## **Annual Report 2022**





**DOING IT TOGETHER** www.internationalbluecross.org

"Building an inclusive community" – project participants in Batonou, Togo

## Message from the President and General Secretary

First of all, we would like to thank all our volunteers and staff in all member countries for their tireless efforts. As a result, we were able to help many people around the world. This impressive feat is much valued and acknowledged by the international board!

On May 18, 2022, we received the sad news of the death of the former IBC President Albert Moukolo, who passed away a few days before his 71st birthday. Albert Moukolo remains in our memory as a dedicated, loyal, and deeply committed Blue Cross president as well as a friend and colleague.

The war in Ukraine has impacted the work of the international Blue Cross community, our thoughts and prayers are especially with the Blue Cross in Ukraine. Thanks to donations, Blue Crosses are able provide support for refugee families in Romania and Poland.

In Europe and other countries, legislators as well as social and health associations have dedicated their time and effort to answering the question of how to deal with cannabis use. Our mission as an umbrella organisation is to collaborate with our member organisations to support an evidence based policy,

which is sensitive to local societal circumstances. Together with Blue Cross Norway, we participated in an exchange on cannabis policy with a Norwegian government representative, where we were able to lead and foster a constructive discussion on the importance of treatment options and the risks of legalisation.

These activities and our extensive work are only possible thanks to many loyal partners and supporters, to whom we would like to extend our gratitude. We continue to count on our many partners, donors, volunteers, staff, and all who join us in our mission. Thank you for standing by us and we look forward to working with you in the future!

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#### IBC at a Glance

#### Who We Are

IBC is a Christian value-based, politically independent non-governmental organisation. The Blue Cross Movement started in 1877 in Switzerland. The International umbrella organisation was founded in 1886, currently comprising 38 national Blue Cross organisations in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. The IBC network comprises expertise in tackling alcohol and other drug-related health, social, and development issues through advocacy, prevention, treatment, and aftercare programmes. The IBC promotes this approach through a joint global voice and enables exchange and learning between Blue Cross Organisations around the world.

#### **Our Vision**

People live dignified and healthy lives in a world where societal structures and services enable a life free from addiction as well as alcohol and other drug-related harm.

#### **Our Mission**

Prevent and reduce the use, abuse and dependency of alcohol, and other drugs and their related harm, especially among the most vulnerable people. Engage Blue Cross Organisations worldwide to promote the mission, with a holistic view of the human being as a state of complete physical, mental, spiritual, and social wellbeing.

#### **Our Values**

Love • Solidarity • Excellence Respect • Empowerment Inclusiveness • Good Governance

### **Key Strategic Focus 2021-2028**

- Promoting a life free from alcohol and other drugs
- Strong member organisations
- Christian value-based approach



## Alcohol- and Drug Policy Advocacy Training in Johannesburg, South Africa

Evidence-based alcohol policies are a cornerstone of effective prevention. At IBC, the alcohol and drug policy advocacy desk focuses on building the capacity of Blue Cross organisations. We are committed to supporting the delivery of the WHO's Global Alcohol Policy Action Plan<sup>1</sup> in its member countries

In december 2022, 23 participants from 11 African member organisations took part in an workshop in Johannesburg, South Africa. The event centered on advancing alcohol policy as part of a strategy to prevent and decrease alcohol- and other drug harm.

The IBC-led workshop emphasized the importance of civil society empowerment through community action and implementing effective advocacy action in their countries.

Besides working on basic community action, the trainers designed sessions on specific topics, based on the needs expressed by participants during interviews prior to the training. Examples



include the WHO SAFER Initiative, advocacy principles and practices, research and data collection, monitoring, policy implementation, and building advocacy networks.

The interactive five-day-training enabled participants to expand their individual capacities and craft policy advocacy plans based on their individual level of knowledge and resources. **The key learning outcomes** for the participants included better understanding of alcohol policy advocacy, importance of

NGO networking, how to advocate for evidence-based alcohol policies with policy actors, monitoring alcohol policy implementation, and industry interference in national alcohol policy processes.

<sup>1</sup> https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\_files/EB150/B150\_7Add1-en.pdf

#### **Prevention Works!**

IBC's mission is to prevent and reduce alcohol- and other substance abuse among those most vulnerable who are suffering all around the world.

**Prevention means** stopping problems from arising in the first place; meaning we focus on keeping people healthy. instead of merely treating them once they have become ill. According to WHO and UNODC, the main objective of preventing drug use is to help young and vulnerable people to delay the initiation of the use of psychoactive substances, or if they have already initiated use, to avert the development of an addiction. The overall aim is much broader yet: IBC enables the healthy and safe development of children and youth so that they can realise their potential, develop their talents, and become active members of their family, community, and society.1

We know that prevention works. For every dollar spent on prevention, at least ten dollars can be saved on future health, social, and crime costs.<sup>2</sup>

Investing in effective and evidence-based prevention, therefore, not only results in better health, less crime, and more societal wellbeing, but also exhibits solid financial benefits for taxpayers and governments. One of these evidence-based prevention methods is "Life Skills Education".

IBC maintains a team of trained Life Skills facilitators who engage with children, who are both in and out of schools, in interactive Life Skills

sessions. Regularly facilitated Life Skills Education promotes skills for non-violent communication, decision-making, critical thinking, and negotiation; important competencies needed for the prevention of risk-associated behavior.

Life Skills Education enables young people to translate knowledge, attitudes,

Core skills	Definition
Decision-making	Helps us to deal constructively with decisions about our lives.
Problem-solving	Enables us to deal constructively with problems in our lives. Significant problems that are left unresolved can cause mental stress and give rise to accompanying physical strain.
Critical thinking	Our ability to analyse information and experiences in an objective manner.
Creative thinking	Contributes both to decision-making and problem-solving by enabling us to explore the available alternatives and various consequences of our actions or inaction.
Communication	Means that we are able to express ourselves, both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are appropriate to our culture and situations.
Interpersonal relationships	Help us to relate in positive ways with the people we interact with.
Self-awareness	Includes our recognition of ourselves, of our character, of our strengths and weaknesses, of our desires and dislikes.
Empathy	The ability to imagine what life is like for another person, even in a situation that we might not be familiar with.
Coping with stress	Recognizing the sources of stresses in our lives, recognizing how this affects us, and acting in ways that help to control our levels of stress.
Coping with emotions	Involves recognizing emotions in ourselves and others, being aware of how emotions influence behaviour and being able to respond to emotions appropriately.

and values into actual abilities (what to do and how to do it)<sup>3</sup> and adopt and sustain a healthy lifestyle for the future.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> www.unodc.org/documents/prevention/UNODC-WHO\_2018\_ prevention\_standards\_E.pdf)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> www.movendi.ngo/the-issues/the-solutions/the-science/

<sup>3</sup> www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240005020

## **Spotlight on Motorcycle Taxi Drivers**



Motorcycle drivers' meeting place in Lomé, Togo

Motorcycle taxi drivers on the streets of some African countries are under substantial pressure. Consequently, most of them do their work under the influence of drugs – alcohol and/or tramadol.

Taxi drivers – alongside schoolchildren, trainees, parents, and local communities – are a target group of the IBC Life Skills programme in the two countries of Togo and Chad. There, at their assembly points, the prevention team meets motorcycle taxi drivers, helping many

to, for the first time, consider how drugs damage health, promote violence and aggression, and lead to social problems.

During these meetings, drivers practice concrete behavioral strategies with a variety of activities, for example role-playing games. This allows

them to learn to break free from peer pressure and avoid violence.

These taxi drivers often have difficult life stories. Most of them didn't choose their work. Some began studies or training and had to drop out due to financial constraints.

Others completed their education but cannot find employment. Many come from rural areas and live isolated from their families in big cities. Hardly any other industry in Africa employs more people, which is why the profession of motorcycle taxi driver is regarded as an important economic factor. In Togo, for example, the sector generates over CHF 70 million a year. Nonetheless, the profession suffers a bad reputation, as it is accident prone and passengers are generally not provided a helmet.

So far, the work of motorcycle taxi drivers remains unregulated in most countries and belongs to the so-called "informal sector". In places where the government undertakes initiatives to better regulate the work of motorcycle taxi drivers and take them out of the informal sector, they are met with distrust from drivers who fear that their meager profits they make from driving will be taxed. This results in even more pressure and frustration for the drivers, leading many to seek refuge in alcohol and other drugs.

## A Motorcycle Driver from Togo Shares His Story

Thirty-eight-year-old Akakpovi Kossi is one of over 260000 motorcycle taxi drivers in Togo. He is married with two children and lives in the Togolese capital Lomé. During a project visit we had the pleasure of sitting down with him for a conversation and getting to know him better.

"I used to be frustrated most of the time and just fight with my family. While I realised that our situation was not good, I never took the time to figure out what could be the cause. There have been many disappointments in my life. I began my studies as a young man, but it was just too expensive! So, I looked for a job where there would always be work: I became a motorcycle taxi driver.

For most people, motorcycle taxis are the primary mode of transportation here - a trip across the city costs little. But the competition is fierce. We often have to work nights, earning a daily wage of 2,500 CFA (just under 3 CHF). Most of the taxi drivers cope with drugs. At some point I started doing it too. I took tramadol almost daily. It wakes you up and makes you feel good. It put my life in a downward spiral.

At some point I met the Blue Cross. Its staff showed up at our meeting point and started talking to us about drugs and alcohol. They explained to us the health risks and also how its

consumption can trigger violence. Something clicked inside me and I started participating in Blue Cross activities on a regular basis, and I have sworn off drugs. I have worked on my behavior and spoken openly with my family. Since then, we have become much closer and there is peace at home. My wife is happy when she sees me walk through the door again!

Today, I see myself as a representative of the Life Skills program. I have become a peer educator, which means that I now visit the drivers' meeting points and do educational work with them. I tell them about the dangers of consumption and tell them about my change. I'm still a taxi driver, but I am working hard to make the best of it. And this is only possible without alcohol and drugs!"

Motorcycle driver Akakpovi Kossi proud being peer educator

## **Latest Results of IBC Life Skills Programme in Africa**

# 1) More responsible behaviour among young people and reduced substance abuse

In 2022, 10'644 young people attended at least eight Life Skills sessions. Through the interactive sessions designed by local teams of trained facilitators particularly vulnerable and marginalized youth acquired communication, decision-making, critical thinking, and negotiation skills needed for healthy development and the prevention of risk-associated behaviours. The last external evaluation (Ranas, 2020) showed that more than 90% of participants in Chad and Congo reported that their problem-solving skills and self-confidence increased. 81% stated that they can better manage stress and have an improved quality of life. In 2022, alcohol consumption in Congo decreased 60% among female project participants and 32% among male participants. Abstention has grown between 25% and 50% for male and female participants.



Training on gender equality in a school in Tanzania

## 2) Reduction of gender-based violence

All project beneficiaries – students, outof-school youth, motorcycle taxi drivers – attended Life Skills sessions on gender equality. Internal evaluations have shown that the sessions on gender have a particularly eye-opening effect. For the first time, many participants hear that men and women are equal in rights and dignity. IBC project partners witness girls becoming aware of their rights by attending Life Skills sessions. They start to speak up in front of boys and the boys recognise certain privileges society accords to them. During the sessions both boys and girls learn to treat each other with more respect. The beneficiaries themselves estimated that the project strongly contributes to reducing alcohol-related harm such as gender-based and other forms of violence and discrimination.

## 3) Policy change through community action and advocacy

IBC's intervention approach is based on the prevention triangle which combines education, community action, and alcohol policy advocacy. A successful advocacy initiative was achieved in Chad: Beverages with a very high alcohol content are widely sold in plastic bags at a very low price throughout the country. The local Blue Cross alerted and mobilised civil society organisations and government ministries about the risks related to the sale of these sachets. The meeting with the inter-ministerial committee was a great success: a bill was drafted and presented to the President who issued a decree in 2022, banning the sale of alcohol bags.

## Volunteer Engagement Worldwide

### **Silvia Eugster**

Aware of the damage that alcohol- and other drug consumption can cause in people's lives, it has been extremely rewarding to work for IBC as a volunteer interpreter and translator since 2020. I'm very grateful for the opportunity to use my skills to promote programmes and policies to protect people from alcohol- and other drug harm. I firmly believe that we can all contribute to build a healthier future by helping others.

Especially satisfying has been for me to interpret remote trainings and meetings during the pandemic, helping IBC to continue its work in difficult times.

Lilla Kajtár

After moving to Switzerland, I felt a little lost and alone in a new country. IBC and its amazing team welcomed me with open arms! It was my first experience with the Swiss work culture, and I quick-

ly felt comfortable and appreciated. The team is doing a wonderful job and get-



**Priscilla Persil** 

I joined IBC through an employment program and although I have a permanent job position, I continue my engagement. Having an academic background in international cooperation and marketing, my volunteer placement has been a perfect opportunity to gain practical skills and enter the world of NGOs, which has since been fascinating for me. Thanks to the

team's support, my volunteer experience has been enriching professionally and personally.

#### **Jack Streames**

I have been with IBC for around 2 years, assisting with various translation and proofreading tasks. Offering my translation services as a linguist at IBC means a lot to me. I am part of a group of people who are committed to helping those who need help and ensuring that our work provides informati-

our work provides information to those who ultimately benefit from it - be it people who are currently suffering from addiction or those who help others overcome it. The Blue Cross in my opinion, fulfils one of the most important goals of our time-helping people to stabilize their own lives and to live without addictive substances. I am very happy to be part of it.

## **Meet IBC Member Organisations**

#### **Burkina Faso, West Africa**



Self-Help group in Burkina Faso

Since 2021 the Blue Cross in Burkina Faso has been running mutual and self-help groups. The local team has learned in several workshops, together with participants from other member organisations, how to set up and conduct groups on a regular basis. Since 2022, two self-help groups ranging from five to seven participants meet once a week to work on their recovery under the supervision of two facilitators. Throughout the learning journey, Blue Cross Burkina Faso has come to understand that the recovery process for individu-

als is gradual, and differs from person to person. The local team has learned the importance of patience, respect, and consideration, which are needed for dealing with people affected to alcoholand other drug-related- harm. In other words: the self-help group programme has helped to further develop the skills, values, and attitudes of local Blue Cross members

#### **Tansania**, East Africa

The Blue Cross Society of Tanzania (BCST) was founded in 2006 in Ifakara. Since then, the area of operation increased with an office in Arusha and branches in the Bunda, Longido, Kibondo, Morogoro and Mwanza municipalities. Most of the branches operate on a voluntary basis and work with various stakeholders, such as local government authorities, parents, and faith and community members. They aim to sensitise their communities on the need for the prevention and reduction of alcohol and other drug use as well as their con-

sequences such as interpersonal and gender-based violence among children and youth.

Over the past 17 years BCST implemented numerous successful programmes addressing the needs of communities with a participatory approach. These programs have covered topics, such as alcohol and other drug use prevention, malaria prevention, and HIV/AIDS awareness. Additionally, BCST has focused on raising awareness and building capacities in local communities on income generation as well as lobbying and advocacy skills. The latest exciting chapter was the addition of the IBC-Life Skills programme in Arusha in 2020.



Awareness-raising with parents in Arusha, Tanzania

Abstinent campsite holidays in Ardèche, France



### France, Western Europe

Blue Cross France is turning 140 years old in 2023! 50 separate entities operate throughout the entire country hosting various activities that range from festive feasts, gift-wrapping, and cooking workshops to informational events in schools. In 2022, an entity organised a run where almost 650 participants raised 6,500 euros for the Cancer League. Also, at an introductory training, the Blue Cross presented its values and offerings for those in need to a wide audience. Since 1972, Blue Cross has run the only alcohol-free camping in France. It primarily hosts members of the Blue Cross seeking to spend the holidays in

abstinence. In addition, people who are otherwise affected by alcohol issues are welcome. The camping site in the Ardèche is the ideal spot for outdoor activities, like hiking, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, river fishing or cycling. Campers are also given the chance to visit a host of magnificent sightseeing spots overlooking surrounding valleys, including the Rhône Valley. This outdoor paradise has been awarded partial funding, but it also funded by guests and donors – special thanks!

2023 Opening Times: 25.06 - 20.08. Contact for reservations: Jean-Claude SCHERER, jeanclaude2951@gmail.com, +33 6 12 60 73 79

## **Switzerland, Western Europe**

The comprehensive approach from prevention, counselling, and therapy to integration is the unique selling point of the Swiss Blue Cross. This umbrella organisation brings together twelve regional organisations. BC Switzerland also coordinates a range of campaigns

across Switzerland, some of which include "Dry January", the dance initiative, "roundabout", which seeks to empower young girls, and the "Blue Cocktail Bar", a mobile bar serving alcohol free beverages. It also supports the execution of undercover alcohol purchases to better monitor the sale of alcohol to minors as well as holiday camps for children and young people. In addition, great examples for effective nationwide prevention measures are the successful banning of tobacco advertising, where Blue Cross offered unwavering support, as well as the sales ban on alcoholic beverages in one of Switzerland's largest supermarket chains, "MIGROS".

Young girls in action at the dance programme "roundabout"



## Abridged Version of the Financial Statements Based on Swiss GAAP FER 21

Assets	2022 CHF	2021 CHF
Cash and Cash Equivalents Short-term Receivables Accrued Assets	634,790.19 46,895.05 17,771.94	593,470.90 88,021.26 30,342.50
Total Current Assets	699,457.18	711,834.66
Financial Assets Furniture and Equipment Total Fixed Assets	352,625.22 1,416.06 <b>354,041.28</b>	384,217.07 1,022.17 <b>385,239.24</b>
Total Assets	1.053.498.46	1.097.073.90

Income	
Foundations	18.4%
Public Institutions	31.8%
Membership Fees	23.7%
	11.5%
Churches	6.5%
Private Donors	7.9%
Companies	0.1%

Liabilities and Equity	2022 CHF	
Trade Accounts Payable Deferrals Provisions	34,185.36 29,010.67 0.00	24,397.95 32,853.14 20,000.00
Total Current Liabilities	63,196.03	77,251.09
Provisions Total long-term Liabilities	20,000.00 <b>20,000.00</b>	0.00 <b>0.00</b>
Chad Congo Brazzaville Brasil Togo Eastern Europe Denmark, Finland, Greenland Life Skills Programme Burkina Faso Knowledge / Skills Transfer, Sensibilisation Music Groups Alcohol Policy Total Funds	38,952.31 32,199.36 405.56 0.00 64,077.33 5,502.01 27,525.31 1,528.66 0.00 8,875.09 547.38	61,110.54 35,722.75 0.00 4,478.64 7,947.06 642.52 59,950.61 7,753.87 34,628.39 4,891.41 11,287.60 <b>228,413.39</b>
Paid-In Capital General Reserve Organisation Reserve Solidarité Organisational Development Retained Earnings Balance from Prior Year Result for the Year Total Equity	433.25 10,000.00 315,249.67 331,300.66 133,705.84 0.00 0.00 <b>790,689.42</b>	433.25 10,000.00 315,249.67 331,300.66 134,425.84 0.00 0.00 <b>791,409.42</b>
Total Liabilities and Equity	1.053,498.46	1,097,073.90

The full version of the Financial Statements 2022 based on Swiss GAAP FER 21 is available on www.internationalbluecross.org in the category "Resources".

Income	2022 CHF	2021 CHF
Membership Contributions	214,320.54	214,985.30
Donations and Contributions	408,688.58	340,413.99
Government Grants	280,386.48	249,406.19
Other Income	5,719.63	4,232.21
Total Income	909,115.23	809,037.69

-714,117.54

-637,677.26

## **Expenses**

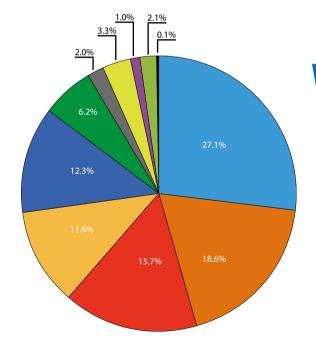
Project Expenses

Fundraising Expenses	-72,632.80	-68,413.78
Administrative Expenses	-122,224.62	-121,471.07
Total Expenses	-908,974.96	-827,562.11
Operating Result	140.27	-18,524.42
Financial Income Incl. Foreign Exchange Profit	8,259.12	39,458.76
Financial Cost Incl. Foreign Exchange Loss	-57,919.77	-7,894.88
Financial Result	-49,660.65	31,563.88
Operating Result Before Changes in Funds	-49,520.38	13,039.46
Allocation to Project Funds	-636,581.32	-542,975.88
Withdrawal from Project Funds	685,381.70	533,586.29
Funds Result	48,800.38	-9,389.59
Result Before Allocation	-720.00	3,649.87
Allocation to Organ. Development Fund	0.00	-3,649.87
Withdrawal from Organ. Development Fund	720.00	0.00
Result for the Year	0.00	0.00

### **Expenses**

CHAD – Life Skills	27.1%
CONGO – Life Skills	18.6%
TOGO – Life Skills	15.7%
TANZANIA – Life Skills	
Knowledge transfer / Sensibilisation MO's	12.3%
Alcohol Policy	6.2%

	BRAZIL – KIDS support	2.0%
	Selfhelp Uganda, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Nigeria, Ghana, Madagascar	
	Sensibilisation general	1.0%
	Ukraine (Romania and Poland refugee support in 2022)	
	Lifeskills Manual	0.1%



## **Audit Report 2022**

The Financial Statements 2022 were prepared according to Swiss GAAP FER, in particular standard 21 "The accounting for charitable, social non-profit organisations". BDO AG, as statutory auditor, examined the Financial Statements. The examination was conducted in accordance with the Swiss Standard on Limited Statutory Examination. This standard requires that the examination is planned and performed to identify material misstatements in the Financial Statements

Based on the limited statutory examination, nothing came to the statutory auditor's attention that causes them to believe that the Financial Statements of International Blue Cross do not give a true and fair view of the financial position, the results of operations, and the cash flows in accordance with Swiss GAAP FER or do not comply with Swiss law and the association's article of incorporation.

#### **Tribute to Donors and Partners**

Among our current partners and donors are:

#### **INSTITUTIONAL DONORS**

- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)
- The Foreign Service of the Faroes Government of the Faroe Islands

#### **FOUNDATIONS & SOCIETIES**

- Foundation Widmer et Creux
- Foundation Jugendsozialwerk Blue Cross Baselland
- Foundation Third World Solidarity
- · Foundation Dutmala
- · Global Giving Foundation
- · Interaction, Switzerland
- KoGe Cooperation Community
- Blue Cross Zurich 4 + 5
- Blue Cross St. Gallen
- Blue Cross Appenzell
- Blue Cross Switzerland (You help, we help)
- Blue Cross Germany
- Blue Cross Denmark
- Blue Cross Finland
- Blue Cross Norway
- Blue Cross Music Winterthur

#### CHURCHES

- Association of churches (Partnerwerke) Zurich
- Evang. Ref. Church of the Canton of Fribourg
- Evang. Ref. Church of the Canton of Luzern
- Evang. Ref. Church of the Canton of St. Gallen
- Evang. Ref. Parish Köniz
- Evang. Ref. Parish Bennwil

#### Hölstein Lampenberg

- Evang. Ref. Parish Luzern
- Evang. Ref. Bern (Gesamtkirchgemeinde)
- Evang. Ref. Parish Johannes Bern
- Reformed Church Canton Zug
- Reformed Church Vechingen
- Reformed Church Winterthur-Seen
- Roman Catholic Church Langenthal
- Roman Catholic Church Region Bern

#### **MUNICIPALITIES & CANTONS**

- Lottery Fonds Canton Bern
- · Lottery Fonds Canton Glarus
- · City of Aarau
- Municipality of Pfeffingen
- · Canton Basel Stadt

#### **COMPANIES**

Black Gazelle



Thank you for your support – you help change lives!

#### **Network Committee**





Hans Eglin, Switzerland



Ingalill Söderberg, Sweden



Lars Thidemann Jensen, Denmark



Holger Lux, Romania MD, Director rehabilitation centre



Ewa Duda, Poland





Project Coordinator Blue Cross Tanzania



Rolf Hartmann, Brazil

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Anja Tuchtenhagen Fundraisina and PR



Sybille Dirren



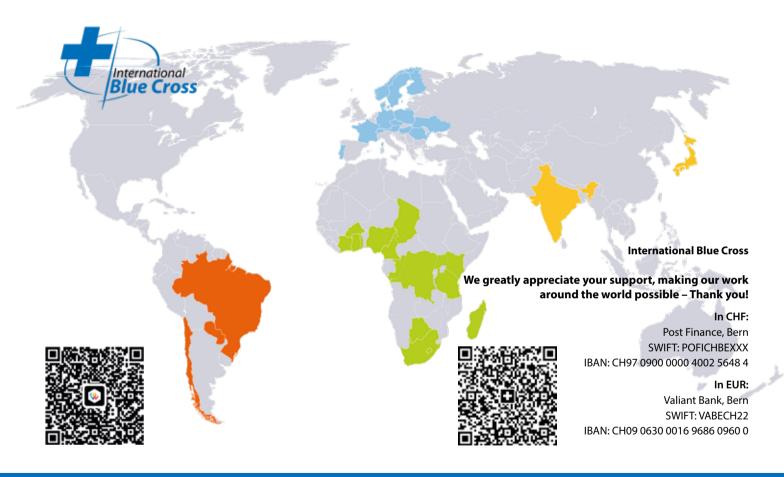


Flavia Ganarin





The Network Committee extends a warm Thank You to all supporters, partners and above all its volunteers who have dedicated in total 1.500 hours of their time to IBC in 2022.





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