

IN SUPPORT OF THE LESOTHO RED CROSS SOCIETY




82
National Society
branches



10
National Society
local units



560
National Society
volunteers



74
National Society
staff

PEOPLE REACHED

Climate and
environment



9,820

Disasters
and crises



9,594

Health and
wellbeing



26,406

Values, power
and inclusion



12,850

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

in Swiss francs (CHF)

Country	Funding Requirement	1.7M
IFRC Secretariat	Emergency Operations	
	Funding	550,000
	Expenditure	57,000
	Longer-term	
	Funding Requirement	1.4M
	Funding	111,000
	Expenditure	4,000
Participating National Societies	Funding	89,000
	Expenditure	89,000
HNS other funding sources	Funding Requirement	300,000

Lesotho Red Cross Society

Overview

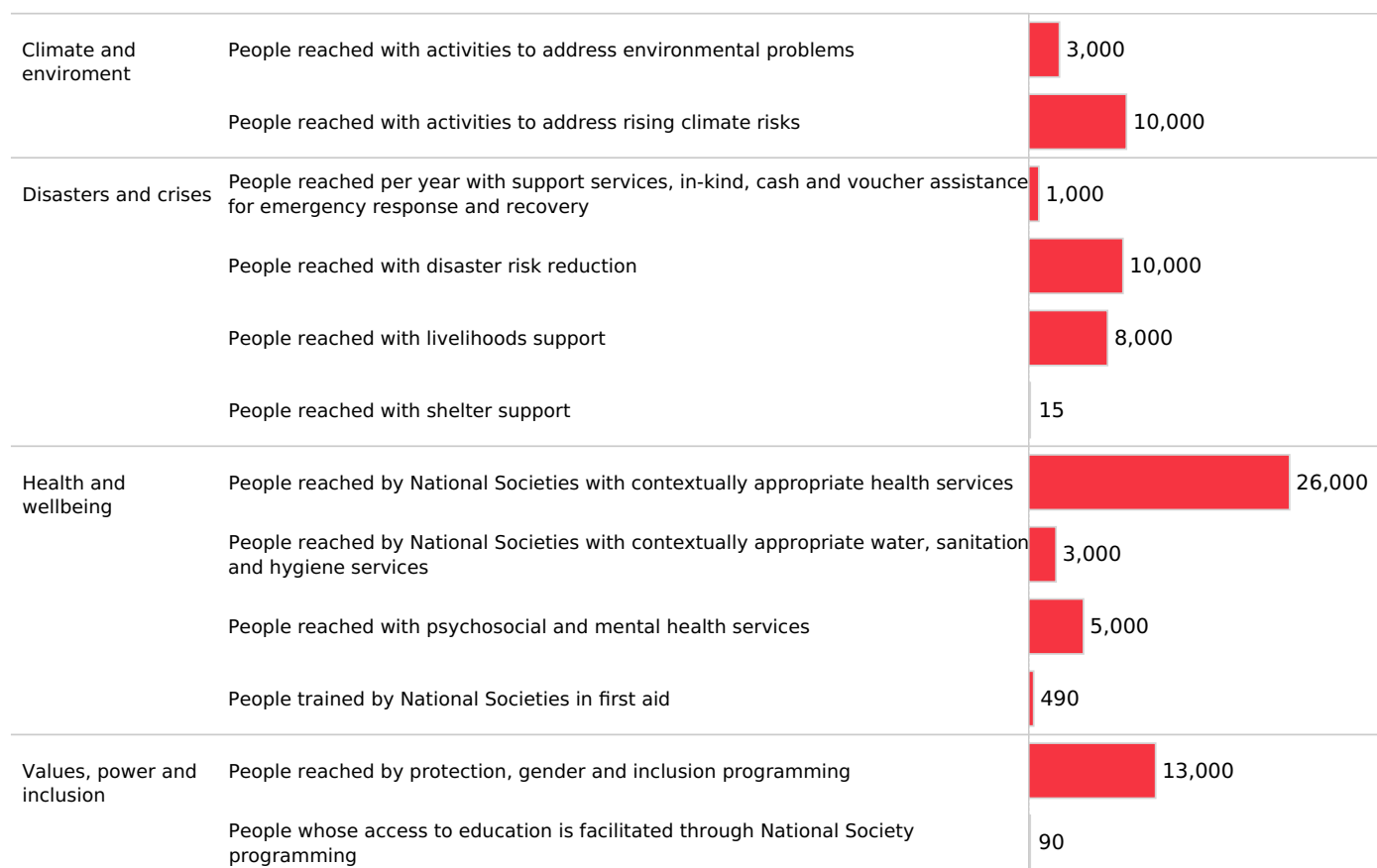
Funding	Not reported
Expenditure	Not reported

Funding Sources

IFRC Secretariat	Not reported
Participating National Societies	Not reported
HNS other funding sources	Not reported

Appeal number **MAALS003**

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



ENABLING FUNCTIONS

Strategic and operational coordination	Number of government led coordination platforms the National Society is part of	6
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IFRC NETWORK SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES

National Society	Funding Reported	Climate and environment	Bilateral Support					Enabling Functions	Multilateral Support
			Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing	Migration and displacement	Values, power and inclusion	Through IFRC		
British Red Cross	268,000							✓	

Total Funding Reported **CHF 268,000**

OVERALL PROGRESS

Context

The onset of 2023 was marked by excessive rains, leading to waterlogging that destroyed crops across various regions of Lesotho. Despite these crop losses, wheat production showed an overall improvement, while maize and sorghum production decreased compared to the previous season. All major cereals were lower than usual and compared to the five-year average. Food availability remained a minor concern as food can be obtained either through local production or stable market channels.

Other challenges during 2023 included high food prices, inflation and reduced casual labour opportunities due to heavy rains hindering weeding activities. These factors undermined the purchasing power of vulnerable households, particularly in mountainous livelihood zones, negatively impacting food access. Food utilization was generally unimpeded, with no significant challenges reported in food preparation.

Between October 2023 and March 2024, it was projected that approximately 325,000 people (22 per cent of the population) will be in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 or above (crisis or worse), with eight districts in Lesotho classified under IPC Phase 3 (crisis). Only two districts remained in IPC Phase 2 (stressed), while the others shifted to higher phases. El Niño was expected to negatively affect food utilization, while food availability was likely to remain stable due to functional markets.

The year highlighted the recurring issue of heavy winds as another hazard in Lesotho. Numerous communities across different districts were affected, resulting in displacement.

Key achievements

Climate and environment

In 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society staff and volunteers were trained on community engagement, focusing on behaviour change approaches for climate adaptation, while promoting community-led solutions to address local challenges and foster climate action. The National Society adopted a comprehensive early warning and anticipatory action learning approach, enhancing its ability to mitigate the effects of climate-related disasters. Through participation in platforms like the anticipation hub and dialogue forums on anticipatory humanitarian action, the National Society strengthened its knowledge exchange on early action. Additionally, it carried out community awareness and school-based activities aimed at adapting to and reducing climate-related risks, facilitated discussions on forecast-based financing, and disseminated early warning messages to prepare communities for drought impacts.

Disasters and crises

In 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society focused on disaster and crisis management through anticipatory action and community preparedness, following the approval of the Drought Early Action Protocol (EAP) in late 2022. The National Society emphasized disaster risk reduction and early warning systems, conducting capacity-building initiatives for staff, volunteers and disaster management structures to enhance community readiness. Cash and voucher assistance (CVA) was prioritized as a tool for effective disaster response, with systems and tools developed to deliver aid rapidly. Early in the year, the EAP was implemented to address drought-related challenges, and by the third quarter, early warning messages were disseminated to mitigate impacts in affected districts. Supported by IFRC DREF funding, pre-positioning and readiness activities were carried out and knowledge exchange on early action was strengthened through platforms such as the Anticipation Hub. Additionally, the National Society provided relief materials to communities affected by fire and heavy winds, while training village and community-based teams on disaster risk reduction.

Health and wellbeing

In 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society played a key role in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic through the Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) approach, as part of the Saving Lives and Livelihoods Project. The National Society focused on protecting rural communities and building trust among local populations and partners. The National Society also enhanced its organizational capacity to address gender-based violence (GBV), mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and child protection, conducting training sessions for staff and volunteers

and integrating MHPSS into existing health programmes. Reporting mechanisms and healthcare interventions were improved, particularly for MHPSS services. In Kena, the Lesotho Red Cross Society addressed sexual and gender-based violence through community interventions and supported orphans and vulnerable children with HIV-related care, ensuring healthcare access and educational assistance. Additionally, [water, sanitation and hygiene](#) (WASH) initiatives were implemented, including the installation of taps to provide safe drinking water in schools.

Migration and displacement

During the reporting period, the Lesotho Red Cross Society focused on strengthening the capacity of its staff to handle [restoring family links](#) (RFL) activities in response to increased migration following the COVID-19 pandemic. The National Society identified and mapped migration and displacement cases, providing much-needed [mental health and psychosocial support](#) (MHPSS) services to affected individuals.

Values, power and inclusion

In 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society focused on promoting values, power, and [inclusion](#) through various initiatives, including a project aimed at improving the livelihoods, protection and nutrition of children in rural schools. This project enhanced school attendance by addressing health, WASH infrastructure, menstrual hygiene and sexual and gender-based violence education. The National Society also trained community members in agriculture and nutrition while supporting vulnerable households with garden inputs. Key policy documents, such as the Child Safeguarding Policy and Gender and Diversity Policy were finalized and endorsed, guiding its [Community Engagement and Accountability](#) (CEA) efforts, including the school feeding project. The National Society further participated in regional initiatives for safe and inclusive practices and advocated for inclusive education in disaster preparedness and response laws. Additionally, the Lesotho Red Cross Society supported vulnerable children's access to essential services and collaborated on a case study with the Army to promote youth boot camps.

Enabling local actors

In 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society implemented a strategic plan that included a constitutional review and the launch of a sustainability strategy to enhance local resource mobilization. The National Society maintained a skilled volunteer workforce while advancing capacity-building efforts in disaster risk reduction and cash assistance. Key policies on Procurement, Child Safeguarding, Gender and Finance were approved, alongside refresher training on Red Cross principles.

The National Society actively participated in district-level advocacy through the District Disaster Management Team and engaged with government ministries and partners. National and regional representation at seminars and media events further strengthened its presence. Additionally, the integration of a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system aimed to improve operational efficiency, while the CEA Strategy enhanced community feedback mechanisms.

Changes and amendments

During 2023, the overall reach of Lesotho Red Cross Society initiatives was constrained due to a decline in overall project funding. Some projects ended mid-year and only few new projects were launched during the year.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Climate and environment

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society staff and volunteers received training on community engagement, with a particular focus on behavior change approaches for climate adaptation. The National Society promoted community-led solutions to tackle local challenges, improve behaviours and encourage climate action. Additionally, the Lesotho Red Cross Society was equipped with a comprehensive early warning early action and anticipatory action learning approach, which included practical early actions to mitigate the effects of climate-related disasters. The National Society's exchange of knowledge and experience on anticipatory action was strengthened through involvement in the anticipation hub and the dialogue platform on anticipatory humanitarian action. Efforts to raise community awareness and conduct school-based activities on adapting to and reducing climate-related risks were also undertaken. Local dialogue platforms on forecast based financing were conducted, and early warning messages on droughts were disseminated to prepare communities for potential climate impacts.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC provided technical support to the Lesotho Red Cross Society during anticipatory action, disaster response and recovery interventions.

The IFRC country cluster delegation in Pretoria, South Africa, ensured that the National Society staff and volunteers have the knowledge, capacity and resources to serve as agents of change as well as mobilize urgent action to adapt to climate and environmental crises.



The school feeding project in Lesotho gave children a chance to actively engage with gardening to strengthen the response to climate change. (Photo: Lesotho Red Cross Society)



Disasters and crises

For real-time information on emergencies, visit [IFRC GO page Lesotho](#).

In 2023, the IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund ([IFRC-DREF](#)) was approved for drought Early Action Protocol ([EAP](#)):

NAME OF OPERATION	Lesotho Drought EAP 2023
MDR-CODE	MDRLS006
DURATION	6 months (November 2022 to May 2023)
FUNDING ALLOCATION	CHF 549,991
PEOPLE TARGETED	20,560

The IFRC DREF has approved a total of CHF 469,480 for the Lesotho Red Cross Society. The approved amount consists of an immediate allocation of CHF 189,621 for readiness, CHF 4,121 for pre-positioning and CHF 275,738 automatically allocated to implement early actions once the defined triggers are met.

Allocations are made from the Anticipatory Pillar of the DREF, and unearmarked contributions to the DREF are encouraged to guarantee enough funding is available for the Early Action Protocols being developed.

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In early 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society initiated the implementation of its Drought [Early Action Protocol](#) (EAP) to address drought-related challenges. Throughout the first half of the year, readiness activities such as capacity building and orientation sessions were conducted for National Society staff, volunteers and disaster risk management structures, ensuring that communities are well-prepared to respond promptly and effectively to crises. District disaster management teams and forecast based financing technical working members were also oriented on the drought EAP, and capacity building for key stakeholders was enhanced through simulation exercises. By the third quarter, the EAP was partially activated, with the soft trigger for disseminating early warning information being executed to mitigate drought impacts in the most affected districts.

The EAP supported by allocations from the Anticipatory Pillar of the IFRC DREF, aimed to implement anticipatory actions in areas anticipated to experience severe drought. Funding was allocated for readiness, pre-positioning, and the implementation of early actions once triggers were met. Prepositioning activities were conducted in line with the approved protocol, and the National Society strengthened its knowledge management and exchange on early action through the Anticipation Hub and the dialogue platform on anticipatory humanitarian action. Additionally, relief materials were provided to households affected by fire and heavy winds and village disaster management teams, along with community-based disaster reduction teams received training on disaster risk reduction.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the Lesotho Red Cross Society in 2023 particularly in the development of the drought EAP and its associated budget. Induction sessions on forecast-based financing were also organized for the National Society to enhance its understanding and preparedness. Throughout the year, IFRC's [disaster law](#) team shared monthly updates on disaster law themes and events with the Lesotho Red Cross Society via the Disaster Law Champions Group. In April, the IFRC hosted a virtual townhall, offering National Societies a platform to discuss practical experiences in overcoming regulatory barriers during response operations. This included guidance on the purpose and scope of pre-disaster agreements, with encouragement for National Societies to advocate for such agreements in their countries.

Additionally, the IFRC co-hosted a virtual webinar in May focused on legislative advocacy for health focal points from Southern African National Societies. The Lesotho Red Cross Society participated in this webinar. Towards the end of 2023, the IFRC began working with the Lesotho Red Cross Society to plan an assessment of the disaster risk management ecosystem, including a review of disaster risk management legal and policy frameworks, with the assessment scheduled for early 2024.

The IFRC also hosted the Southern Africa Regional Dialogue Platform, linking the Lesotho Red Cross Society with relevant regional actors and facilitating coordination with Movement and external stakeholders. This included collaboration with Hydro-Met agencies, humanitarian partners involved in forecast-based financing and early warning/early action, and disaster risk management authorities at both local and national levels.



Health and wellbeing

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society collaborated with partners to address the COVID-19 pandemic through the Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) approach. As part of the Saving Lives and Livelihoods Project, a joint initiative with the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Mastercard Foundation, the Lesotho Red Cross Society played a vital role in protecting communities, particularly in rural areas, and supporting the continent's recovery from the pandemic. Their expertise in RCCE helped build trust within communities and among implementation partners.

The Lesotho Red Cross Society also focused on enhancing organizational capacity to address gender-based violence (GBV), [mental health and psychosocial support](#) (MHPSS) and child protection. Training sessions were conducted to equip staff and volunteers with skills to manage these critical issues, and MHPSS activities were integrated into existing health programmes. Through this effort, the National Society improved reporting mechanisms and strategic healthcare interventions, including strengthening referral pathways for MHPSS services.

In addition, the Lesotho Red Cross Society carried out community interventions to address sexual and gender-based violence in Kena, supported by the Lars Amundsen Foundation. The Orphans and Vulnerable Children project in the same district supported children with HIV-related care, ensuring drug adherence and continued access to healthcare services, as well as educational support for their schooling needs. The Lesotho Red Cross Society also promoted [water, sanitation and hygiene](#) (WASH) initiatives, installing taps in key areas to provide safe drinking water as part of its school feeding project.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the Lesotho Red Cross Society in its health and wellbeing initiatives throughout 2023, particularly through capacity building and strengthening its role as a key public health actor. The IFRC facilitated the development and use of reporting tools and indicator tracking systems, which significantly improved the quality of reports and enabled strategic planning for healthcare service interventions. Additionally, the IFRC supported the Lesotho Red Cross Society in mainstreaming safe and inclusive programming. The IFRC also reinforced the Lesotho Red Cross Society's auxiliary role in health and care through the health auxiliary project, positioning the National Society to effectively respond to COVID-19 and other public health emergencies.



Migration and displacement

Progress by National Society against objectives

During the reporting period, the Lesotho Red Cross Society primarily worked towards strengthening the capacity of its staff to better handle [Restoring Family Links](#) (RFL) activities. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, which had health impacts, social aspects as well as economic impacts, cases of migration increased. Therefore, the need for RFL activities remained a growing concern in Lesotho. The National Society mapped and identified migration and displacement cases and provided MHPSS services.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC offered technical support and guidance on migration and displacement programming.



Values, power and inclusion

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society continued implementing a two-year project (2021-2023) aimed to enhance the livelihoods, protection and nutrition of children in six rural schools. It focused on improving school attendance through health, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), infrastructure enhancements, menstrual hygiene support and sexual and gender-based violence education. Additionally, households received garden inputs, and community members were trained in agriculture, nutrition and protection.

In December 2021, the Lesotho Red Cross Society, alongside other National Societies, agreed on a regional Safe and Inclusive Action Plan with the British Red Cross and Southern Africa cluster delegation, spanning the period 2022-2024. This initiative aims to enhance safe and inclusive practices across the region. The Lesotho Red Cross Society participated in training and meetings to support this endeavor.

In 2023, the National Society finalized several policy documents, including a Child Safeguarding Policy and a Gender and Diversity Policy, both endorsed by the National Society Governing Board in August. The National Society also finalized and implemented a community engagement and accountability (CEA) strategy and workplan that was also endorsed by the Governing Board. These policies have influenced the Lesotho Red Cross Society's work, particularly in its school feeding project by guiding staff roles and responsibilities to ensure community safety and protect children. The CEA strategy has also guided the lives and livelihoods project.

The National Society also supported advocacy efforts to strengthen education provisions in disaster preparedness and response laws, remove barriers to education access and promote continuous education opportunities for specific groups. It provided support to vulnerable children, ensuring their protection and access to essential services.

During the year, a video documentary was developed on the school feeding project. Further, a protection, gender and inclusion (PGI) case study was written in collaboration between the Lesotho Red Cross Society and the Army to support youth boot camps.

IFRC network joint support

The **IFRC** provided support to the Lesotho Red Cross Society on capacity building with policy reviews and technical expertise on values, power and inclusion. Support was provided to advocate and collaborate with relevant stakeholders for integrating/strengthening of education-related provisions in national disaster preparedness and response laws and policies, standard operating procedures, anticipatory action related protocols and other risk reduction measures; as well as removing barriers to (continuous/equitable) access to education opportunities for specific groups.

The **Australian Red Cross** and the IFRC Southern Africa cluster delegation supported the National Society in implementing the two-year project to enhance the livelihoods, protection and nutrition of children in six rural schools.

The **British Red Cross** provided financial support to the National Society for safe and inclusive programming and development and implementation of the Child Safeguarding Policy.

ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS



Strategic and operational coordination

IFRC membership coordination

IFRC membership coordination involves working with member National Societies to assess the humanitarian context, humanitarian situations and needs; agreeing on common priorities; jointly developing common strategies to address issues such as obtaining greater humanitarian access, acceptance and space; mobilizing funding and other resources; clarifying consistent public messaging; and monitoring progress. This also means ensuring that strategies

and programmes in support of people in need, incorporate clarity of humanitarian action, links with development assistance, and efforts to reinforce National Societies in their respective countries, including through their auxiliary role.

The participating National Societies that supported the Lesotho Red Cross Society in 2023 were the **Australian Red Cross**, the **British Red Cross** and the **Botswana Red Cross**.

Movement coordination

The Lesotho Red Cross Society ensures regular exchanges with the IFRC, the International Committee of the Red Cross and participating National Societies, for the alignment of support and action between Movement partners. In times of emergencies, closer coordination is organized. This is carried out in line with the Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation ([SMCC](#)) principles, and the newly adopted [Seville Agreement 2.0](#).

The **ICRC**, through its Pretoria regional delegation, monitors the humanitarian situation in the region, promotes [international humanitarian law](#), restores contact between family members separated by conflict through [restoring family links](#) (RFL) services and helps National Societies enhance their emergency response capabilities.

External coordination

Externally, the National Society partnered with local UN agencies, including the UNICEF. The Lesotho Red Cross Society also partnered with government ministries of Health, Agriculture, Social Development, Disaster Management Authority and the National AIDS Commission during the reporting period.



National Society development

Progress by the National Society against objectives

During 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society's work was guided by a strategic plan and National Society development plans. The National Society reviewed its constitution during the year. The National Society also initiated a sustainability strategy, involving focused and aggressive investment in mobilizing local resources.

On the operational side, the National Society continued to maintain a skilled pool of volunteers to support the implementation of National Society initiatives. Ongoing capacity-building efforts include disaster risk reduction, Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), [cash and voucher assistance](#) (CVA), and understanding National Society policies. The four policies, which were approved during the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 2023 include the Procurement Policy, Child and Safeguarding Policy, Gender Policy and Finance Policy.

The Human Resources and Branch Development department also provided refresher training to National Society staff and volunteers on the [Fundamental Principles](#) of the Red Cross.

IFRC network joint support

The **IFRC** provided technical support and training to the Lesotho Red Cross Society youth on National Society development and fundraising.



Humanitarian diplomacy

Progress by the National Society against objectives

The Lesotho Red Cross Society, through its 10 divisional offices, continued to uphold its National Society advocacy roles at the district level. This was achieved through its participation as a member of the District Disaster Management Team, close collaboration with government ministries and engagement with implementing partners. At the national and regional levels, the technical and management teams represented the National Society at various seminars and dialogue platforms. The Lesotho Red Cross Society also participated in press conferences and across different media platforms.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC supported the National Society to have a leadership succession plan and sound governance structure with good representation.



Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

Progress by the National Society against objectives

In 2023, the Lesotho Red Cross Society developed a Procurement Policy, Child and Safeguarding Policy, Gender Policy and Finance Policy, along with a CEA Strategy. These were approved during the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and are currently operational. CEA/RCCE was also mainstreamed in projects/interventions and community feedback system maintenance and data handling was strengthened during this period.

In terms of digital transformation, the National Society is in the process of integrating its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, which is housed in the finance department. This integration is aimed at linking internal systems to facilitate more efficient and transparent day-to-day processes, thereby contributing to the overall digital maturity of the National Society.

IFRC network joint support

The IFRC continued to support Lesotho Red Cross Society in its day-to-day operations. The finance, human resources and planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) teams have a close relationship with the National Society. In 2023, the National Society was supported with a report writing session by the PMER team. Engagement with the National Society to update data collection tools and systems is a continuous process.



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

is the world's largest humanitarian network, with 191 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and around 15 million volunteers. Our volunteers are present in communities before, during and after a crisis or disaster. We work in the most hard to reach and complex settings in the world, saving lives and promoting human dignity. We support communities to become stronger and more resilient places where people can live safe and healthy lives, and have opportunities to thrive.

DATA SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

- **Missing data and breakdowns:** National Societies have diverse data collection systems and processes that may not align with the standardized indicators. Data may not be available for some indicators, for some National Societies. This may lead to inconsistencies across different reporting tools as well as potential under or over-estimation of the efforts led by all.
- **Reporting bias:** The data informing this Federation-wide overview is self-reported by each National Society (or its designated support entity) and which is the owner and gatekeeper, and responsible for accuracy and updating. IFRC tries to triangulate the data provided by the National Societies with previous data and other data in the public domain.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [IFRC Lesotho 2023 Financial Report](#)
Note: For emergencies for which a financial report is not yet available, see: [MDRLS006](#)
- [IFRC network country plans](#)
- [Subscribe for updates](#)
- [Donor response](#) on IFRC website
- [Live Disaster Response Emergency Fund \(DREF\)](#) data
- Operational information: [IFRC GO platform](#)
- National Society data: [IFRC Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)
- [Evaluations database](#)

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