response to escalating crises. Beyond financial governance, stakeholders — including members of the Donor Support Group (DSF) — report that the ICRC's post-crisis external engagement has become markedly more proactive and transparent. The organisation's increased openness since 2023 about its financial trajectory and reform progress has clearly strengthened donor confidence.

The 2024–2027 Institutional Strategy represents a substantive and credible effort to modernise the organisation while preserving its foundational identity. The elevation of enabling functions (digital transformation, people and culture, financial resilience) to the level of strategic orientations is a structural innovation that signals the Directorate's recognition that humanitarian effectiveness requires institutional fitness. Cross-cutting approaches on gender and diversity, climate and conflict, accountability to affected populations, and impact and evaluation reflect a serious engagement with sector-wide commitments. The first implementation phase (2024-2025) has already generated tangible results in emergency preparedness, IHL promotion and organisational redesign.

The ICRC's role as guardian of IHL is being reinvigorated. The 75th anniversary of the 1949 Geneva Conventions provided a platform for the ICRC to build the *Global Initiative on IHL*. This new international initiative, developed jointly with Brazil, China, France, Jordan, Kazakhstan and South Africa, is aimed at strengthening political commitment to comply with IHL. It is a direct response to the erosion of respect for IHL seen in several contemporary conflicts, where patterns of civilian harm, attacks on medical facilities, and state inaction have tested the boundaries of the ICRC's traditional engagement model. Mounting pressure on the organisation's impartiality (from states, non-state actors and public opinion) has necessitated a more deliberate and adapted approach to state relations, which seeks to preserve confidential dialogue while managing the reputational and political costs of perceived silence.

The organisation is actively adapting its normative work to the evolving character of warfare. This is demonstrated through its engagement with states, armed forces, technology companies and civil society on the humanitarian and legal implications of autonomous weapons, cyber operations and artificial intelligence. Yet these technological developments, layered onto an already contested geopolitical environment, risk deepening



Fortaleza, Brazil

Holding of the ninth national meeting of the ICRC's Safer Access Network for Essential Public Services in 2024, aimed at reducing the impact of armed violence.

Photo: © Camila Almeida | ICRC

disagreements over the interpretation and application of core IHL principles and, by extension, over the ICRC's own operating model and mandate. As the boundaries between combatant and civilian, human and automated decision-making, and kinetic and digital warfare become increasingly blurred, the organisation faces challenges in maintaining its principled stance and normative relevance, while maintaining constructive relationships with the states whose political commitment it seeks to galvanise. While the challenges are acute, the ICRC's mandate and standing give it a distinctive capacity to tackle this difficult set of issues.

The ICRC's direct implementation model and deep field presence enable it to deliver real humanitarian impact.

With 89% of its 15 889 staff deployed in 63 delegations and missions covering over 90 countries in five operational regions, the organisation maintains a proximity to affected populations that is rare in the humanitarian system. This field-based model, while expensive relative to partner-implementation approaches, enables quality control, responsiveness and access that indirect modalities cannot replicate. In 2025, the ICRC facilitated 1.46 million phone calls between separated family members, visited 678 000 detainees across 557 places of detention, provided food security support to 3.04 million people and supported 669 hospitals. These results, substantial as they are, represent only the measurable dimension of an operational footprint whose most significant impacts are often unquantifiable. The assessment also identifies the ICRC's decision to return to a generalist (polyvalent) delegate model as contributing to its operational strength. This move away from a proliferation of highly specialised technical roles, which in some contexts had produced siloed working patterns, has been widely welcomed at field level as enabling more integrated programme delivery, clearer communication with government and partner counterparts, and more timely and joined-up needs assessments. Roving technical specialists and short-term consultants are used to maintain technical quality. The stakeholder survey confirms the quality of in-country decision-making: 85% of respondents agreed that the ICRC can make critical strategic and programming decisions at the country level, in proximity to where humanitarian needs are greatest. It is important to note, however, that physical proximity to affected populations is a necessary but not sufficient condition for accountability and responsiveness. While community feedback mechanisms exist, the ICRC's direct presence has not yet been translated into feedback, complaint systems or monitoring processes being consistently effective.

Notable ICRC practices

The ICRC's "plan-implement-fund" budgeting model is an example of principled financial architecture that other humanitarian organisations would benefit from examining. By designing programming around humanitarian need rather than available funding, the ICRC has created an institutional safeguard against donor-driven distortion of priorities. The maintenance of approximately 39% flexible (unearmarked or loosely earmarked) funding enables rapid adaptation to escalating crises, a model increasingly recognised in the Grand Bargain as best practice for humanitarian financing. This reflects (i) the ICRC's unique treaty-based mandate, providing donors with institutional

trust; (ii) long-term donor relationships built on consistent delivery; (iii) active advocacy for flexible contributions; and (iv) the plan-implement-fund model, demonstrating programming independence from funding. While the ICRC's model is not fully replicable, the relational and advocacy dimensions offer lessons for other organisations

The Analysis and Evidence function represents a promising institutional innovation in evidence-based humanitarian programming. Established in 2023 to promote a shift towards an evidence-based, outcome-oriented, and people-centric programming culture, the Analysis and Evidence function is working to develop common definitions, metrics and methodologies across the programme cycle. The early integration of GIS capacity, protection evidence frameworks and outcome-level monitoring data is encouraging, and the function has the potential, if adequately resourced and given genuine institutional authority, to significantly strengthen the ICRC's results architecture.

The creation of an independent Evaluation Office, with the Head of Evaluation reporting directly to the Director-General and with full discretion over the evaluation programme, represents a meaningful institutional investment in accountability and learning that is positively viewed by stakeholders. The function has produced credible evaluation products within the first phase of the strategy. The sustainability and impact of the Evaluation function will depend on its continued resourcing and the institutional authority granted to its recommendations in programme planning processes.

The ICRC's engagement with armed non-state actors represents one of the organisation's most distinctive capabilities and a core element of its comparative and collaborative advantage. Maintaining dialogue with hundreds of armed groups globally, through trained delegates operating under strict frameworks, is a capability grounded in its treaty-based mandate and built up over many decades.

Areas requiring improvement

The ICRC's most significant structural vulnerability is its dependence on a small number of government donors. In 2025, the top five donors provided 52% of all contributions, and 72 governments and the European Commission collectively provided 85% of total funding. The withdrawal or significant reduction of contributions from any of the top five donors, as evidenced during the US aid freeze in 2025, can trigger disruption at a magnitude that compromises the organisation's ability to deliver on its mandate. The ICRC's Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2027 identifies donor diversification as a priority, but progress to date, particularly in growing contributions from emerging donors in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Gulf, has been limited. While reliance on state funding remains high, the proportion of funding from private sources was 13% in 2023, 9% in 2024 and again 13% of all contributions in 2025 (a function of both an increase in private funding but also a decrease in the contribution of governments).

The limitations of the ICRC's results architecture represent a persistent and partially structural challenge. Some of the most significant outcomes of the ICRC's work (for example, violations of IHL prevented through confidential dialogue) are not systematically captured in the organisation's results framework. This is not simply a technical measurement failure; it reflects the fundamental tension between operational confidentiality (essential to the ICRC's access and credibility) and the accountability and transparency demands of results-based management. The Analysis and Evidence function, established in 2023, is an important step, but the organisation has not yet developed a credible methodology or theory of change for articulating and communicating the value of its most distinctive contributions. This gap is not merely an internal management challenge: it affects the ICRC's ability to demonstrate value to donors and to defend its overhead and staffing costs against pressures for efficiency.

Significant workforce reductions have created risks around institutional memory, staff wellbeing and operational capacity. The elimination of approximately 1 800 positions in 2023, followed by further reductions in 2024 and a reduction in the budget of 16.9% for 2026, has imposed a cumulative toll on the organisation's human

capital. Field operations, particularly in Africa, which absorbs 40% of the field budget, have been scaled back in ways that reduce proximity to affected communities. The assessment encountered concerns among staff relating to the retention of experienced field staff in hardship postings, succession planning at senior levels following the leadership transitions of 2023-2024, the adequacy of mental health and psychosocial support for staff in high-risk environments, and the pace of recruitment to fill capability gaps in digital, data and technical disciplines. The 2024-2027 strategy has an appropriate emphasis on skills, trust, cohesion and responsibility, but the investment required to address these challenges will need to be sustained, despite ongoing budget pressures.

The assessment identifies a persistent gap between the ICRC’s headquarters-level policy architecture on preventing and responding to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) and its active implementation at delegation and sub-delegation level. While headquarters policies, risk assessments and guidance are well-developed, evidence from field interviews and country-level review reveals that community-based complaint mechanisms are not consistently accessible to all affected populations, and that field staff do not always experience the active, proximate policy implementation support that the policy framework envisages. The operational realities of crisis contexts also make it challenging for delegations to engage with National Societies on the risks of SEAH and ensure appropriate prevention mechanisms are adopted. This gap is particularly significant given the ICRC’s direct-implementation model, partnerships with National Societies of various capacities and the often sensitive nature of its engagement with vulnerable populations. At the time of the assessment, the ICRC did not have a dedicated whistleblower protection policy in place, but noted that the development of a policy is anticipated to be in place by Q4 2027. The absence of a formalised, standalone policy is a gap under MOPAN’s assessment standards.

Digital transformation, while a stated strategic priority, remains at an early and uneven stage of implementation.

The ICRC has made meaningful investments in data protection (achieving internationally recognised standards), platform unification and cybersecurity. However, the assessment finds that the digital transformation agenda, critical for improving operational efficiency, scaling evidence-based programming and engaging with technology-sector partners on IHL, is proceeding unevenly. Field staff in several delegations report inadequate digital tools



**Southern Burundi,
Burunga province**

Musenyi, a refugee camp hosting people from the Democratic Republic of Congo. The ICRC and the Burundi Red Cross are working to restore family links at an ICRC connectivity center, serving Congolese refugees.

Photo:
© Hugh Cunningham
Kinsella | ICRC

and connectivity. The organisation's ability to leverage data analytics for real-time programming decisions, while improving, is not yet at the level of leading humanitarian organisations. Given the central role of technology in contemporary conflict (and the ICRC's strategic interest in engaging technology companies on IHL compliance), the gap between digital ambition and operational reality warrants sustained attention.

The role of the ICRC has to be continuously asserted and negotiated. The humanitarian system is undergoing structural transformation. For the ICRC, the 2025 Humanitarian Reset and UN80 reform process present both a challenge (system-wide funding contraction) and opportunity (the Reset's emphasis on principled action and locally led response aligns with the ICRC's operating model). It is important that the ICRC engages with these processes proactively, shaping the new architecture.

The ICRC's engagement with the localisation and "new humanitarianism" agenda requires further development.

The 2024-2027 strategy commits the ICRC to taking a leading role in policy debates on the future of humanitarian action, including "addressing power imbalances in aid delivery and exploring new paradigms", responding to debates it identifies on "the localisation and decolonisation of aid". It recognises the need to re-examine established practices and promote more inclusive and equitable approaches to humanitarian assistance. The assessment finds that, while the commitment is genuine and concrete steps have been taken, the ICRC's direct implementation model, linked to its mandate under the Geneva Conventions, is structurally in tension with elements of the localisation agenda that the ICRC has signed up to under Grand Bargain commitments. Greater clarity is needed on how the ICRC intends to translate its stated commitments into tangible shifts in power, resources and decision-making authority at the local level, while preserving the quality, access and principled grounding of its operations. The assessment also finds that, despite a sophisticated policy framework for Movement partnerships, relationships with National Societies at field level are frequently described by stakeholders (including National Society counterparts) as transactional: concentrated on technical task-delegation and financial pass-through rather than on joint planning, shared accountability or institutional capacity development. Capacity strengthening provided to National Societies predominantly focuses on technical skills rather than on governance, administration and longer-term organisational resilience (which fall

Ramadi, West Iraq

Al-Rawda
Al-Muhammadiya
Primary School.
ICRC Staff
Members giving
awareness sessions
about weapon
contamination
to the students,
including the
distribution of
stationery.
Photo: © Mike Mustafa
Khalaf | ICRC



within the mandate of the IFRC). The Movement is a key asset. The Seville Agreement 2.0, adopted in 2022, updated the Movement's division of labour, clarifying the ICRC's co-convener role in situations of armed conflict and internal strife, and the IFRC's co-convener role in disasters and other crises. In contexts where the ICRC and National Societies have invested in Seville-aligned co-ordination, joint programming has been more coherent and effective. However, implementation is uneven, and the Agreement's potential has not yet been fully realised. The National Society Investment Alliance (NSIA), while a potentially important vehicle for more equitable, multi-year partnership, has not yet achieved the scale or systematic reach required to change this characterisation in most operational contexts.

TABLE 8. MAIN STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Main strengths	Areas for improvement
- Unique legal mandate (Geneva Conventions) granting unparalleled access and authority to operate in armed conflict - Principled operating model (neutrality, impartiality, independence) institutionally embedded and consistently operationalised in complex environments - Unmatched engagement with armed groups (approx. 60% of ~450 globally), enabling access to populations unreachable by other actors - Credible financial governance reform following the 2023 crisis; strong liquidity position and surpluses in 2023-2024 - Maintenance of ~39% flexible funding, preserving rapid-response capability and programming integrity - Substantive 2024-2027 strategy that elevates institutional effectiveness alongside humanitarian delivery - Leading normative role on IHL, actively adapted to address new technologies (autonomous weapons, cyber, AI) - Strong direct-implementation model with 89% of staff in the field, ensuring proximity to affected populations - Analysis and Evidence function and Independent Evaluation Office have strengthened evidence-based programming - Return to generalist delegate model has sharpened programming and country-level decision-making - Strengthened IT infrastructure and data governance following data breach - More proactive, transparent donor engagement particularly through thematic DSG forums	- Acute vulnerability from funding concentration: top 5 donors provide 52% of contributions, with limited diversification progress - Insufficient progress on donor diversification, particularly from private sources (declined to 9% in 2024, recovering to 14% in 2025) - Inadequate results architecture for capturing the most significant humanitarian outcomes (protection, prevention, confidential dialogue) - Limited public visibility of the ICRC's results in pursuing its core protection mandate constrains both influence and the scope to diversify beyond traditional government donors - Workforce reductions eroding institutional memory, affecting surge capacity and morale - A 16.9% budget reduction in 2026 risks compounding existing capacity gaps - Digital transformation proceeding unevenly; field-level tools and data analytics capacity lagging - No dedicated whistleblower protection policy in place (although planned for 2027) - The traction with and quality of reporting against PSEAH policy implementation at delegation level varies - National Society relationships are frequently delivery and project driven at field level; institutional capacity strengthening lags behind technical support - The 2024-2027 Institutional Strategy's broader localisation commitments have yet to translate to operational shifts or multi-year partner funding, capping the Movement's value as a force multiplier

SECTION 3: CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The ICRC enters the second half of its 2024-2027 strategy period navigating converging pressures: a contracting funding environment, an expanding humanitarian needs landscape, a fragmenting geopolitical order, and profound questions about the future of the international humanitarian system. The following considerations are addressed to ICRC senior management, MOPAN members and Donor Support Group members, and reflect the assessment team's judgement on the most strategically significant issues requiring attention in the near and medium term.

CONSIDERATION 1: Urgently diversify donors

The 2025 funding shock (driven principally by steep US aid cuts, but also by significantly reduced aid funding from most other traditional donors) has exposed the organisation's structural reliance on a handful of sovereign donors. With the top five donors providing 52% of all contributions in 2025 and private sector funding remaining low, the pace of diversification is insufficient relative to the risk. MOPAN members and the ICRC's DSG should expect, and facilitate, concrete and time-bound progress on: (i) new donor engagement in underrepresented regions (Gulf, Asia, Latin America); (ii) private sector fundraising through the ICRC's Foundation and National Society partnerships; (iii) multi-year flexible funding commitments from current major donors; and (iv) a candid mid-point review of the Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2027's ambitions against actual trajectory. The ICRC's 2026 mid-strategy review is a natural moment for the Directorate to bring revised diversification targets before the Assembly. The urgency of this consideration is reinforced by MOPAN's 2025 system-wide mapping, which found voluntary contributions to be the resource pool most severely and most immediately affected across the multilateral system as a whole. The ICRC's reliance on voluntary, unearmarked contributions, a strength of its model in normal conditions, makes it particularly exposed to the current structural contraction in this funding category.

CONSIDERATION 2: Invest in capturing and communicating the value of protection and prevention outcomes

Not all the ICRC's most distinctive humanitarian contributions are systematically represented in its results architecture. This gap has consequences beyond internal management: it affects the organisation's ability to demonstrate value to donors, to defend its cost structure against efficiency demands, and to contribute evidence to sector-wide debates about what "good" humanitarian performance looks like. The ICRC's Analysis and Evidence function should be tasked with developing methodologies for documenting preventive outcomes and the impact of confidential engagement. MOPAN members should be prepared to provide patient, flexible funding to support this investment, recognising that measurement of the ICRC's most significant impacts is challenging and will require methodological innovation.

CONSIDERATION 3: Develop and resource a human capital strategy that can balance the dual pressures of further budget cuts and strategic talent demands

The cumulative impact of workforce reductions since 2022, with further reductions anticipated, creates material risks for the organisation's operational capacity, institutional memory and staff wellbeing. The People and Culture Department's agenda around recruitment, onboarding, succession planning and diversity is well designed, but risks being underfunded in the context of further budget constraints. Three specific priorities warrant the Directorate's attention: (i) active knowledge management and succession planning at the senior delegation level, where leadership transitions have accelerated; (ii) investment in the mental health and psychosocial support infrastructure for staff in hardship postings where the toll is hardest; and (iii) a targeted strategy for acquiring the digital, data and technical talent necessary to deliver the digital transformation agenda. MOPAN members should encourage the ICRC to treat human capital investment as a strategic expenditure, not a discretionary overhead.

CONSIDERATION 4: Accelerate digital transformation with explicit attention to its implications for data protection in conflict settings

While the ICRC has made tangible progress on digitalisation (the IT infrastructure overhaul following the 2022 data breach, the strengthened data protection framework, and early-stage GIS integration provide an important

foundation), its digital transformation agenda is well-founded but operationally uneven. Field staff in multiple delegations report insufficient digital tools and connectivity, while the organisation's capacity for real-time data analytics, essential for evidence-based programming and resource allocation, is developing slowly. At the same time, the ICRC handles some of the most sensitive personal data in the humanitarian sector. The organisation has established a strong data protection policy framework, but ensuring that digital tools deployed in field operations meet these standards requires sustained investment in both technology and staff capacity. The 2026 budget review provides an opportunity to protect digital transformation investments from efficiency cuts across the board, and to ensure that data protection resources are explicitly ring-fenced.

CONSIDERATION 5: Strengthen the Movement partnership model as a force multiplier for capacity and reach in an era of constrained resources

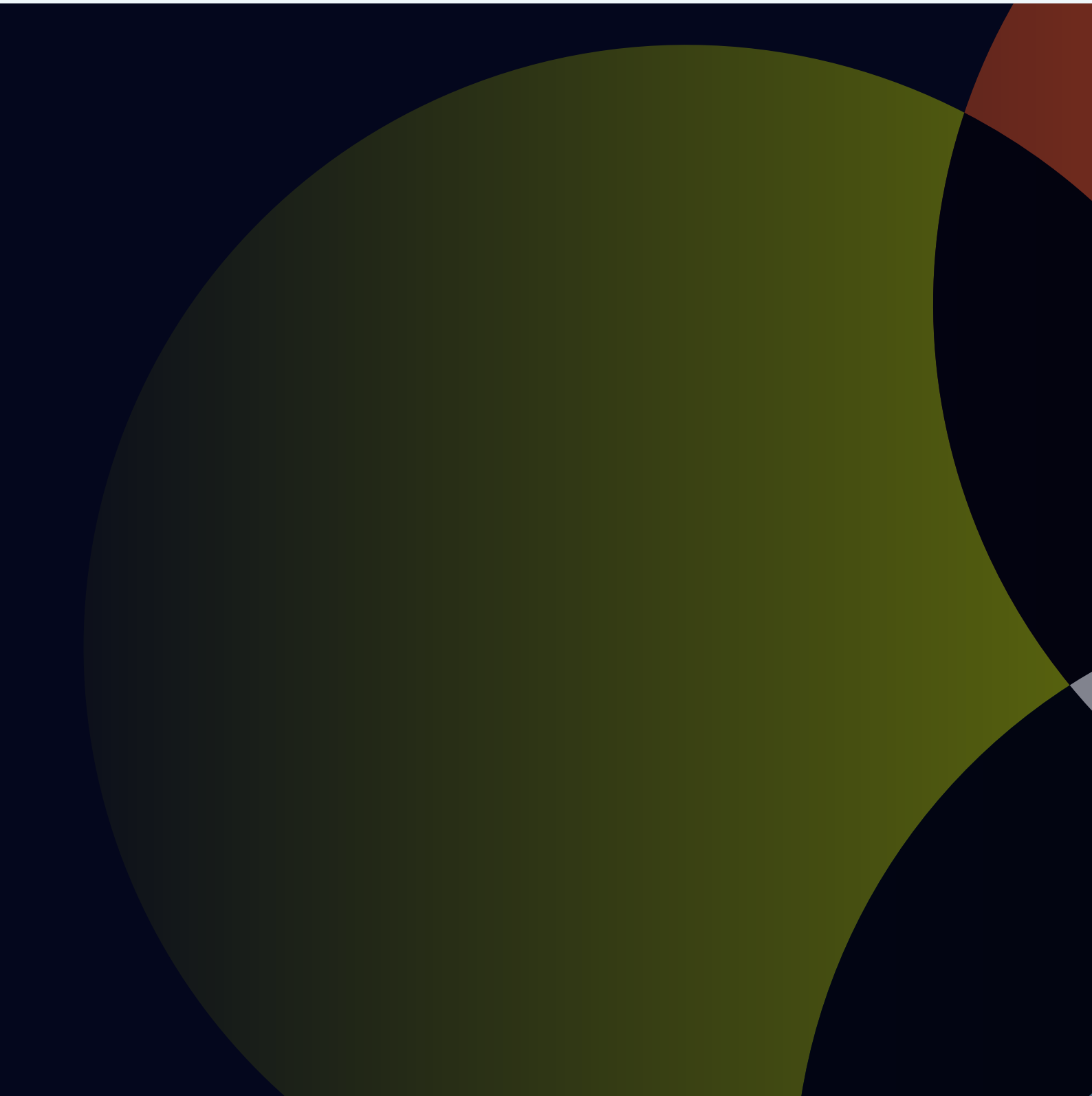
The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement represents an underutilised asset in the context of resource constraints. The Seville Agreement 2.0, adopted in 2022, updated the Movement's division of labour, clarifying the ICRC's co-convenor role in situations of armed conflict and internal strife, and the IFRC's co-convenor role in disasters and other crises. In contexts where the ICRC and National Societies have invested in Seville-aligned co-ordination, joint programming has been more coherent and effective. However, implementation is uneven, and the Agreement's potential as a framework for Movement-wide response has not yet been fully realised. The assessment finds that in practice the relationship between the ICRC and National Societies in operational contexts is often perceived to be vertical and focused on direct implementation and delivery rather than genuinely collaborative. The Directorate should develop, in consultation with National Societies and the IFRC, a concrete plan for deepening equitable partnership in the operational contexts most affected by the 2026 budget reductions.

CONSIDERATION 6: Engage substantively with the Humanitarian Reset and system-wide reform agenda from a position of principle and influence

The 2025 Humanitarian Reset and the UN80 initiative constitute significant structural reform processes for the humanitarian system. Their focus on effectiveness, localisation, streamlining co-ordination, reducing bureaucracy and protecting life-saving action is in close alignment with the ICRC's core institutional characteristics, including its principled independence from UN structures, its comparative advantage in direct implementation, and its commitments to localisation. The ICRC's de-prioritisation of nexus and recovery activities raises important questions about whether and how needs previously addressed through these approaches will be met by other actors. As these reform processes evolve, the ICRC has a key institutional role in ensuring that considerations of IHL and principled humanitarian action remain central to system-wide reforms, informed by its mandate and by its operational experience in securing humanitarian access and protecting civilians.

CONSIDERATION 7: Use the 2026 mid-strategy review to integrate assessment findings into institutional adaptation

The 2024-2027 Institutional Strategy's first implementation phase concluded in 2025. The 2026 mid-point review provides an opportunity to integrate the findings of this MOPAN assessment (the first in the ICRC's history) into the organisation's change management process. MOPAN members and the Assembly should expect: (i) a transparent assessment of progress against each of the eight strategic orientations; (ii) explicit acknowledgement of the areas for improvement identified in this report; (iii) revised, credible targets for funding diversification and results measurement; and (iv) a management response to this assessment's considerations that is time-bound and tracked. For the DSG, the mid-strategy review is also an opportunity to align members' bilateral dialogue with the ICRC around the shared priorities identified in this report, reducing fragmentation and increasing the coherence of the donor engagement that remains the ICRC's primary source of financial and political support.



ASSESSMENT FINDINGS





ICRC staff member in the Taoudeni region of Mali

As part of the economic security programme (ECOSEC), the ICRC is working with the Malian Red Cross to distribute cattle feed and wheat bran to livestock farmers whose livelihoods are threatened by conflict, armed violence and climate change. Photo: © S.N. | ICRC

This chapter provides a more detailed assessment of the ICRC’s performance across five performance areas — strategic management, operational management, relationship management, performance management, and results — and the key performance indicators (KPIs) that relate to each area, accompanied by their score and rating.

MOPAN PERFORMANCE SCORING AND RATING SCALE

Highly satisfactory (3.51-4.00)	Satisfactory (2.51-3.50)	
Unsatisfactory (1.51-2.50)	Highly unsatisfactory (0.00-1.50)	No evidence / Not applicable

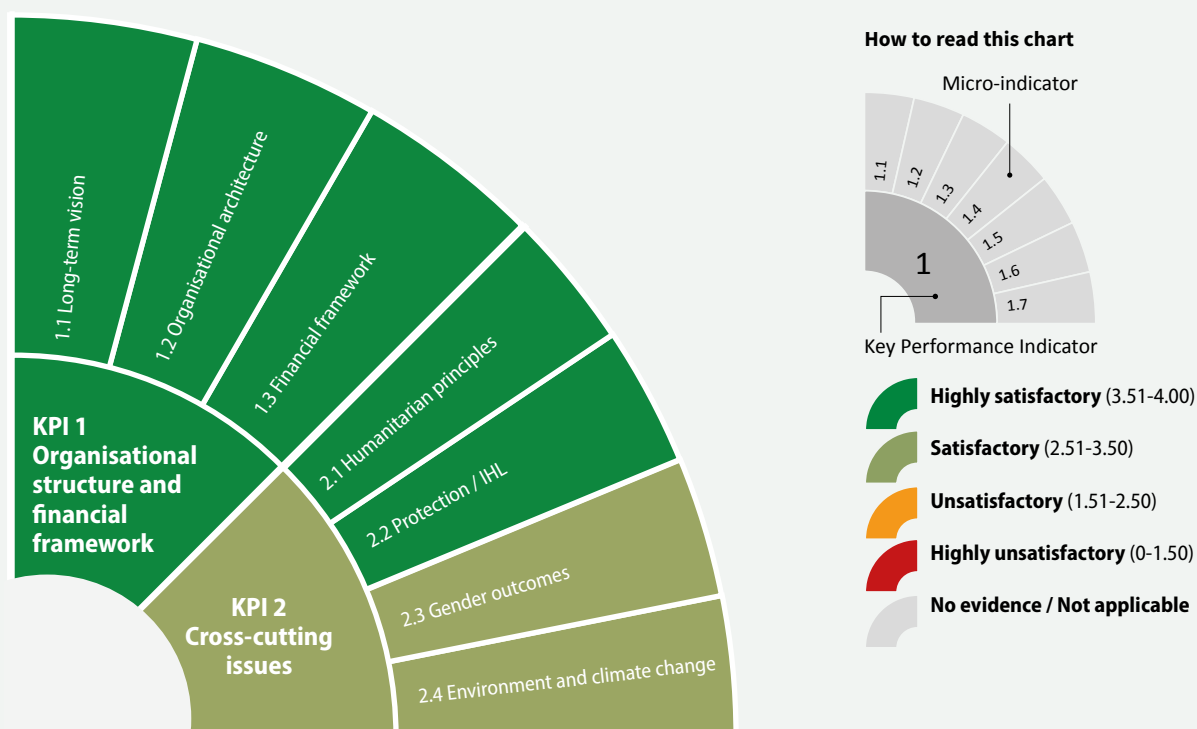
Assessment key findings draw on information from the three evidence sources (document reviews, interviews and a partner survey — see Chapter 4 for more information). Further analysis per micro-indicator and detailed scoring can be found in Annex A, while the full survey results are included in Annex C. For the full list and citation details of the documents referred to, please see Annex B.

ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

Clear strategic direction geared to key functions, intended results and the integration of relevant cross-cutting priorities.

FIGURE 6. KEY FINDINGS ON ICRC’S STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT



The ICRC demonstrates strong strategic direction overall, anchored in a legally grounded mandate, a credible institutional strategy, and a governance model that, while structurally distinctive, provides genuine oversight and direction. The 2024-2027 Institutional Strategy represents the organisation’s most ambitious and self-aware planning effort to date, explicitly recognising that institutional effectiveness is inseparable from humanitarian impact. Governance arrangements are adapted appropriately to the ICRC’s

unique legal personality, and the financial framework, though shaped by a difficult 2022-2023 crisis, has been substantially strengthened. The principal strategic management challenge lies in the tension between the organisation’s principled confidentiality, essential to its access and mandate, and the transparency and cross-cutting commitments expected of modern humanitarian organisations.

KPI 1: Organisational architecture and financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of expected results

Highly satisfactory	3.89
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MI 1.1 – Strategic plan based on comparative advantage

The ICRC’s 2024-2027 Institutional Strategy is publicly available and provides a robust and credible strategic foundation fully aligned with the organisation’s mandate. The strategy is centred on protection and international humanitarian law (IHL); response to emergencies capabilities; new technologies; human resources capabilities; and enabling systems. It is grounded in a clear analysis of the ICRC’s comparative advantage, and directly responsive to the global humanitarian environment including the surge in armed conflicts, the erosion of IHL adherence, climate-conflict interactions, and the growing role of technology in warfare. Its eight strategic orientations span both delivery (protection centrality, IHL promotion, emergency response, Movement identity, new humanitarianism) and institutional enablers (risk/financial management, digital transformation, people and culture). The addition of institutional enablers as strategic objectives is a key strength of the strategy.

The institutional strategy’s eight strategic orientations are fully embedded in the ICRC’s annual planning and budgeting processes. It is reinforced by an Institutional Strategy Implementation Plan, supported by an annual planning process known as Planning for Results (PrF). The strategy is set to be reassessed every four years, with dynamic assessments of needs and available resources within and between years.



Sagaing, Myanmar

The ICRC supports community kitchens that distribute food to people affected by the earthquake in March 2025.

Photo:
© Stephen Ryan | ICRC

Survey respondents and interviewees consistently validate the strategy’s direction and relevance. A clear majority of survey respondents, spanning government donors, Movement partners and operational counterparts, affirm that the ICRC’s mandate and strategic priorities are clearly communicated and appropriate to the current humanitarian context — while also noting the need for strong prioritisation within this overall strategy in a period of constrained resources.

MI 1.2 – Organisational structure and governance allow for an agile, operational organisation

The ICRC’s governance arrangements are structurally distinct from multilateral humanitarian organisations.

The Assembly, composed of 15–25 co-opted Swiss nationals under Swiss civil law, operates as the supreme governing body, formulating policy, approving budgets and appointing leadership. While the composition of the Assembly has historically drawn comment for its nationality restriction, the ICRC’s 2024 Internal Regulations and the Assembly’s engagement with the 2024–2027 strategy reflect genuine strategic oversight. The Audit and Risk Commission, the Recruitment and Remuneration Commission and the Internal Audit Unit together constitute an oversight infrastructure that, for a non-intergovernmental organisation of the ICRC’s scale, is broadly adequate. The assessment finds that the CFO’s direct reporting line to the Assembly, a reform introduced in 2023, has meaningfully strengthened financial oversight.

The structural changes post 2023 have led to an organisational model where financial oversight and control are placed at the centre of ICRC operations. The elevation of a Chief Financial Officer to the Directorate, with a direct reporting line to the President, is the clearest expression of this change. The organisational model maps closely onto the Institutional Strategy, with clear and consistent parameters to guide institutional transformation, spanning the headquarters-field relationship, digital transformation and financial and human resource frameworks.

The Directorate provides effective executive leadership with evidence of improved coherence between headquarters and field. The restructuring of the Office of the Director-General in 2024 reflects a clear and genuine effort to improve strategic implementation coherence. It is too early to assess the full effectiveness of these structural changes, but early evidence from leadership interviews suggests the reforms have improved co-ordination and strategic focus at Directorate level. Country visit and interview evidence suggests that the relationship between the Directorate’s functional departments and regional operations has improved, although some field interviewees note that headquarters guidance does not always fully account for the operational realities of high-risk contexts.

MI 1.3 – Financial framework

The ICRC’s financial recovery following its 2023 crisis is genuine and the governance reforms introduced are substantive. The generation of CHF 311 million and CHF 291 million surpluses in 2023 and 2024 respectively, the establishment of real-time financial monitoring cockpits,¹ a revised treasury policy managing currency risk, and the targeting of a six-month liquidity coverage ratio represent material improvements over the pre-crisis financial management environment. The “plan-implement-fund” model, while exposing the organisation to potential cash-flow risk, has successfully preserved programming integrity, maintaining around/over 40% of contributions as flexible (unearmarked or loosely earmarked) funding. With a projected CHF 150 million deficit in 2025 and a further 16.9% budget reduction for 2026, this recovery should not be assumed to be durable.

Funding concentration remains the most significant structural vulnerability in the financial framework. With the top five donors providing 52% of contributions in 2025, and 85% coming from governments and the European Commission in 2025, the financial framework’s resilience to sudden donor shifts is limited — as demonstrated by the CHF 113 million deficit in 2025. Private source contributions have been fluctuating — first declining from 13.2%

1. Financial Cockpit: real-time tracking of spending and commitments (including logistics, travel, cash advances to National Societies, and working advances), accessible to both finance and non-finance users, simplifying financial planning and monitoring.

Waingmaw, Myanmar

An ICRC team holds an awareness session on the risks of contamination by weapons and safe behaviors to adopt, for displaced communities.

Photo: © Aw H pang
Ndawng | ICRC



(2022) to 9% (2024), then increasing again to 13% (2025), an issue that has been a key area of focus for the Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2030 ambitions. Financing provisions for surge and anticipatory action exist (emergency appeals and budget update mechanisms), and the assessment finds that these are used appropriately and in a timely manner in practice.

KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms support the implementation of global frameworks for cross-cutting issues

Satisfactory

3.42

MI 2.1 – Humanitarian principles

The humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, and independence make up, together with the Movement-specific principles of neutrality, voluntary service, unity and universality, the Fundamental Principles that govern every aspect of the ICRC's and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's work. **As such, humanitarian principles are both core to the ICRC's mandate — the ICRC is constructed around them — and a deeply embedded cross-cutting issue across all operations and programmes.** They are explicitly referenced in every planning, programming and reporting document reviewed, and are operationalised through mandatory training, confidential dialogue frameworks, institutional review processes and, where required, public denunciation protocols. Interview evidence across all levels of the organisation reveals that staff understand and can articulate how humanitarian principles are applied in practice, including in complex dilemmas. The ICRC has systems in place to support principled access negotiation and to review situations where humanitarian principles come into tension with operational realities. There is evidence of genuine institutional debate about how to navigate difficult cases. The ICRC's approach is a leading example of good practice in the humanitarian sector.

MI 2.2 – Protection / IHL (adapted)

The ICRC's strategy, doctrine, and general and technical guidance uphold the central nature of protection and the promotion of respect for IHL to the organisation's work. The assessment finds strong systems in place for operationalising protection across all programming. Analysis of protection and human rights/IHL issues is a central thread of the ICRC's needs and risk analyses, and the ICRC has a range of key guidance and good practice centred around the Geneva Conventions on addressing protection and human rights/IHL dilemmas during operations. In 2025, the ICRC published an updated Commentary to the Fourth Geneva Convention, which includes a dedicated section on international human rights law, and sections on several transversal issues such as the gendered impact of armed conflicts, disability inclusion, and special care for children. Protection is also integrated as a lens across

programming in the areas of essential services, prevention and co-operation. The centralisation of the Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) function within the Department of Operations, the strengthening of the Protection and Central Tracing Agency, and the integration of protection analysis into needs assessment processes, all reflect a well-developed approach, although the quality of implementation at delegation and sub-delegation level can vary. The assessment notes that, consistent with the ICRC's mandate, this MI is assessed against promotion of respect for IHL rather than the broader human rights framework, in line with the agreed framework adaptation.

MI 2.3 – Gender

The ICRC has a gender policy architecture in place, but evidence of systematic integration into programming and results measurement is uneven. A dedicated gender policy, gender analysis tools and gender-sensitive programming guidance exist and are referenced in planning documents. Sex- and age-disaggregated data is increasingly integrated into needs assessment and reporting. However, survey and interview evidence suggests that gender equality outcomes are not yet consistently prioritised across all operational contexts, with the ICRC's own framing addressing gender through a conflict and vulnerability lens rather than as a rights-based commitment. Investment in gender expertise at delegation level is uneven. The 2024-2027 strategy identifies gender, diversity and inclusion as a cross-cutting approach, and progress against this commitment will require dedicated resourcing, metrics and accountability mechanisms.

MI 2.4 – Environment and climate

Environmental sustainability is not a formal strategic priority for the ICRC, but the organisation is increasingly integrating environmental considerations into operations. An environmental sustainability adviser was appointed, and climate-sensitive programming approaches have been piloted in several operational contexts. The ICRC recognises the climate-conflict nexus (conflicts exacerbate climate vulnerability, and climate stress amplifies conflict risk) and has begun to incorporate this analysis into context assessments. However, the assessment finds that environmental integration remains uneven and is not yet systematically embedded in programme planning or evaluation. The relevant policy frameworks and doctrine exist, and individual field-level examples of climate-sensitive programming can be identified, but systematic evidence of organisation-wide integration (particularly given budget constraints and reductions in specialist capacity) is insufficient to meet a satisfactory threshold. The organisation's framing of climate change specifically through an IHL lens (i.e. focusing on how climate-conflict interactions affect humanitarian obligations) is coherent with its mandate but narrows the scope of what is assessed and evidenced relative to standard humanitarian sector expectations on environmental programming. The ICRC's commitment to greening its own operations (facilities management, logistics carbon footprint) is in early stages. Given the organisation's explicit identification of "climate and conflict" as a cross-cutting approach in the 2024-2027 strategy, more substantive evidence of implementation is expected by the next assessment.

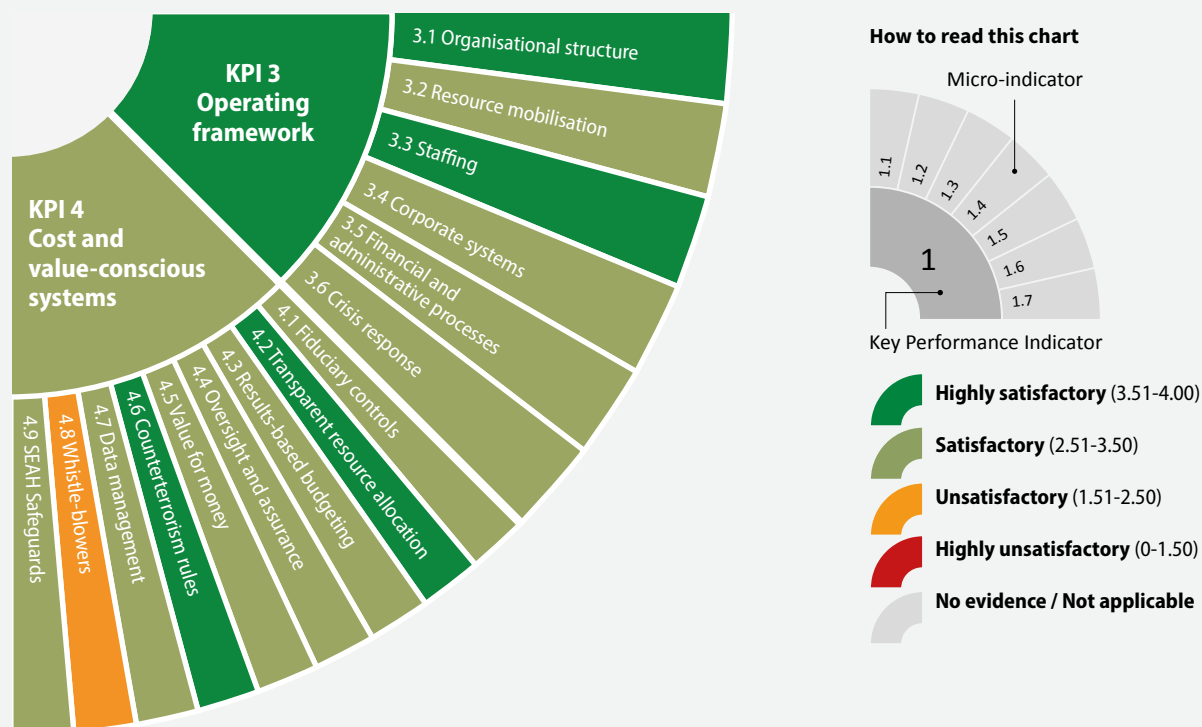
BOX 8. GOOD PRACTICE: OPERATIONALISING HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES WHEN FACED WITH COMPLEX DILEMMAS

The ICRC's framework for managing tension between humanitarian principles and operational realities, including its graduated approach to confidentiality versus public denunciation, represents sector-leading good practice (with the notable exception of not having a stand-alone whistleblower protection policy). The organisation maintains structured internal debate mechanisms (including the Ethics, Risk and Compliance Office and the Data Protection Office) and has published analytical guidance on how principles are applied across its modes of action. The consistent embedding of humanitarian principles training in onboarding, induction and periodic staff development distinguishes the ICRC from organisations where principled approaches are policy commitments but not operational realities.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Assets and capacities organised behind strategic direction and intended results, to ensure relevance, agility and accountability.

FIGURE 7. KEY FINDINGS ON ICRC'S OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT



The ICRC's operational management is characterised by strong field orientation, an effective although recently tested financial governance architecture, and a direct implementation model that provides quality and accountability advantages. The key resource mobilisation challenge is the concentration of funding from a small number of donors. The principal operational management challenges relate to the management of workforce reductions and their impact on institutional capacity; the pace of digital transformation in field operations; and the ability to maintain surge capacity while managing structural budget constraints. Accountability and transparency systems are broadly adequate, with some areas, notably value-for-money evidence, requiring further development.

KPI 3: Operating model and human and financial resources support relevance and agility

Highly satisfactory

3.59

MI 3.1 – Organisational structure is highly decentralised and focused on delivering the ICRC's core mandate

The ICRC's field-based operational structure, organised around five regional directorates and 97 delegations and missions, is well-suited to its direct-implementation mandate. The regional structure enables contextual adaptation while maintaining coherence with global institutional standards, and there is evidence of effective field-regional-headquarters integration in operational planning, emergency response and IHL engagement. Decision-making authority is substantially delegated to the field in operational matters, although financial approvals above certain thresholds require headquarters sign-off. Country visit evidence from South Sudan and interviews across the sample countries confirm that delegation leadership has genuine programming autonomy, bounded primarily by

budget ceilings and principled frameworks rather than procedural bottlenecks. The stakeholder survey corroborates this: 85% of respondents agreed that the ICRC can make critical strategic and programming decisions at the country level, in proximity to where humanitarian needs are greatest. This is a strong validation of the decentralised model.

MI 3.2 – Resource mobilisation

The ICRC’s resource mobilisation is technically proficient but strategically constrained by donor concentration.

The Resource Mobilisation Department is well-staffed, the fundraising strategy is clearly articulated, and the organisation has demonstrated success in securing flexible, multi-year contributions from major donors. In 2025, 45% of the funding was flexible, of which a portion was loosely earmarked. The Donor Support Group provides a structured platform for deepened engagement with the 22 principal government donors. However, the organisation’s fundraising ambitions with respect to emerging donors and private sources are not yet matched by resourcing or results: private sector fundraising remains low, and diversification into new sovereign donor pools in Asia, the Gulf and Latin America is progressing slowly. Interviewees at delegation level consistently identify limited capacity for donor engagement at sub-regional levels as a gap.

MI 3.3 – Staffing

The ICRC invests in strong and fully capacitated leadership at country level and in major crisis contexts, both for international and resident staff. The organisation’s staffing model prioritises field presence, with approximately 93% of staff deployed outside Geneva headquarters (89% in delegations and 4% in Shared Service Centres).

This is a structural strength for a direct-implementation humanitarian actor. However, the cumulative workforce reductions between 2022 and 2025 (from approximately 22 488 to under 18 000) have created material risks. Interview evidence identified a loss of institutional memory in operational contexts where experienced national staff and international delegates have departed; reduced capacity in technical disciplines (economic security, water and habitat, health) in delegations affected by the 2023 closures; and concerns about succession planning at the senior delegation and regional director level following the 2024 leadership transitions. The People and Culture Department’s redesigned recruitment to build up the generalist pool of staff, onboarding and training processes represent the right institutional response to this risk, but their impact is not yet fully visible in the evidence base. In addition, a pool of experienced senior managers is available for deployment at the outset of a crisis, and senior leaders and heads of delegation in the field are expected to share the burden of hardship stations by committing to accepting a hardship posting every 2-3 missions.

Duty of care systems are strong and investment in staff safety is commensurate with the ICRC’s risk exposure.

Measures are in place for rotation, particularly in hardship postings. The Security and Crisis Management Support unit, the Institutional Readiness, Crisis Response and Learning function, and mandatory security training at all levels demonstrate that the ICRC takes its duty-of-care responsibilities seriously. There is consistent evidence of security protocols being applied, security risk assessments informing programming decisions, and staff evacuation and medical support systems being available in hardship duty stations. Survey respondents working in field contexts rate the ICRC’s duty-of-care provisions positively relative to peer organisations.

MI 3.4 – Logistics and procurement

The ICRC’s logistics and procurement systems are well-established, globally managed and appropriate to large-scale humanitarian operations.

Pre-positioning of supplies, a managed global supply chain for essential medicines, food commodities and shelter materials, and a centralised procurement function with anti-corruption provisions, are all in place. The organisation’s logistics infrastructure, reinforced by the Logistics Department within the Support and Digital Transformation portfolio, supports operations in some of the most challenging access environments globally, including active conflict zones. The ICRC’s framework for operational co-operation with other Movement components is governed by the Seville Agreement 2.0, adopted in 2022, which sets out lead agency roles and CO-Ordination responsibilities between the ICRC, the IFRC and National Societies. Interview evidence suggests

that the depth of operational co-ordination with National Societies varies considerably by context, with many field-level relationships remaining more transactional than the framework envisages.

MIs 3.5–3.6 – Financial processes and surge capacity

Post-crisis financial process improvements have tangibly improved operational agility, and surge mechanisms are well-defined and practised. Adaptive management techniques, including real-time financial dashboards, simplified emergency procurement procedures and pre-delegated authority for emergency budget extensions, are in place and have been used in practice during the Gaza and Sudan crisis escalations. The ICRC’s surge framework includes fast-track recruitment, expert rosters, back-fill provisions and dedicated seed-funding windows for emergency appeals. The framework operationalises a push/pull model whereby headquarters deploy teams and resources for an initial six-week period before transitioning operational lead to the in-country delegation, drawing on a centrally managed rapid deployment roster of approximately 1 200 staff across critical functions. The evidence for this is well-documented and include examples of timely activation in 2023 and 2024. The assessment identifies three elements that need further improvement: (i) the operationalisation of common operations with National Societies under the Seville Agreement 2.0, where there is limited evidence of demonstrated cost-effectiveness at outcome level and of National Societies being positioned as co-convenors rather than implementers; (ii) the efficiency of surge mobilisation, where mechanisms exist but evidence of timely, co-ordinated activation across all organisational components is incomplete; and (iii) the documentation of scale-up and scale-back triggers, where the criteria and processes for activating or winding down emergency surge capacity require greater formalisation and clarity.

KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable transparency and accountability

Satisfactory	3.27
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MI 4.1 – Fraud, corruption and ethics

The ICRC’s ethics and anti-fraud architecture is comprehensive and demonstrates a genuine tone-from-the-top commitment to integrity. The Ethics, Risk and Compliance Office, the Internal Audit Unit, the Office of Corporate Legal Affairs and the Ombuds Office together constitute a layered integrity system. A publicly available Code of Conduct, mandatory staff training, and clear conflict-of-interest provisions are in place. The evidence base includes examples of fraud investigations being conducted, sanctions applied, and, where warranted, cases referred to Swiss national authorities. Reporting to donors on fraud and corruption instances, while adequate, is an area where the ICRC could enhance transparency and public confidence, particularly given the scale of its operations.

MI 4.4 – Independent oversight

The ICRC’s independent oversight arrangements are broadly adequate, with some structural limitations arising from its unique governance model. The Internal Audit Unit operates with functional independence, reporting to both the Directorate and the Assembly’s Audit and Risk Commission, and has an adequate, risk-based audit plan. External financial audit is conducted annually and confirms compliance with internationally accepted standards. However, the absence of a judicial body equivalent to UN legal tribunals, and the reliance on Swiss domestic courts for employment disputes, represents a structural limitation, partially mitigated by the Global Independent Board of Appeal and the Ombuds Office. The Data Protection Commission provides independent oversight of the ICRC’s handling of sensitive personal data, a function of particular importance given the nature of the data it holds.

MI 4.5 – Value for money

The ICRC maintains an organisational commitment to value for money (VfM), not just in financial terms but in its mandate to deliver access, protection and adherence to humanitarian principles. The ICRC set out its position on VfM in a two-page brief in 2020, defining it as the optimal use of resources to achieve intended humanitarian outcome and impact. The brief was shared with donors in mid-2025 as part of a broader communication on cost

drivers, and while it serves as a useful statement of intent, consistent guidance and practical tools to translate these principles into day-to-day operations are not yet in place. The ICRC has indicated plans to develop more detailed guidance in due course.

Routine operational data on value for money, including at metier level, is not systematically generated, and there is limited evidence of how cost information provided at programmatic level is being centrally analysed or used to inform an organisation-wide approach or monitoring system. Nonetheless, the ICRC has engaged openly with donors to address their information needs, and there is broad agreement with donors and the ICRC that the organisation's principal value for money advantage lies in its capacity to consistently deliver its mandated activities in remote and difficult to reach locations, alongside the breadth of specialist services it provides in conflict settings — and the costs associated with doing so are both significant and justified.

MI 4.9 – Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

The ICRC has made meaningful progress in strengthening its approach to PSEAH, with the foundations of a robust policy infrastructure and strategy. The organisation has a dedicated, organisation-specific policy statement covering both protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH), addressing external (staff-beneficiary) and internal (staff-staff) dimensions. The policy and supporting additional policies align with international standards, apply to all staff at every level and location, and is regularly reviewed and improved. The ICRC actively participates in the sector-wide safer recruitment initiative, the Misconduct Disclosure Scheme, and has clear contractual requirements and due diligence processes for National Societies and operating partners. Mandatory and supplementary staff training achieves high compliance, and additional cultural initiatives have been spearheaded to address both dimensions of external and internal SEAH, although raising community awareness of SEAH remains a challenge for delegations.

Dedicated human resources and structures exist to monitor and support implementation. At headquarters, PSEAH is mainstreamed across metiers who actively engage in forums where PSEAH is addressed; at field level, efforts and resources focus on ten priority delegations identified against risk-related criteria. Traction



Beirut airport

Arrival of medical supplies provided by the ICRC to support the Lebanese healthcare system. Photo: © Steve Berzghal, | ICRC

with priority delegations remains varied, and dedicated resources at delegation level differ according to risk profile and operational context, with the implementation of the policies relying on a network of Code of Conduct facilitators present in all delegations. This prioritisation reflects the ICRC's PSEAH strategy and a pragmatic response to real resource constraints, but it carries risk. Where delegations have not been prioritised for focus, the risks of SEAH, in particular sexual harassment and internal SEAH, may receive insufficient attention. The absence of a systematic process for all delegations to engage formally with the organisation's PSEAH strategy means that progress in non-priority geographies is largely dependent on the delegations' initiative and proactive commitment. This challenge is compounded by broader resource pressures, and risks uneven coverage that may leave gaps in some of the contexts where SEAH risks are most acute.

While prevention efforts have improved progressively over the course of the assessment period, and the investigations of SEAH cases are well resourced, the ICRC is on a journey to improve its reporting mechanisms.

Complaints mechanisms are centralised through web-based and email platforms, with limited contextually appropriate community-level reporting options. The ICRC has formalised its commitment to a victim-centred approach (VCA), supported by funding available at delegation level, psychological support, country office-based referral persons, and expertise within the Investigations Unit. However, the ICRC acknowledges that embedding VCA into prevention and reporting efforts requires further work and contextualisation.

While the ICRC's PSEAH progressive improvement of policies and implementation reflects the organisation's PSEAH commitments, there is limited outward evidence of global leadership or engagement on PSEAH, and anonymised SEAH case statistics and disciplinary outcomes are not publicly reported or reflected on beyond donor reporting. Strengthening the organisation's external voice, whether through public reporting, cross-sector engagement or visible senior leadership commitments would reinforce the progress of internal efforts and signal transparency and accountability. The environments where SEAH risks are most prevalent, such as in community-level responses and in relationships with local and national partners, are also the environments where resource and capacity constraints can be most acute.

Two additional areas under KPI 4 require further attention. First, no standalone whistleblower protection policy is in place, despite ongoing internal discussions; this falls below the expected standard. Second, the evidence base for value-for-money is limited: beyond overhead rates and implementation figures, the assessment found few documented examples of systematic cost-efficiency analysis or alternative delivery appraisal. The independence of the internal audit function, while broadly adequate, also warrants monitoring: field audit coverage is selective given resource constraints, and the extent to which the Internal Audit Unit can independently determine where country-level audits are conducted requires attention.

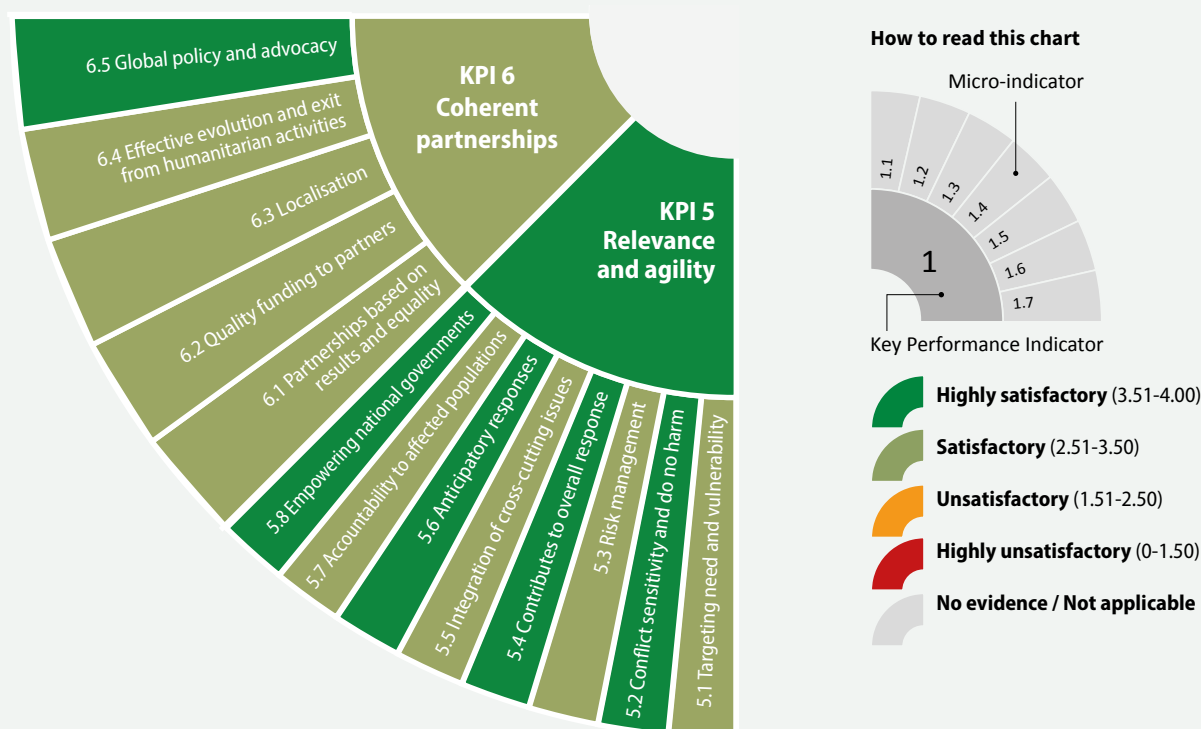
BOX 9. GOOD PRACTICE: UNIFIED SEAH FRAMEWORK

Unified SEAH frameworks recognise the common root causes (systemic and hierarchical organisational power imbalances) of SEA and SH, while providing differentiated response pathways for different contexts. This approach recognises that all people regardless of their relationship with the organisation, have an equal right to dignity and protection and places accountability on the organisation to respond effectively and coherently. This model merits attention from the broader humanitarian sector. Through the 2023-2026 PSEAH Global Strategy, the ICRC has integrated sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH) into a single, unified prevention and response framework, covering both external (staff-beneficiary) and internal (staff-staff) dimensions. Compared to humanitarian sector peers who typically maintain separate policies for these dimensions, this is an example of good practice.

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Engaging in inclusive partnerships to support relevance, leverage effective solutions and maximise results.

FIGURE 8. KEY FINDINGS ON ICRC'S RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT



The ICRC's relationship management reflects its distinctive position in the humanitarian architecture: deeply principled, operationally independent, and structured around partnerships that are shaped by its mandate rather than by standard UN co-ordination frameworks. Its strongest relationship management assets are its conflict-sensitivity expertise, its unmatched engagement with armed groups, and its advocacy authority on IHL. The principal challenges relate to the structural tension between direct implementation and localisation commitments, and the relatively underdeveloped accountability-to-affected-populations infrastructure in some operational contexts.

KPI 5 Operational planning and intervention design support relevance and agility in partnerships

Highly satisfactory

3.55

MI 5.1 – Targeting greatest need

The ICRC makes use of in-depth assessments and multidimensional analysis to inform programme design, and it monitors and updates these regularly. The assessments are inclusive and consider those most left behind, including women and the disabled, but are not systematically or uniformly employed across contexts. Specialised staff in the A&E and AAP Units and in specific metiers provide guidance across all programme areas throughout the programme cycle, drawing on a comprehensive set of tools, frameworks, and methodologies, and dedicated sessions are built into annual planning processes.

The ICRC's mandate-driven approach to targeting provides a strong structural foundation for reaching the most conflict-affected and marginalised populations. The ICRC has clear criteria for prioritisation and ranking the

severity of needs and crises. Its Institutional Strategy 2024-2027 and its 2026 PfR instructions are widely credited with providing clear guidance on prioritisation to delegations and their regions. Needs assessment processes, combining field delegate observation, community consultations, secondary data review and, increasingly, Analysis and Evidence analytical products, inform programming in all operational contexts. In each context, the ICRC conducts its own needs assessment, and the outcome of these assessments, combined with its conflict and context analysis, determines its field interventions. The organisation's presence in 97 delegations and missions, including in many contexts where other humanitarian actors cannot operate, is itself an expression of its targeting priorities. Disaggregated data, including by sex, age and vulnerability category, is increasingly integrated into planning documents, although consistency across all delegations is still developing. The assessment finds that the ICRC's targeting is most clearly operationalised in essential services programming (economic security, health, water/habitat) and is more challenging to document systematically in protection and prevention work.

MI 5.2 – Conflict sensitivity

The ICRC systematically undertakes conflict analysis and uses the findings to inform programme and project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The ICRC is mandated by the signatories of the Geneva Conventions to protect and assist in contexts of international and non-international armed conflict. It demonstrates conflict sensitivity, as well as adherence to the principle of Do No Harm, across its programming. Conflict sensitivity is among the most deeply embedded features of the ICRC's operational model and represents a clear comparative advantage. Systematic conflict analysis is conducted at the delegation level, updated regularly, and integrated into programming decisions, access negotiations and communications strategies. The ICRC's principled framework, particularly its commitment to neutrality and impartiality, constitutes an institutional safeguard against the most common failures of conflict sensitivity: unintentional reinforcement of power asymmetries, fuel to conflict economies, or political instrumentalisation of humanitarian assistance. Interview evidence confirms that conflict sensitivity is applied not only to programming but to procurement, communications and staffing decisions.

MI 5.3 – Risk management

The ICRC has significantly strengthened its risk management architecture following the 2022-2023 financial and operational crisis. An organisation-wide risk management system with clear lines of responsibility, escalation pathways and risk tolerance parameters is in place. The evidence base includes updated risk registers, the MIR Operational Guideline (in place since 2022), the Risk and Assurance Governance and Oversight Charter (2025), the Institutional Readiness function, and improvements to the crisis response framework. Security risk is systematically assessed through the Security Risk Management Methodology and steers the ICRC's programming decisions in high-risk contexts. Investment in risk training has increased, with a new risk and compliance module integrated into the Staff Integration Programme. The assessment finds that programmatic and contextual risk management is stronger than institutional/financial risk management, although the latter has improved significantly. MI 5.3.5, added to the adapted framework to ensure risks of sexual abuse and other misconduct are factored into intervention design, shows evidence of integration, but implementation is uneven across delegations. Risk assessment of SEAH risks or other misconduct is required for delegation-level planning, though it is not always tailored to host communities specifically.

MI 5.4 – Contribution to overall response

The ICRC contributes to the overall humanitarian response in ways shaped primarily by its principled independence. It engages with other humanitarian actors in the field when relevant and appropriate to its mandate. It co-ordinates and conducts shared operations as required and possible with Movement partners and authorities. It includes the activities of others in its context analysis and planning, to illustrate complementarity, local capacity and greatest needs, and to show where the ICRC can respond to a need that cannot be addressed by others. The organisation maintains Permanent Observer status at the UN and engages with cluster mechanisms at the field level in a selective and principled manner, contributing data and analysis where this does not compromise its confidentiality.

or access. Within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the ICRC plays a co-convenor role in armed conflict contexts under the Seville Agreement 2.0.

In operational settings, in addition to maintaining its own risk assessments and registers, the ICRC participates in joint risk assessment exercises with Movement partners and contributes to broader risk analysis for the humanitarian community. Some UN and INGO partners, particularly at country level, express a desire for deeper ICRC information-sharing and co-ordination, but recognise that the ICRC's principled independence is the basis for its operational access. Multi-year planning and programming are in place in protracted contexts, but accessing multi-year finance to support longer-term approaches remains a challenge.

MI 5.7 – Accountability to affected populations

The ICRC has developed a series of guidelines and frameworks to ensure that affected people are included at all stages of its programming. Accountability to affected people (AAP) is seen by the ICRC as the operationalisation of the principles of impartiality and humanity, as explained in the Guidance on AAP and Inclusion in the Project Cycle documents. AAP is integrated across ICRC strategies, programmes, recruitment, training and performance management. It is central to partnership agreements and to the ICRC's results reporting, although it is not yet implemented in a standardised way across all departments. The dedicated AAP function within the Department of Operations, community feedback mechanisms in most country operations, and an updated AAP framework reflect genuine organisational commitment. Processes are being gradually put in place to ensure that communities' views and perspectives are systematically taken into account by delegations at all stages of operations. The ICRC has clear guidelines and practices to enable communities to play an active role in decisions that will impact their lives. The ICRC Guidance on Inclusive and Accountable Programming guidance requires the inclusion of AAP at all stages of the project cycle.

KPI 6: Working in coherent partnerships directed at leveraging resources and results

Satisfactory	3.20
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MI 6.1-6.2 – Partnership principles and quality funding

The ICRC's partnerships are governed by a clear Partnering Framework (2025) that articulates the principles of equality, transparency, result-orientation, responsibility and complementarity. Due diligence processes for other operational partners are in place and documented. The quality of funding passed to partners (principally National Societies in conflict contexts) is an area of ongoing development, with the ICRC working through the National Society Investment Alliance (NSIA) and the Virtual Fundraising Hub to strengthen capacity and equitable arrangements. Interview evidence from National Society partners in the sample countries reflects appreciation for ICRC technical support, but also a desire for greater co-leadership in planning and less vertical co-ordination. The assessment finds that while the policy framework for Movement partnerships is sophisticated and well-documented, the relationships as experienced at field level are frequently described as transactional, focused on task-delegation, financial pass-through and technical assistance rather than on genuine co-design, joint accountability or institutional development. The NSIA, while referenced as an important vehicle for more equitable multi-year partnership, does not yet appear to have reached sufficient scale to alter this characterisation systematically. Capacity strengthening provided to National Societies is primarily technical in nature; support for governance, administration and organisational resilience, the dimensions most critical to genuine localisation, is less consistently documented.

MI 6.3 – Localisation

Strengthening local actors is identified in the 2024-2027 strategy as a commitment, but the assessment confirms a structural tension between this commitment and the ICRC's direct-implementation operating model. The ICRC's mode of operation, characterised by deployment of its own internationally mobile staff in

Democratic Republic of Congo

Bwito, Rutshuru Territory, in the eastern part of North Kivu province: Food assistance from the ICRC to displaced communities and those who have returned since February 2024.
Photo: © Alain Kyro Malimutoto | ICRC



direct implementation roles, limits the extent to which local organisations lead or co-lead programming. In many operational contexts, local and national partners play supplementary or sub-implementing roles rather than equal partnership roles. The ICRC's relationship with host National Societies is the most substantive expression of its localisation commitment, but even here, the National Society's role varies significantly by context and available capacity. Document review and interview evidence suggest that the ICRC is aware of this tension and is developing guidance on localisation in conflict contexts, but concrete operational shifts are still limited. Related to this is the issue of the quality of funding passed to partners: while the ICRC engages with National Societies under iterative annual financial frameworks within longer-term relationships, there is no evidence of multi-year funding commitments being passed through specifically as multi-year grants to partner organisations — a pattern arguably shaped by the ICRC's own funding base of which 80% is annual, and of the multi-year funding it receives, only half is unearmarked. This is a gap relative to Grand Bargain commitments and growing donor expectations. Non-Red Cross Movement local partners are more likely to receive less systematic attention in terms of partnership quality, capacity building or documented due diligence, reflecting the ICRC's direct-implementation model and its Movement-first partnership philosophy.

MI 6.4 – Evolution and exit (adapted)

The ICRC has adapted systems for managing transitions from acute crisis response toward other humanitarian modalities. Due to the ICRC's mandate focused on IHL, the assessment did not look at engagement with development actors or formal engagement with the humanitarian, development and peace nexus. Exit and transition planning is documented in several sample country contexts, with evidence of handover to National Societies and local actors where access permits. The organisation actively seeks to avoid creating dependency and, through its substitution mode of action, explicitly aims to enable authorities to reassume their responsibilities. The assessment finds that transition planning is most developed in contexts with relatively stable access, and less systematic in protracted, fragmented conflicts where exits are rare and needs persist indefinitely.

MI 6.5 – Global policy and advocacy

Global IHL advocacy is the ICRC's most distinctive relationship management asset and a clear area of highly satisfactory performance. The organisation engages with states, armed groups, technology companies, civil society and academic institutions on IHL promotion and compliance in ways that are unmatched in the humanitarian system. Specific examples from 2024 and 2025 include: the six-country Global Initiative on IHL launched on the 75th anniversary of the Geneva Conventions; expanded dialogue with technology companies on cyber warfare and autonomous weapons; and engagement in the UN Secretary-General's SG80 reform process. The annual publication

of the Humanitarian Law and Policy Blog, the ICRC’s legal commentary series, and its engagement in the Grand Bargain and humanitarian reform processes demonstrate sustained normative leadership.

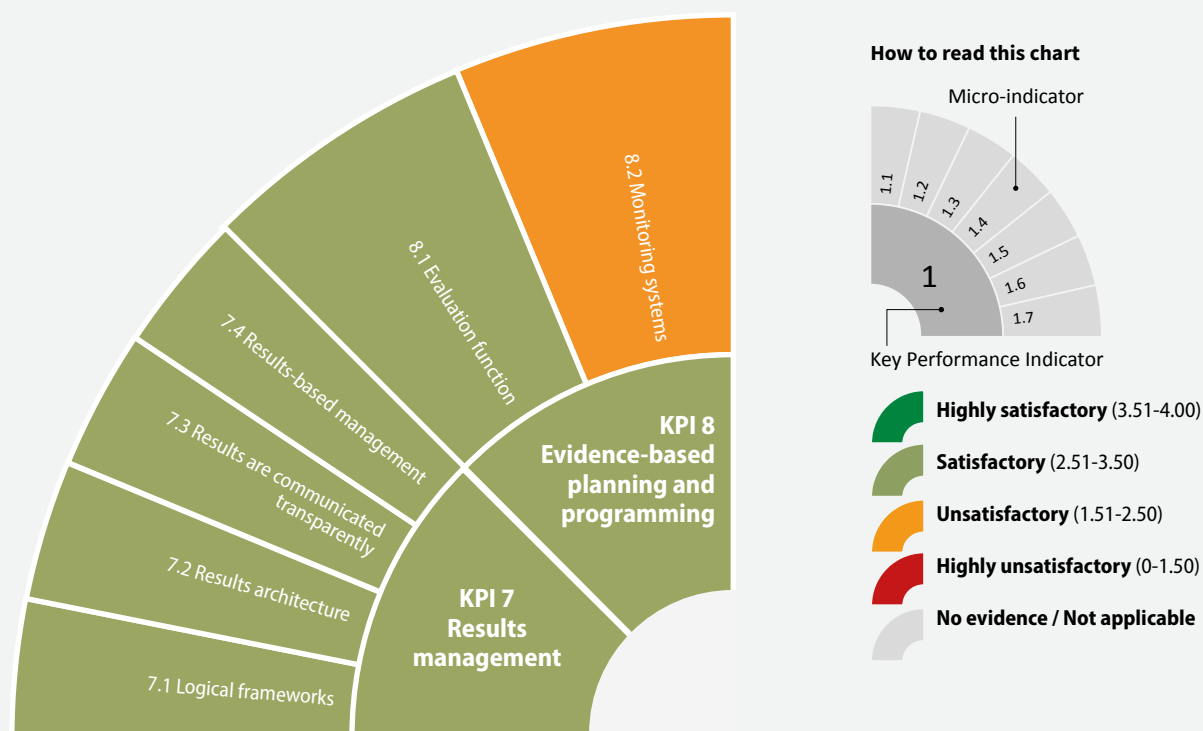
BOX 10. NOTABLE PRACTICE: MOVEMENT CO-ORDINATION UNDER THE SEVILLE AGREEMENT 2.0

The ICRC’s co-ordination of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement’s collective response to armed conflict guided by the Seville Agreement 2.0 represents a partnership model with genuine potential to leverage the Movement’s combined reach of millions of volunteers and staff. In country cases included in this assessment, there were examples of effective joint programming between the ICRC, host National Societies and Participating National Societies, with clear role delineation and mutual accountability. This model of principled, mandate-grounded partnership co-leadership is distinct from and complementary to standard UN co-ordination architectures.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Systems geared to managing and accounting for development and humanitarian results and the use of performance information, including evaluation and lesson-learning.

FIGURE 9. KEY FINDINGS ON ICRC’S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT



Performance management is an area of genuine investment and recent institutional reform for the ICRC, but also the area where the most significant gap between policy intent and operational reality is observed. The organisation’s commitment to evidence-based, outcome-oriented programming culture, expressed through the Analysis and Evidence function, the evaluation office, and the 2024-2027 strategy’s cross-cutting approach on impact, evaluation, learning and innovation, reflects a serious institutional agenda. However, the inherent tension between the ICRC’s confidential operating model and the transparency requirements of results-based management means that performance management improvements face structural as well as technical constraints.

KPI 7: Strong and transparent results focus, explicitly geared to function

Satisfactory	3.05
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MI 7.1 – Logical frameworks and theory of change

The ICRC uses logical frameworks at corporate, regional and operational levels to link activities to outcomes, but the architecture varies across programming areas. The 2024-2027 Institutional Strategy sets out a high-level logical framework connecting strategic orientations to intended results. At the operational level, country Action Plans provide more granular frameworks linking activities to outputs and outcomes, with responsibility assigned by department or programme. The Analysis and Evidence function is working to standardise logical framework approaches and develop common outcome indicators across the programme cycle, a significant effort given the diversity of ICRC operations. Where these frameworks are most developed, notably in economic security and health programming, there is evidence that they drive programming decisions rather than serving solely as accountability documents.

MI 7.2-7.3 – Results architecture and communication

The ICRC’s results architecture captures output-level achievements comprehensively but faces inherent limitations in communicating its most significant humanitarian outcomes. The organisation has a standard set of indicators linked to general and specific objectives, with guidance promoting their use, but the excessive list of live sub-set indicators available to staff for use inhibits organisational monitoring and reporting. There are efforts underway to streamline the number of indicators in use. However, staff have the flexibility to tailor indicators to the specific contexts and needs of a projects. As a result, it is difficult to extract information in an efficient way to make comparisons or provide trend analysis. This flexibility, while useful for staff, has made it difficult to track comparisons or trends across Monitoring for Results (MfR) objectives over time.

There is guidance on defining and using standard indicators, led by individual metiers, but it lacks conformity and training for staff across the organisation.

However, the results architecture does not yet provide a credible methodology for measuring and communicating the outcomes and impacts of confidential protection work, IHL dialogue or preventive activities, dimensions of the ICRC’s work that are potentially its most significant contributions to humanitarian outcomes. Staff reflected on the complexity of tracking and reporting on results linked to the level of respect for IHL, since this differs considerably in each operating context, with multiple variables. They noted the complexity, for instance, of reporting on the organisation’s influencing and prevention work and the role of the dialogue the ICRC has with states, and linking these inputs to specific results in a time-bound traditional logic model approach. These areas are critical components of the organisation’s mandate which staff see as ongoing areas of engagement that may fall outside of a typical reporting and planning cycle. Annual reports, donor appeals and IATI reporting reflect a commitment to transparency within the constraints of the operating model.

MI 7.4 – Performance data in decision-making

The use of performance data in operational planning and management has improved with the introduction of financial dashboards and the Analysis and Evidence analytical products. Interview evidence from Directorate members and regional directors suggests that corporate performance reviews now systematically draw on data, and that planning documents are more consistently grounded in performance analysis than in previous periods. At the field level, evidence of performance data use in programming adaptation is more mixed: some delegations demonstrate sophisticated evidence-based adaptation, while others, particularly those with reduced staffing following the 2023 reductions, rely more heavily on delegate judgement than on systematic data analysis. The



South Ossetia

An ICRC team on its way to remote villages in South Ossetia, a self-declared, partially recognised republic in the South Caucasus that is internationally considered part of Georgia.

Photo: © Konstantin Demidov | ICRC

implementation rate (87% in 2024) is used as a key institutional performance metric, although interviewees note that implementation rate alone does not capture the quality or impact of programming.

KPI 8: Evidence-based planning and programming applied

Satisfactory

2.54

MI 8.1 – Evaluation function

The ICRC's Evaluation Office has operational independence in practice and is producing credible, institutionally relevant evaluation products. The office's reporting line to the Director-General's Office (rather than directly to the Assembly) has pros and cons: in practice, it has brought senior leadership into closer engagement with evaluation findings, and stakeholder feedback cited this as a meaningful institutional investment in accountability. However, the arrangement means that managerial independence is not codified: the Office of the Director-General hires the Head of Evaluation, validates the evaluation plan, and approves the budget and staffing structure. In practice, staff report no evidence of interference in findings, and there is ring-fenced funding with defined selection criteria, but the absence of explicit independence guarantees in policy represents a structural gap relative to international standards. Evaluations are publicly available and management responses are tracked, suggesting the function is used for genuine learning. Coverage remains modest, and the volume of published evaluations reflects the office's recent establishment (late 2021). The evaluation function is adequately resourced relative to the ICRC's scale, though the 0.3% budget target is modest by multilateral comparators.

MI 8.2 – Monitoring systems

The analysis and evidence function represents the most significant monitoring system innovation of the assessment period and is showing early promise. Established in 2023 to promote evidence-based, outcome-oriented and people-centric programming culture, the analysis and evidence function has developed common definitions, metrics and analytical methodologies across the programme cycle. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) capacity, evidence-based protection frameworks and emerging outcome-monitoring data products are being integrated into operational decision-making. Interview evidence suggests that the function has gained institutional traction and is valued by programme managers, although its penetration into protection and prevention programming (where the most significant measurement gaps exist) is still limited. Remote monitoring systems,

deployed in contexts where direct access is restricted, are in place and are cited by interviewees as an important tool for maintaining evidence quality in inaccessible areas.

The PAM system is not yet systematically used across delegations, and there is no organisation-wide process for addressing consistently poor programme performance.

BOX 11. GOOD PRACTICE: ANALYSIS AND EVIDENCE (A&E) FUNCTION

The ICRC's establishment in 2023 of a centralised Analysis and Evidence (A&E) function represents an institutional innovation that addresses one of the most persistent weaknesses of large humanitarian organisations: the disconnect between data generation and programming decision-making. The ICRC's A&E function is not innovative per se — the existence of a dedicated analytical unit is now relatively common across major humanitarian agencies. What is innovative is the degree to which its A&E function integrates previously fragmented evidence streams into operational planning and programme delivery. By bringing together GIS capabilities, protection evidence frameworks, economic security analysis, needs assessments and programme monitoring within a shared institutional structure, the ICRC has created a more coherent and multidisciplinary approach to understanding needs and vulnerabilities across contexts.

The active involvement of A&E specialists in country-level planning and programme design distinguishes the model from more conventional monitoring and evaluation structures focused primarily on donor reporting or retrospective assessment. The A&E function is inserted throughout the programme cycle, informing targeting decisions, early warning analysis, programme adaptation and outcome monitoring in real time. ***In a sector where data systems often remain siloed across departments and disconnected from operational choices, the ICRC's approach represents an attempt to institutionalise evidence-informed and people-centred programming across the organisation as a whole.***



**Nakivale camp,
Uganda**

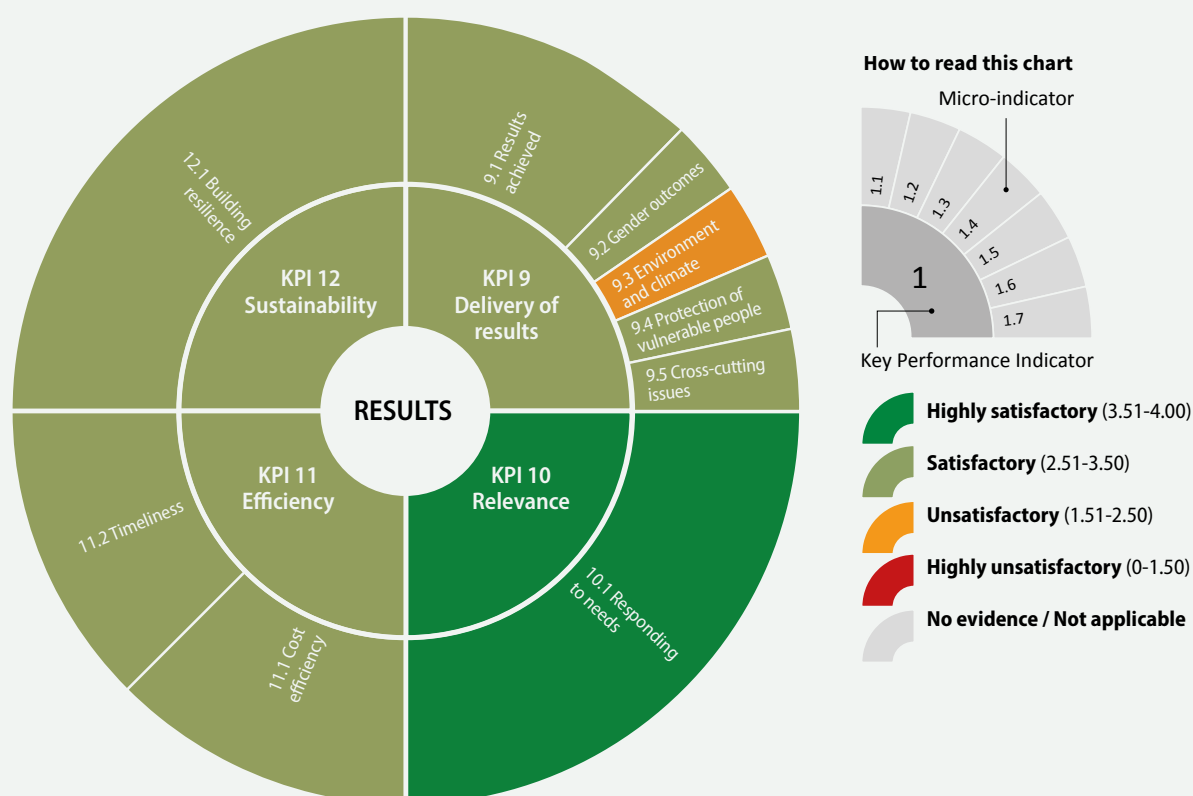
The ICRC and the Uganda Red Cross are working together in one of Africa's oldest refugee camps to reconnect families separated by conflict and forced displacement, providing essential support and hope for reunification.
Photo: © Jamateo Aramillo | ICRC

HUMANITARIAN EFFECTIVENESS

RESULTS

Achievement of relevant, inclusive and sustainable contributions to humanitarian and development results in an efficient manner.

FIGURE 10. KEY FINDINGS ON ICRC'S RESULTS AREAS



The ICRC's results in 2024 demonstrate substantial humanitarian impact across all four programme areas — protection, essential services, prevention, and Movement co-operation — in some of the world's most demanding operational contexts. Output targets were met or exceeded in most areas, and the implementation rate of 87% reflects operational discipline in a constrained budget environment. The most significant evidential challenge in this performance area is the assessment of outcomes and impacts for the ICRC's most distinctive activities, confidential protection, IHL dialogue and neutral intermediary services, where conventional results measurement cannot be applied without compromising the operating model. Ratings in this performance area are informed by the ICRC's own evaluation evidence base and its 2024 Annual Report, as well as the MOPAN survey findings.

KPI 9: Humanitarian objectives achieved; results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals

Satisfactory

2.88

The ICRC demonstrably achieved the majority of its stated output and outcome objectives in 2024, with several programme areas exceeding targets. Notable results include the following: food security support reaching 2.95 million people against a target of 1.75 million; water and habitat activities reaching 33.9 million people; support to 704 hospitals; and 1.88 million phone calls facilitated between separated family members. Protection

targets, including detention visits (678 places of detention, 737 000 detainees) and 14 682 tracing cases positively closed, were substantially achieved. In prevention, the IHL promotion initiative launched with six partner countries and expanded engagement with armed groups represent significant normative outputs.

Cross-cutting commitments show mixed evidence of achievement. Gender mainstreaming results are documented at output level (sex-disaggregated data, gender-sensitive programme design) but outcome-level evidence of gender equality results is limited. Environmental integration is uneven. Protection results, the ICRC’s core comparative advantage, are documented at output level but outcome-level evidence (violations prevented, behaviours changed through confidential dialogue) remains largely un-quantified for legitimate operational reasons.

KPI 10: Interventions relevant to needs and priorities of affected people

Highly satisfactory	4.00
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The ICRC’s mandate-driven needs assessment approach produces interventions that are systematically targeted to the most conflict-affected populations. Survey findings across the stakeholder sample show strong endorsement of the ICRC’s relevance: an overwhelming majority of partners and counterparts affirm that ICRC interventions are designed to meet the priority needs of target populations, and that the organisation demonstrates genuine understanding of context. The ICRC’s presence in contested territories, across front lines and in areas inaccessible to other actors is itself evidence of relevance to the most severe humanitarian needs. Community consultation and AAP mechanisms, while developing, provide channels for affected populations to influence programming.



Demining in Iraq

Noora is a deminer from Sinjar, and has dedicated her life to the dangerous, difficult and essential work of protecting civilians from the long-term hazards of anti-personnel landmines.
Photo: © Mike Mustafa Khalaf | ICRC

Relevance is strongest in emergency and acute crisis contexts and somewhat less consistent in protracted crisis settings. In protracted contexts, including the DRC, Afghanistan and South Sudan, interview evidence suggests that the ICRC’s programming has at times remained focused on emergency modalities even as population needs have evolved toward more sustained recovery and resilience support. The adapted framework acknowledges the ICRC’s mandate limitations in development programming, but notes that the organisation could engage more proactively with transition planning in contexts where humanitarian needs are stabilising. The ICRC has, selectively, built relationships with International Financial Institutions such as the World Bank to support this transition.

KPI 11: Results delivered efficiently

Satisfactory	3.00
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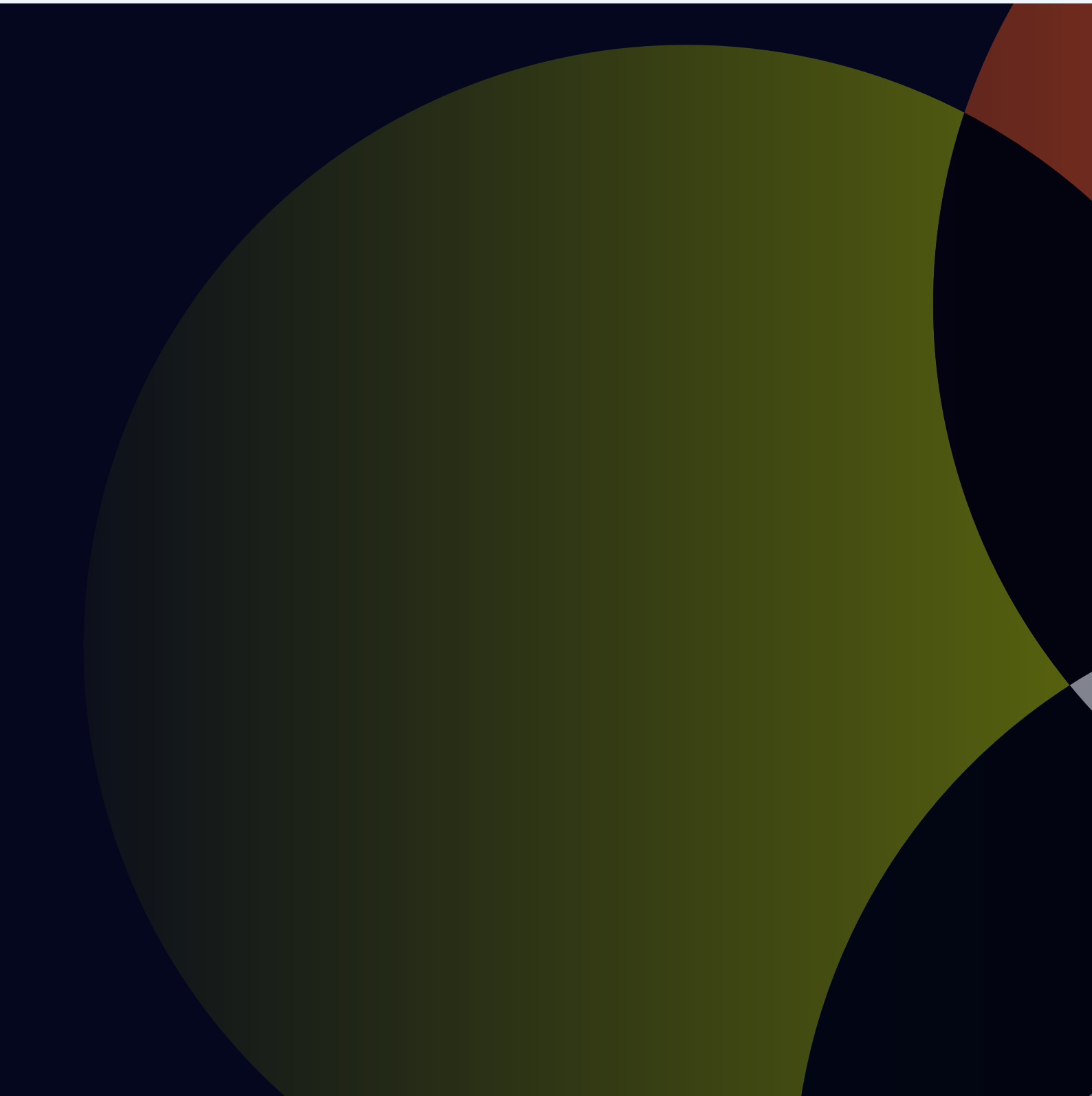
The ICRC’s efficiency record during the assessment period is shaped by two countervailing factors: the financial governance improvements that have reduced waste and improved resource allocation, and the operational contraction that has reduced the scale of assistance while maintaining high per-unit costs in high-risk environments. The 87% implementation rate in 2024 reflects operational discipline. The 6.5% overhead rate is competitive for a direct-implementation humanitarian organisation. Budget variance analysis, value-for-money audits and performance tracking against financial cockpit dashboards all contribute to an efficiency culture. However, the cost of delivering humanitarian services in inaccessible, high-risk environments (where the ICRC operates specifically because other actors cannot) is inevitably higher than in stable contexts, and the organisation rightly resists applying blunt cost-per-beneficiary metrics that would disadvantage the most difficult and important work.

Timeliness of delivery has improved with the strengthened emergency response mechanisms. Evidence from the Gaza crisis escalation and the Sudan conflict indicates that the ICRC was able to activate emergency appeals, redeploy personnel and scale up operations within timeframes consistent with the severity of the crisis. In some contexts, access constraints (rather than organisational delays) are the principal driver of delivery gaps, and these are documented appropriately in reporting.

KPI 12: Results are sustainable

Satisfactory	3.00
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Sustainability, in the ICRC’s mandate context, is assessed in terms of the continuity of humanitarian response, support for resilience, and the reduction of future vulnerabilities, rather than the conventional development concept of post-project sustainability. Evaluation evidence suggests that the ICRC is increasingly attentive to sustainability in both strategic positioning and operational design, particularly in response to declining humanitarian funding and rising operational costs. Sustainability considerations are not yet fully embedded within evaluation and monitoring frameworks, although clear improvements have been made. In contexts where the ICRC has sustained long-term presence (Afghanistan, South Sudan, DRC), programming has contributed to measurable resilience outcomes, including community water system functionality, rehabilitated health infrastructure and restored family links that support social cohesion. The ICRC’s IHL promotion and prevention work also contains a sustainability dimension: the goal of embedding respect for humanitarian norms within armed forces, security services and armed groups is explicitly oriented toward reducing future violations and the humanitarian needs they generate.



ABOUT THIS ASSESSMENT





North Darfur, Sudan

With the support of the ICRC and the Sudanese Red Crescent, eight community kitchens are providing two hot meals a day to approximately 10,000 newly displaced people who have fled violent clashes that disrupted supply chains and forced tens of thousands of people to leave their homes. Photo: © Ismail Ahmed | ICRC

THE MOPAN APPROACH

The approach to MOPAN assessments has evolved over time to adjust to the needs of the multilateral system. The MOPAN 3.1 Approach, applied in this assessment, is the latest iteration. Additional information can be found on our website.

This assessment has used the MOPAN 3.1 Adapted Framework for multilateral organisations working in crisis-affected contexts. Specific adaptations were agreed with the ICRC and the MOPAN Secretariat during the inception phase.

Table 9 lists the performance areas and indicators used in MOPAN 3.1.

TABLE 9. PERFORMANCE AREAS AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Performance area	KPI
Strategic management	KPI 1: Organisational architecture and financial framework enable mandate implementation and achievement of expected results
	KPI 2: Structures and mechanisms in place and applied to support the implementation of global frameworks for cross cutting issues at all levels
Operational management	KPI 3: The operating framework and human and financial resources support relevance and agility
	KPI 4: Organisational systems are cost- and value-conscious and enable financial transparency and accountability
Relationship management	KPI 5: Operational planning and intervention design tools support relevance and agility within partnerships
	KPI 6: Working in coherent partnerships directed at leveraging and catalysing the use of resources
Performance management	KPI 7: The focus on results is strong, transparent and explicitly geared towards function
	KPI 8: The MO applies evidence-based planning and programming
Results	KPI 9: Development and humanitarian objectives are achieved, and results contribute to normative and cross-cutting goals
	KPI 10: Interventions are relevant to the needs and priorities of affected people, as the organisation works towards results in areas within its mandate
	KPI 11: Results are implemented efficiently
	KPI 12: Results are sustainable

Source: MOPAN 3.1 Methodology Manual, 2020 Assessment Cycle, <https://www.mopan.org/en/our-work/mopan-methodology.html>.

APPLYING MOPAN 3.1 TO THE ICRC

This assessment applies the MOPAN 3.1 Adapted Methodology for multilateral organisations operating in crisis settings, while interpreting the KPIs in a manner that reflects the ICRC's distinct mandate.

Interpretations and adaptations to the methodology

The ICRC has distinct characteristics that set it apart from other multilateral organisations assessed by MOPAN, necessitating a series of considered adaptations to the standard framework. The key considerations shaping the adapted framework are described below.

Key adaptations to the MOPAN 3.1 framework for the ICRC

- **Mandate and normative authority:** The ICRC's core mandate derives from the Geneva Conventions and the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. References to the "2030 Agenda" and development objectives in KPI 2 and related indicators are reframed to reflect IHL compliance and humanitarian norm promotion. MI 5.8 (IDPs) has been removed as a separate indicator, since IDPs are amongst civilian populations that the ICRC responds to.
- **Nature of protection work:** Many of the ICRC's most significant outcomes involve preserving human dignity through confidential dialogue, detention visits and family links services. Direct attribution and quantitative measurement are inherently limited, particularly for preventive work. The framework and ratings reflect this operational reality.
- **Independence from the UN system:** The ICRC is not a UN organisation and does not participate in UN co-ordination mechanisms in the same way as UN agencies, although it is given observer status). References to IASC, cluster leadership, OIOS and UN system audits have been adapted or removed. The ICRC engages with UN bodies in a principled and selective manner.
- **Direct implementation:** The ICRC is an operational actor that directly implements programmes through its own staff, as opposed to relying on third-party implementing partners. References to partner-implementation are adapted accordingly.
- **Governance structure:** The ICRC's self-perpetuating Assembly under Swiss law differs from an intergovernmental governing body. KPIs 1 and 4 are adapted to reflect this unique governance model, including the role of the Assembly, the CFO direct reporting line, and the structure of oversight commissions.
- **PSEAH unified framework:** The ICRC addresses sexual exploitation/abuse and sexual harassment (SEAH) as a unified concept covering both internal (staff-staff) and external (staff-beneficiary) dimensions. MIs 4.9 and 4.10 have been merged into a single adapted MI 4.9, titled "Appropriate measures in place to prevent and respond to SEAH".
- **Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus:** MI 6.4 is adapted from the standard HDP nexus framing to focus on the ICRC's approach to ensuring effective evolution and exit from humanitarian activities, reflecting the absence of a development mandate.
- **Sustainability (KPI 12):** Reframed in terms of continuity of response and support for resilience, rather than post-project sustainability of development results, reflecting the ICRC's mandate as a humanitarian actor in conflict settings.

Lines of Evidence

This assessment relies on three complementary lines of evidence: a document review, a stakeholder survey, and staff interviews and consultations. The triangulation of evidence across these three streams underpins the credibility and validity of the assessment findings. Evidence was collected primarily in relation to the ICRC's Institutional Strategy period (2024-2027), while drawing on relevant trends and developments from earlier years.



Eastern Burundi

Buhumuza province, Busuma is a refugee camp hosting people from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Annuarite Yamwaka fled the fighting in eastern Congo and was separated from three of her children during her displacement.

Photo:

© Hugh Cunningham
Kinsella | ICRC

Document review

The document review comprised publicly available documents and internal documents shared by the ICRC, covering the period from approximately 2021 to 2025. Documents were limited to those in final form, recognised by management, and available in English; documents in French were noted and referenced where relevant. The review was organised against the MOPAN framework to identify evidence by KPI and micro-indicator, and an interim document review with gap analysis was completed in advance of the headquarters data collection visit. An overall cut-off date of 19 December 2025 applied, with selective consideration of documents received between January and April 2026 where they provided significant new evidence or reflected material institutional change.

The review encompassed over 500 documents, including:

- Strategic and planning documents: Institutional Strategy 2024-2027, annual appeals (2023-2025), Country PfRs from sample delegations
- Performance and results reports: Annual Reports (2022-2024), evaluation reports, Analysis and Evidence analytical products
- Governance and oversight documents: ICRC Statutes, Internal Regulations, Assembly resolutions, audit reports, Audit and Risk Commission documentation
- Policy and guidance documents: Code of Conduct, PSEAH Policy, Data Protection Policy, Resource Mobilisation Strategy, Partnering Framework, AAP framework, gender policy, environmental sustainability guidance
- Financial documents: Financial statements (2022-2024), Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2020-2030 and revised 2027 strategy, funding allocation reports
- Evaluations and reviews: Independent evaluations of programmes in sample countries, thematic evaluations, the operational crisis management framework review
- IHL and normative documents

Stakeholder Survey

An online stakeholder survey was designed in consultation with the ICRC to capture external perspectives on the ICRC's performance from across its partner and counterpart ecosystem. The survey was adapted from the standard MOPAN template to reflect the ICRC's mandate, operating context and stakeholder typology, with questions covering only those micro-indicators where external stakeholders are well-placed to provide informed perspectives.

The survey, open from 17 November to 17 December 2025, targeted stakeholders from six categories: operational partners (with and without a funding relationship), Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners, government representatives (donor governments and field-level government counterparts), armed forces and security forces, international organisations and NGOs, and academic and technical partners. The survey was available in English, French and Spanish.

The survey was distributed to stakeholders at global, regional and country level, covering the following ten countries and delegations in the country sample:

- Brasilia (Brazil)
- Colombia
- Democratic Republic of Congo
- Lebanon
- Myanmar
- Philippines
- Regional Delegation, London (United Kingdom)
- Regional Delegation, Luxembourg
- Regional Delegation, Paris (France)
- South Sudan

The survey yielded a 27.5% response rate (288 respondents). Full survey results can be found in Annex C.

Note: *The survey sample is not intended to be statistically representative of all ICRC external stakeholders. It seeks to obtain diverse perspectives across main stakeholder groups for triangulation purposes. Survey respondents were identified through a process of joint nomination by the ICRC focal points and MOPAN members. Contact details were held exclusively by the MOPAN Secretariat. Individual responses are treated as confidential; only aggregated and anonymised findings are reported.*

Interviews and consultations

Interviews were conducted in two phases: an inception phase (May 2025) and a data collection phase (October–December 2025), supplemented by a country visit to South Sudan. The two-phase approach allowed scoping interviews during inception to inform framework adaptation, while substantive data collection interviews were structured around the agreed assessment framework and evidence gaps identified during the document review.

A total of over 40 ICRC staff members were interviewed during the inception phase in Geneva (25–28 May 2025) and in subsequent virtual scoping sessions. During the data collection phase, interviews were conducted as follows:

- Geneva Headquarters (in-person): 13–17 October 2025, 81 interviews with senior managers, directors and technical experts across all six departments and the Office of the Director-General

- Remote interviews with regional delegations and country offices: 12 November –18 December 2025, across ten country delegations within the sample, including senior delegation management, programme co-ordinators and technical staff
- Country visit to South Sudan: 8-16 November 2025, over 70 in-person interviews and field observations with delegation leadership, programme staff, National Society partners, government counterparts and beneficiary representatives
- Institutional Lead consultations: Throughout the analysis phase, discussions with MOPAN member Institutional Leads to gather donor perspective insights and validate emerging findings.

In total, 193 key stakeholders (ICRC staff members and external stakeholders) were interviewed across the two phases. Interviews were conducted in English; notes were taken for all interviews and, where participants consented, recordings were made to support accuracy. Data was systematically logged and analysed using MAXQDA qualitative data software.

ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The assessment consisted of four phases: inception, evidence collection, analysis, and reporting. Table 10 below summarises the key activities and milestones across these phases.

TABLE 10. ASSESSMENT PHASES, ACTIVITIES AND KEY MILESTONES

Assessment Phase	Inception (Apr – Oct 2025)	Evidence Collection (Oct 2025 – Jan 2026)	Analysis (Jan – May 2026)	Reporting (May – Sep 2026)
Key activities	● Desk review ● Scoping interviews (Geneva, May 2025) ● Framework adaptation ● Country sample selection ● Inception report	● HQ interviews (Oct 2025) ● Remote delegation interviews ● Country visit (South Sudan) ● Stakeholder survey ● Document review	● Synthesis across evidence streams ● Technical Annex (Annex A) drafting ● ICRC fact-check of Technical Annex ● Emerging findings discussion	● Draft assessment report ● ICRC/IL fact-check ● Final report ● Embargoed distribution ● Public launch
Key milestones	● Inception visit Geneva: 25–28 May 2025 ● Zero draft to ICRC: 2–20 Jun 2025 ● Final Inception Report: 27 Oct 2025	● HQ interviews: 13–17 Oct 2025 ● Remote interviews: Nov–Dec 2025 ● Country visit (S. Sudan): 8–16 Nov 2025 ● Survey open: 17 Nov – 17 Dec 2025 ● Doc cut-off: 19 Dec 2025	● Technical Annex QA: 5 Jan – 11 Mar 2026 ● TA to ICRC fact-check: 20 Mar – 20 Apr 2026 ● Emerging findings: 13–16 Apr 2026	● 1st draft report: April 2026 ● Fact-check by ICRC: 5–19 June 2026 ● Final report ready: July 2026 ● Launch: September 2026

Inception phase (April to October 2025)

The inception phase established the methodological foundation for the assessment, including the adapted framework, country sample and stakeholder engagement approach. The phase included a five-day in-person visit to ICRC Headquarters in Geneva (25-28 May 2025), during which over 40 scoping interviews were conducted with senior staff across all departments. This was supplemented by virtual scoping interviews with key institutional leads and representatives of the Donor Support Group. An Interim Document Review with gap analysis was prepared ahead of the data collection phase, and the Final Inception Report was submitted on 27 October 2025.

Evidence collection phase (October 2025 to January 2026)

The evidence collection phase comprised headquarters interviews, remote delegation interviews, a country visit, the stakeholder survey and continued document review. In-person headquarters interviews were conducted 13-17 October 2025. Remote interviews with country and regional offices were conducted 12 November – 18 December 2025. The country visit to South Sudan took place from 8 to 16 November 2025 and involved in-person field engagement with delegation staff, Movement partners, government counterparts and affected community representatives. The stakeholder survey was open from 17 November to 17 December 2025. The document review cut-off date was 19 December 2025.

Analysis phase (January to May 2026)

The analysis phase involved systematic synthesis of evidence across the three evidence streams, against the adapted MOPAN framework. A technical annex (Annex A) providing detailed scoring and evidence citation at the element level for all KPIs was prepared, quality-assured by the MOPAN Secretariat and shared with the ICRC for fact-checking on 20 March 2026 (review period 20 March to 20 April 2026). Emerging findings were discussed with ICRC senior management and Institutional Leads on 13-16 April 2026.

Reporting Phase (May to September 2026)

The reporting phase produced the final assessment report and supporting annexes. A first draft was prepared in April 2026 and circulated for quality assurance. A final assessment report was fact-checked by the ICRC from 22 May to 5 June 2026. The final embargoed report was completed by 10 July 2026, with public launch planned between July and September 2026. A management response from the ICRC will be published alongside the assessment report.

**Somalia**

Las Anod, Sool region. Hassan Hussein, 43, struggles to feed his goats after losing half of his herd due to drought.
Photo: © Abdikarim Mohamed | ICRC

Democratic Republic of Congo

Bunia, Ituri Province, in the northeast of the country. Volunteers from the Red Cross of the DRC are raising awareness among community members about the risks associated with the Ebola virus disease and preventive measures.

Photo:
© Bingi Kalinda | Judor Production



METHODOLOGY FOR SCORING AND RATING

The approach to scoring and rating under MOPAN 3.1 is described in the 2020 Methodology Manual¹, which can be found on MOPAN's website. The MOPAN website also presents additional information about how the MOPAN framework was adapted for private sector operations.

Each of the 12 KPIs contain several micro-indicators (MIs), which vary in number. The KPI rating is calculated by taking the average of the ratings of its constituent MIs.

Scoring of KPIs 1-8

The scoring of KPIs 1-8 is based upon an aggregated scoring of the MIs. Each MI contains several elements, which vary in number, that represent international good practice. Taking the average of the constituent scores per element, a score is then calculated per MI. The same logic is pursued at aggregation to the KPI level, to ensure a consistent approach. Taking the average of the constituent scores per MI, an aggregated score is then calculated per KPI.

Scoring of KPIs 9-12

The scoring of KPIs 9-12 is based upon a meta-analysis of evaluations and performance information, rated at the MI level and aggregated to the KPI level. KPIs 9-12 assess results achieved as assessed in evaluations and annual performance reporting from the organisations. Other sources of information are reviewed and included as needed.

Rating scales

Whenever scores are aggregated, rating scales are used to translate scores into ratings that summarise the assessment across KPIs and MIs. The rating scale used under MOPAN 3.1 is shown below.

Highly satisfactory (3.51-4.00)

Satisfactory (2.51-3.50)

Unsatisfactory (1.51-2.50)

Highly unsatisfactory (0.00-1.50)

High evidence confidence

Medium evidence confidence

Low evidence confidence

1. MOPAN 3.1 Methodology Manual, 2020 Assessment Cycle,
<https://www.mopan.org/en/our-work/mopan-methodology.html#FAQ>.

A score of “N/E” means “no evidence” and indicates that the assessment team could not find any evidence but was not confident of whether there was evidence to be found. The team assumes that “no evidence” does not necessarily mean that the element is not present (which would result in a zero score). Elements rated N/E are excluded from any calculation of the average. A significant number of N/E scores in a report indicates an assessment limitation (see the Limitations section at the beginning of the report). A note indicating “N/A” means that an element is considered to be “not applicable”. This usually owes to the organisation’s specific nature.

LIMITATIONS

Any assessment involves limitations arising from constraints on data availability, methodology and access. The following limitations are relevant to this assessment. For each, an indication is provided of the impact on confidence in findings and the steps taken to mitigate it.

TABLE 11. ASSESSMENT LIMITATIONS

#	Limitation	Description	Impact on confidence	Mitigation
1	Operational confidentiality and protection outcomes	The ICRC’s core operating model based on confidential dialogue with parties to conflict, detention visits and neutral intermediary services means that the most significant outcomes of its work cannot be publicly documented or measured using standard results frameworks. This is a structural feature of the mandate, not an institutional failure. The Assessment was conducted under a data sharing agreement which allowed for the team to review confidential material.	Medium–High. Confidence in ratings for protection and prevention-related MIs (KPIs 7, 9) is reduced.	Interviews also explored process-level evidence of outcomes; use of qualitative indicators; explicit acknowledgement in ratings and narrative. While confidential material cannot be reviewed or quoted, and reference to delegations is not always made explicit, the materials reviewed form part of the evidence base and have in places enhanced the evidence confidence for some KPI areas.
2	First MOPAN assessment (no baseline for comparison)	This is the first MOPAN assessment of the ICRC. No prior MOPAN ratings or management response data are available for longitudinal comparison or for tracking progress against previous recommendations.	Low–Medium. Some trend analysis is possible using the ICRC’s own reporting; this report establishes a baseline for future assessments.	Longitudinal analysis using the ICRC’s own Annual Reports and evaluations (2021–2024). Explicit framing as a baseline assessment throughout.
3	Rapid and ongoing organisational change	The ICRC underwent major restructuring in 2023–2024 and was implementing the first phase of a new institutional strategy during the assessment period. During the assessment, the ICRC underwent further staff reductions.	Medium.	The inception report framework explicitly addresses how reforms-in-progress are scored; narrative notes reform status. Interviews with incoming and outgoing staff where possible.
4	Country visit security constraints	The country visit to South Sudan experienced security constraints during the visit period (November 2025). Certain areas of the delegation’s operation and some stakeholder groups could not be reached for safety reasons.	Low–Medium. Review team were able to visit alternative sub-delegations. No evidence of systematic bias.	Use of document evidence for gaps; other country sample contexts used to triangulate.



Ethiopia

Tigray. An ICRC staff screens conflict affected children and woman for malnutrition.

Photo: © Alyona Synenko | ICRC

#	Limitation	Description	Impact on confidence	Mitigation
5	Language constraints on document review	The document review was limited to documents available in English, in line with the MOPAN methodology. Some internal guidance documents, particularly those used in francophone operational contexts (DRC, West Africa, Paris regional delegation), are primarily available in French.	Low. Key strategic and policy documents are available in English; operational guidance gaps in French are noted where relevant.	French-language documents referenced in scoping interviews and noted in the document mapping.
6	Survey sample representativeness	The stakeholder survey was not designed to be statistically representative of all ICRC external stakeholders. Respondents were identified through nomination by ICRC focal points, which may over-represent stakeholders with positive engagement with the organisation.	Low–Medium. Survey findings are used for triangulation rather than as standalone evidence; weighted against interview and document evidence where divergence is observed.	MOPAN member nominations were also incorporated; open-text responses are systematically analysed; survey results presented as one of three evidence streams.
7	Limited evaluation evidence base for results KPIs	The number of independent evaluations covering the primary assessment period (2024-2025) is limited, given the relatively recent launch of the Institutional Strategy 2024-2027 and the time required for formal evaluations to be completed.	Medium. KPIs 9-12 ratings draw more heavily on performance reporting and interview evidence than on independent evaluation findings.	Evaluations from 2021-2023 are included where they provide relevant trend evidence. Annual Report data and Analysis and Evidence analytical products supplement the evaluation evidence base.

Note on the impact of the 2023-2024 financial and operational crisis on the assessment

The ICRC's 2023 financial crisis, which resulted in approximately 1 800 redundancies and the closure of 26 field structures, created unusual conditions for evidence collection. In several delegation contexts, institutional memory had been disrupted by staff transitions, and documentation of practices prior to the 2023 restructuring was sometimes incomplete or inaccessible. The assessment team has endeavoured to distinguish between the pre-crisis situation (where relevant as context) and the post-reform situation (which is the primary basis for scoring), consistent with MOPAN guidance on scoring reforms-in-progress. Where the distinction is material to a rating, it is noted in the relevant section of Annex A.

ANNEX

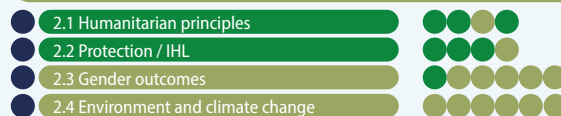
FIGURE 11. ICRC PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

Strategic management

KPI 1: Organisational and financial framework

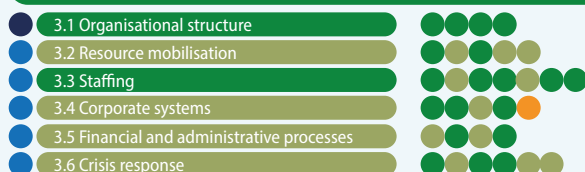


KPI 2: Structures for cross-cutting issues

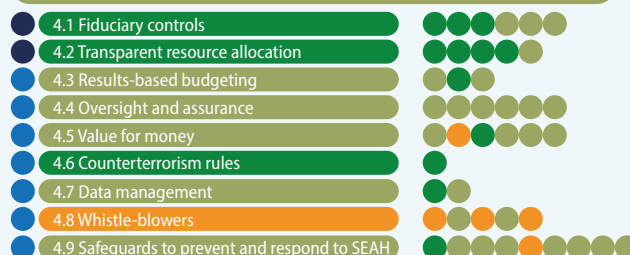


Operational management

KPI 3: Operating framework



KPI 4: Cost- and value-conscious systems



Relationship management

KPI 5: Relevance and agility

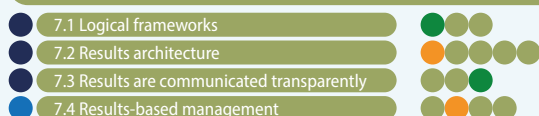


KPI 6: Coherent partnerships



Performance management

KPI 7: Results management



KPI 8: Evidence-based planning and programming

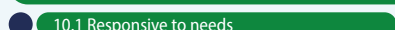


Results

KPI 9: Delivery of results



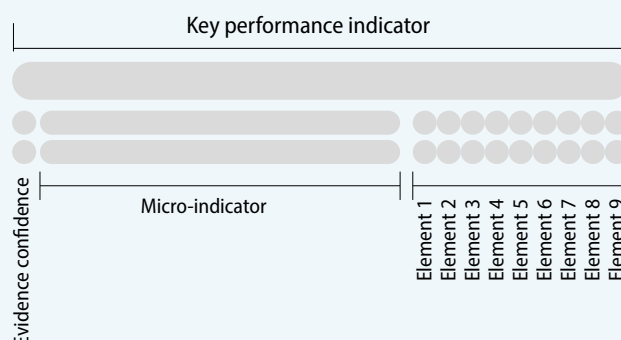
KPI 10: Relevance to partners



KPI 11: Efficient delivery



KPI 12: Sustainability





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