

### International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) and the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre

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The IFRC and Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre lead the humanitarian approach to extreme heat by developing climate resilience programs, supporting early warning early action initiatives, raising global awareness, and integration into cluster approaches. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network. Its mission is to inspire, encourage, facilitate, and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies. The IFRC does so with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The mission of the Climate Centre, an <u>IFRC Global Reference Centre</u> hosted by the Netherlands Red Cross in The Hague, is to support the <u>Red Cross and Red Crescent</u> <u>Movement</u> and its partners in reducing the impacts of climate change and extremeweather events on vulnerable people, including extreme heat.

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#### Lead Heat Entities:

- Climate, Environment and Resilience Unit
- Global Disaster Preparedness Center
- Global Climate Resilience Programme
- Urban, Health and Anticipatory Action programmes

### KEY FACTS

# Extreme heat is surpassing human and social limits.

There are clear limits beyond which people exposed to extreme heat and humidity cannot survive. There are also likely to be levels of extreme heat beyond which societies may find it practically impossible to deliver effective adaptation for all. On current trajectories, heatwaves could meet and exceed these physiological and social limits in the coming decades, including in regions such as the Sahel, and South and South-West Asia. The impacts would include large-scale suffering and loss of life, population movements and further entrenched inequality. These impacts are already emerging.

Extreme Heat: Preparing for the Heatwaves of the Future (2022)

### The impacts of extreme heat are growing and unequally distributed globally and socially.

**Technical Focal Points:** 

Vulnerable populations, especially in the world's poorest countries, face the greatest increases in hot days and warm nights—a trend accelerating for decades.

Marginalized groups, including casual laborers, agricultural workers, migrants, the elderly, children, and pregnant or breastfeeding women, are at higher risk of heat-related illness and death. This thermal inequality highlights the disproportionate burden on those least responsible for climate change.

Extreme Heat: Preparing for the Heatwaves of the Future (2022)

### Experiencing extreme heat has become 2x as likely due to climate change.

Climate change is driving unprecedented exposure to extreme heat, doubling the likelihood of such events worldwide. Between June 2023 and May 2024, 78% of the global population faced at least 31 days of extreme temperatures hotter than 90% of historical norms made twice as likely by human-caused warming.

Climate Change and the Escalation of Global Extreme Heat (2024) Heatwave Guide for Cities (2020)







### **National Implementation efforts**

The IFRC and the Climate Centre have led the implementation of various projects on extreme heat.

A key project, the <u>Coastal City Resilience and Extreme Heat</u> <u>Action Project (CoCHAP)</u>, aims to build climate resilience of urban communities, particularly to extreme heat and coastal threats. While building on the learning from the previous experiences in coastal cities, extreme heat response and locally led climate adaptation, CoCHAP will strengthen the capacities of the communities, Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) National Societies, city authorities, meteorological agencies and other stakeholders in system and design thinking, coalition building and evidence-based collective action.

Another key project, led by the Climate Centre, includes leading <u>studies in Nepal and Bangladesh</u> to identify heat thresholds and heat hotspots, with the intention to improve resilience and preparedness around future extreme-heat events.

**Core Partners:** United States Agency for International Development (USAID) & Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), Asia Regional Resilience to a Changing Climate programme

### **Global Awareness Raising**

The IFRC and Climate Centre lead global awareness on extreme heat. The <u>Global Summit on Extreme Heat</u> was a flagship event hosted in collaboration with USAID, to raise the alarm about the growing urgency of heatwaves and the threat they pose to human health and well-being. The Global Summit further developed the <u>Global Sprint of Action on Extreme Heat</u> and <u>Heat Action Day Campaign</u>.

**Core Partners:** United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

🛧 Featured initiative

### **Heat Toolkit**

The Heat Toolkit is a collection of resources on extreme heat and climate change, including guidance materials, campaign materials, case studies, policy briefs, research, and reports. The Heat Toolkit includes materials developed specifically by the Red Cross and Red Crescent Society as well as international partner organizations.

Core Partners: Global Heat Health Information Network (GHHIN), World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

### Early Warning, Early Action (EWEA)

EWEA Framework is an initiative co-led by the IFRC, which involves taking steps to protect people before a disaster strikes based on early warning or forecasts.

- The <u>Early Warnings for All (EW4All)</u> initiative is a key component of the EWEA framework, which aims to ensure everyone on earth is protected by early warnings, including for extreme heat, by 2027 through collaboration with the UN and various partners.
- Anticipatory Action is another key component of the EWEA framework that encompasses the actions that can be taken before a predicted hazard hits to prevent or reduce its potential impacts. Anticipatory Action includes work on heatwaves, such as the <u>Early Action Protocol in</u> <u>Bangladesh for heatwaves</u>.

The German Red Cross hosts the <u>Anticipation Hub</u>, which brings together the knowledge and experience on anticipatory humanitarian action to help scale up efforts in different countries, for different hazards by a range of users. Extreme heat is comprehensively integrated throughout the Early Warning, Early Action initiative.

**Core Partners:** Partnership across the United Nations, International Agencies and International Financing Institutions, Red Crescent Societies

### Urban Climate Resilience Programme (UCRP)

The Global Climate Resilience Programme is an initiative aimed to create lasting urban resilience in 15 cities internationally. The program addresses climate-related challenges through in-depth analysis of local risks, with a focus on vulnerable urban communities. Cities will develop and implement tailored solutions, emphasizing best-practice sharing and public-private partnerships to enhance resilience. Cities will focus on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and disaster risk management (DRM) in the short term, with plans to expand into climate change adaptation (CCA). At some of the locations of implementation, such as cities in Australia and Spain, extreme heat is one of the major focal areas of the program.

This initiative was launched in 2023, as a three-year initiative by the Zurich Foundation in partnership with the IFRC and several other organizations.

**Core Partners:** International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI), C40 Cities, Resilience Cities Network, Plan International, Colombian Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross, Australian Red Cross, respective Zurich Insurance Business Units







## The Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organizations

The charter, led by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and IFRC, provides a clear vision and principles to guide humanitarian action in the face of the climate and environment crises. The commitments of the charter include helping people adapt to the impacts of the climate and environment crises (Commitment 1), and increase capacity to understand climate and environmental risks and develop evidence-based solutions (Commitment 4), mapping to extreme heat.

**Core Partners:** International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), <u>Advisory Committee</u>

### **Global Climate Resilience Programme**

The Global Climate Resilience Programme is an ambitious, multi-year programme to scale up locally-led <u>climate-smart</u> <u>disaster risk reduction</u> (DRR) and adaptation efforts.

The programme aims to help people adapt their lives and livelihoods to our changing climate, protect themselves from the increasing risks of disasters caused by climate change, and become more aware of, and resilient to, current and future climate shocks. It includes scaling up climate-smart DRR, early warning and anticipatory action and preparedness and reducing the public health impacts of climate change, with a focus on reducing the impacts of extreme heat.

As part of its Global Climate Resilience Program, in November 2024, IFRC launched its flagship initiative to tackle extreme heat "Beating the Heat Together: People, Places and Partnerships". The ambition of this initiative is to mobilize 500 million CHF by 2030, to increase the heat resilience of 100,000,000 million people across 100 countries, through strategic partnerships at global and city-level.

### **IFRC Global Shelter Cluster (GSC)**

IFRC leads the Global Shelter Cluster (GSC) in disaster settings. The Shelter Cluster is an inter-agency mechanism that coordinates shelter and settlements assistance in humanitarian responses to disasters and internal displacement due to conflict. Strengthening capacity to deliver environmentally sustainable and climate-smart approaches in shelter responses is one of the key priorities of the Global Shelter Cluster's new <u>strategic framework</u> to enhance the impact of the response efforts.

In line with this strategic direction, the Global Shelter Cluster has recently established a "<u>Working Group on Addressing</u> <u>Extreme Heat Risks in Shelters and Settlements</u>". The objective of this working group is to raise awareness of the significance of extreme heat as a factor affecting safe use and design of shelters and settlements and to provide resources to Shelter Cluster partners and others on how to reduce the impact of extreme heat on shelter users. This working group is open to all interested stakeholders and aims to bring together Shelter Cluster partners, other IASC clusters (e.g. health, WASH, CCCM), academia, extreme heat experts, private sector, and others.

**Core Partners:** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Global Shelter Cluster partners, World Wide Fund for Nature, Oxford Brookes University, Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Cluster Lead Agencies



Photo: Climate Centre 2024





### **HEAT RESOURCES**



### Foundational documents governing institutional heat activities

#### Global Plan 2024

The 2021-2025 Plan and Budget aims to ensure that 250 million people are better protected from heat (the most ignored and rapidly rising climate risk) by 2025, in at least 150 cities and towns.

### **Climate and Environment Charter for** Humanitarian Organizations **1st Commitment:**

- Target 1: Reach 250 million people with activities to address the rising climate risks.
- Target 2: By 2025, climate and environmental risks are factored into all our programmes and humanitarian operations.

### RCCC Strategy 2021-2025: Priority – Addressing urban heat risk

Through this strategic priority, the Climate Centre aims to support the IFRC's 2025 goal of protecting 250 million people with enhanced heat action plans or early warning systems in 150 cities and towns by accelerating city-level action and promoting urban planning, policy, and awareness. It will bolster its leadership, foster partnerships, and advocate for increased funding to reduce urban heat impacts worldwide.



Secretary-General's Call to Action on Extreme Heat



This heat action profile was developed by the Global Heat Health Information Network in partnership with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), as a contribution to the United Nations Secretary-General's Call to Action on Extreme Heat (2024). The content was validated by focal points from the profiled international organization / agency, and captures a snapshot of its heat work at the time of publication. The profile will be periodically updated.

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