

# EARLY ACTION PROTOCOL ANNUAL REPORT

Lesotho | Drought

31<sup>st</sup> December 2024



*Community vulnerability list verification*

*Lesotho Red Cross Society*

EAP №: <b>EAP2022LS01</b>	Operation №: <b>MDRLS006</b>	
EAP approved: <b>November 2022</b>	EAP timeframe: <b>5 Years</b>	Timeframe covered by this update: <b>01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024</b>

**Annual Budget: 113,338 CHF**

**EAP Budget: 549, 858 CHF**

# SUMMARY OF THE EARLY ACTION PROTOCOL

The IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) has allocated CHF 549,858 for the implementation anticipatory actions to reduce and mitigate the impact of (Hazard name) in (Country). This Early Action Protocol includes an allocation of CHF 40 318 to preposition stock and undertake annual readiness activities in order to implement early actions, if and when the trigger is reached. The early actions to be conducted have been pre-agreed with the National Society and are described in the [Early Action Protocol summary](#).

This report summarizes the annual readiness and prepositioning activities done in the reporting period. The report also includes any changes or updates done to the initially agreed plan.

The integration of the Early Action Protocol into the Disaster Management (DM) contingency plan of the LRCS has further strengthened the effectiveness and reach of disaster management efforts.



*VDMTs training on EWS and Smart Agriculture*



*Group work during an EWS training for the VDMTs*

In May-July 2024, the Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS), in collaboration with key stakeholders such as the Disaster Management Authority (DMA) and district disaster management teams in Qacha's Nek and Mohale's Hoek, focused on building community capacity in several critical areas. These areas included the development of community preparedness plans for drought, first aid training, and strengthening effective Early Warning Systems (EWS) that were tailored to the specific needs of each community. As part of the integrated approach of the project, LRCS volunteers were also trained to better understand Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) concepts and to use the integrated Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) for anticipatory actions.

During the 2023/2024 rainy season, the Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS) successfully activated its readiness trigger on October 25th, 2023.

## Early Action Overview


The Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS), through the Drought Early Action Protocol (EAP), aims to enhance the government's capacity to anticipate and respond to disasters, particularly in drought prone areas. The goal is to prevent and minimize the impacts of drought, whenever possible, while also reducing human suffering and preventing losses. A key priority under this protocol is to strengthen early warning systems, which are crucial for providing communities with timely and relevant information. By improving access to accurate early warnings, LRCS empowers individuals and communities to make informed decisions and take prompt action, when necessary, thereby helping to mitigate the impact of impending disasters.

In addition to enhancing early warning systems, LRCS has prioritized the provision of unconditional cash transfers (UCT) to vulnerable households as part of its response strategy. These cash transfers will be a vital form of direct support, enabling families to meet their basic food needs during drought periods and providing a lifeline during times of crisis when other resources are scarce.

To further strengthen disaster preparedness, LRCS trained local communities on early warning systems. These sessions targeted ten Village Disaster Management Teams (VDMTs) in the drought-prone districts of Qacha's Nek and Mohale's Hoek. In addition, monitoring efforts were conducted with twelve VDMTs in Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek, and Qacha's Nek to assess their progress and the effectiveness of the training. The goal of these sessions was to ensure that community-level teams are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively utilize early warning systems and implement timely early actions. The monitoring process focused on tracking the progress of the trained VDMTs, evaluating the quality of their work, and ensuring that the skills gained during the training were being applied effectively in real-world scenarios.

1. In addition, as part of LRCS efforts to build the capacity of volunteers and equip them with practical knowledge related to Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)-based activation, LRCS engaged 120 volunteers, from Quthing, Mohale's Hoek, Mafeteng, and Qacha's Nek). These volunteers were involved in a comprehensive on-the-job training program, which focused on key areas such as beneficiary targeting, verification, and registration, as well as supporting post-distribution monitoring activities. The training aimed to strengthen their understanding of CVA processes and improve their ability to effectively carry out these tasks in the field. Furthermore, the volunteers were deployed to other LRCS initiatives related to CVA, such as the Storm Surge and Drought Emergency Appeals, to gain hands-on experience and contribute to ongoing programs.

## SUMMARY OF ANNUAL PROGRESS BY PLANNED OPERATION

 <p><b>Multi-purpose Cash</b></p>	Female:	<b>3,865</b>	<b>285,121.27 CHF</b>
	Male:	<b>1,503</b>	AP Code: <b>081</b>
<b>Indicator:</b>	Number of people reached with multi-purpose cash in advance of a drought		
<b>Priority Early Actions:</b>	<p><b>Readiness Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Department of Social Development and DMA and social workers in drought prone areas to identify waiting list and sensitizing communities about Early Actions.</li> <li>• Refresher training of volunteers on CVA</li> <li>• Review of MoU's with Financial Services Providers; Vodacom (Mpesa) and Econet (Eco-cash).</li> </ul> <p><b>Priority Early Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with key stakeholders to confirm UCT areas of intervention &amp; roll out of early actions.</li> <li>• Refresher training to FSPs and workshop to explain processes. Refresher training of volunteers on mobile data collection. Verification and registration of beneficiaries' assessment. Transfer the cash. Monitoring,</li> <li>• PDM and lessons learned workshops.</li> <li>• Gap analysis with key stakeholders to prepare for potential DREF.</li> <li>• Outcome and impact evaluation.</li> </ul>		

### **Narrative description of achievement of outstanding activities**


The LRCS prioritized preparedness activities with a focus on addressing resource limitations. Refresher courses and on job-training for volunteers and staff on Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) were conducted alongside other projects, such as the Storm Surge and Drought Response initiatives, to optimize resource use. A total of 120 volunteers received training on CVA, Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), and Red Cross fundamentals, while also gaining skills in beneficiary targeting, selection, and registration. Additionally, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and Disaster Management Authority, waiting lists were reviewed and verified as some of the beneficiaries were also eligible for other drought-related food security response that the NS was implementing in the same area.

As this verification exercise coincided with other drought response, the Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS), with the support of the Disaster Management Authority (DMA), the Department of Social Protection, and members of the District Disaster Management Teams (DDMTs) in Qacha's Nek, Mafeteng, and Mohale's Hoek, carried out a comprehensive verification of public assistance waiting list beneficiaries. This process was conducted using a community gathering approach, which allowed for direct engagement with local communities. The verification process was further extended during the activation of the pre-activation trigger, ensuring that individuals identified through the waiting list exercise were incorporated into the broader response framework. These beneficiaries were enrolled in various government, LRCS, and other humanitarian assistance programs. By linking verified beneficiaries to a coordinated network of support, LRCS, and its partners ensured that those most vulnerable, particularly in the face of the drought, received the necessary aid, including food, cash transfers, and other forms of assistance.

Lastly, as part of LRCS drought EAP readiness activities, the LRCS conducted a review of its existing agreements with two mobile financial service providers namely, Vodacom Mpesa and Econet-Ecocash. In its pursuit of expanding its partnerships with additional financial service providers (FSPs), LRCS also engaged a new service provider, Chaperone, which offers a product called C-pay. All these efforts were made to make LRCS prepared for any CVA-related anticipatory actions as well as responses.

Although a formal simulation exercise was not conducted for the year 2024, these FSPs were actively involved in supporting the CVA-based response efforts in the same districts. The lessons learned from these interventions will be documented to inform

future LRCS programming, including anticipatory actions. Additionally, LRCS plans to collaborate with the government on a simulation of its anticipatory action (AA) activation, further enhancing its readiness and response capacity.

	<b>Risk climate adaptation and recovery</b>	<b>Reduction,</b>	Female:	<b>3,865</b>	<b>20,715.93CHF</b>
			Male:	<b>1,503</b>	AP Code: <b>101,103, 105,106</b>
<b>Indicator:</b>			Number of people reached with risk reduction and/or climate adaptation interventions in advance of a hazard		
<b>Priority Early Actions:</b>			<p><b>Readiness Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building of communities (VDMTs, Local authorities) on DRR and Climate Smart Agriculture.</li> <li>• dissemination of EW messages when seasonal outlook forecasts below normal rainfall Sign EWM agreements.</li> <li>• Trigger interagency alignment review (workshop)</li> <li>• EAP simulation exercise</li> </ul> <p><b>Early Actions:</b></p> <p>EWM dissemination refreshing training for volunteers. Dissemination of EWM through public gatherings, Radios, TV, social media platforms, bulk messaging.</p> <p><b>Narrative description of achievement of outstanding activities</b></p> <p>To enhance disaster preparedness, the LRCS conducted training sessions for local communities on the effective use of early warning systems. These training efforts specifically targeted ten Village Disaster Management Teams (VDMTs) in the drought-prone districts of Qacha's Nek and Mohale's Hoek. Additionally, monitoring activities were carried out with twelve VDMTs across Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek, and Qacha's Nek to assess their progress and evaluate the effectiveness of the training.</p> <p>The primary aim of these sessions was to ensure that community-level teams are fully equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to utilize early warning systems effectively and take timely early actions when required. The monitoring process was designed to track the progress of the trained VDMTs, assess the quality of their work, and verify that the skills and techniques they learned during the training were being implemented successfully in real-world situations. This process also provided an opportunity to identify any gaps in their preparedness and address them promptly, ultimately strengthening the overall capacity of communities to respond to potential disaster threats.</p>		

Based on the various monitoring activities the key gaps identified included the need for continuous training and simulation exercises for the Village Disaster Management Teams (VDMTs) to ensure they fully comprehend the content and are well-prepared for their roles. In addition to training, these groups require additional tools and equipment to enhance their capacity for early warning systems—resources that were not initially part of the Anticipatory Action for drought. To address these gaps, LRCS aims to collaborate more closely with the government and World Vision to build upon existing preparedness initiatives. Furthermore, LRCS plans to mobilize resources to support more in-depth preparedness efforts, ensuring that these teams are better equipped to respond effectively to future emergencies.

Following the Trigger interagency alignment review workshop), it was agreed that the activation trigger (second trigger) would remain largely unchanged, with one key modification: it would no longer be a tiered system. Instead, the trigger would be based solely on the observed rainfall for any month within the OND period. If rainfall in any month during OND is recorded as below normal, the trigger would be activated, recognizing that rainfall in a single month is often insufficient for supporting crop growth.


Apart from this revision, all other conditions remain the same. However, LRCS, in collaboration with LMS, DMA, and other anticipatory action humanitarian agencies, will conduct an annual review of the trigger. This review will consider available forecasting products and ensure alignment with other agencies, to avoid discrepancies where LRCS does not activate while other organizations do.

Unfortunately, the simulation exercise was not done but LRCS is planning to host a simulation exercise with the government in 2025.

## Enabling approaches

	<b>Secretariat Services</b>	<b>49,995CHF CHF</b>
		AP Code: <b>122</b>
<b>Objective:</b> Strengthen Secretariat Service to provide technical and operational EAP implementation support to the Lesotho Red Cross Society		
<b>Priority Early Actions:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IFRC EAP Preparedness &amp; Operations Officer (15%)</li> <li>2. IFRC Finance officer (5%)</li> <li>3. Bank Charges</li> </ol>	

	<p>4. Field monitoring</p> <p>5. Activations and operations</p> <p><b>Narrative description of achievement of outstanding activities</b></p> <p>The IFRC AA Officer has been supporting the NS and the implementation of the EAP through linking the NS with different organizations and other NSs for peer-to-peer learning thereby broadening the exposure of the NS. A monitoring visit will be done during the Simulation Exercise that has been postponed to the first half of 2025.</p>
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 <p><b>National Society Strengthening</b></p>			<b>163,642.61CHF</b>
			APCode: <b>124,125,126</b>
<b>Objective:</b>	To strengthen NS capacity to support the effectively of EAP		
<b>Priority Early Actions:</b>	<p><b>Readiness Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EAP manager (100%).</li> <li>• Cash and readiness officer (50%).</li> <li>• Procurement of stationery and communication.</li> </ul> <p><b>Priority Early Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer insurance to cover 30 volunteers.</li> <li>• Lessons learnt workshop.</li> <li>• Post Distribution Monitoring.</li> <li>• Post activation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Achievements</b></p> <p><b>Staff Salaries:</b></p> <p>EAP Manager (100%).</p> <p>CVA officer (50%).</p> <p>LRCS was able to procure some stationery and visibility materials.</p>		

## CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNED, PROPOSED AJUSTMENTS

During the 2023/2024 rainy season, the Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS) successfully activated its readiness trigger on October 25th, 2023. However, the activation did not occur as expected due to the nature of the trigger, which involved a multi-tiered approach across several components. These included the seasonal outlook, which forecasted below-normal rainfall for the October-November-December (OND) period, as well as other critical conditions. Among these was confirmation from the Lesotho Meteorological Services (LMS) that the observed rainfall for OND was indeed below normal, along with the verification of food insecurity indicators, which required at least 20% of the population to be classified as food insecure by January.

Therefore, this failed activation, forced LRCS together with stakeholders to re-assess and review the reasons behind the failure to activate. As a result, the trigger mechanism was reviewed. To facilitate this review, LRCS, in collaboration with the Lesotho Meteorological Services (LMS) and other key stakeholders, organized a

comprehensive five-day workshop. The workshop focused on analyzing the previous trigger activations, with the aim of understanding the underlying factors that may have influenced the failure to activate.

Following the review, it was agreed that the activation trigger (second trigger) should remain the same with a slight change in making it to no longer be a tiered trigger. Instead, it was decided that the trigger would be based solely on the observed rainfall for any month within the OND period. If the rainfall for any month during OND is recorded as below normal, the trigger would be activated, as the rainfall in just one month is often insufficient for crop growth.

Apart from the revision, all conditions remain the same. However, LRCS together with the LMS, DMA and other Anticipatory Action humanitarian agencies with further review the trigger on an annual basis based on available

## FINANCIAL REPORT

The financial report is presented below, and there are no variances that require further explanation.

## Contact information

**For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:**

### In the Lesotho National Society

- **Secretary General** (or equivalent); Sechaba Mokhameleli, Secretary General, [smokhameleli@redcross.org.ls](mailto:smokhameleli@redcross.org.ls) ,
- **Operational coordination:** Sebongile Hlubi, Anticipatory Action and Readiness Manager, [shlubi@redcross.org.ls](mailto:shlubi@redcross.org.ls), +266 58014081

### At the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation:

- Kopano Masilo, Head of Delegation, Pretoria Cluster Delegation; Country Cluster Delegation, [kopano.masilo@ifrc.org](mailto:kopano.masilo@ifrc.org)
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### IFRC in Geneva:

- Programme and Operations focal point: Nazira Lacayo, Senior Officer DREF, Forecast-based Action, [nazira.lacayo@ifrc.org](mailto:nazira.lacayo@ifrc.org) Contact: +41 (0)22 730 4944

### For IFRC Resource Mobilisation and Pledges support:

- Louise Daintrey-Hall, Head of Partnership and Resource Development, phone: +254 110 843 978; email: [louise.daintrey@ifrc.org](mailto:louise.daintrey@ifrc.org)

### For In-Kind Donations and Mobilisation Table support:

- Manager, Global Humanitarian Services and Supply Chain Management, Allan Kilaka Masavah, [allan.masavah@ifrc.org](mailto:allan.masavah@ifrc.org) ; +254 (0) 113 834 921

### For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting enquiries):

- IFRC Africa Regional Office: Beatrice Okeyo, Regional Head PMER, and Quality Assurance; email: [beatrice.okeyo@ifrc.org](mailto:beatrice.okeyo@ifrc.org)

## Reference



Click here for:

- [EAP summary and budget](#)
- [Forecast-Based Triggered Action](#)
- [EAP Update 1](#)

# FBAF Early Actions

## INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2022-2024	Operation	*
Budget Timeframe	*	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 26/Feb/2025

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

### MDRLS006 - Lesotho - Drought (EAP2022LS01) / \*

## I. Summary

<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Funds &amp; Other Income</b>	<b>549,991</b>
DREF Anticipatory Pillar	549,991
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>-113,338</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>436,653</b>

## II. Expenditure by area of focus / strategies for implementation

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
AOF1 - Disaster risk reduction	14,178	54,506	-40,328
AOF2 - Shelter			0
AOF3 - Livelihoods and basic needs	300,783	11,402	289,381
AOF4 - Health			0
AOF5 - Water, sanitation and hygiene			0
AOF6 - Protection, Gender & Inclusion			0
AOF7 - Migration			0
<b>Area of focus Total</b>	<b>314,962</b>	<b>65,909</b>	<b>249,053</b>
SFI1 - Strengthen National Societies	141,703	31,602	110,101
SFI2 - Effective international disaster management			0
SFI3 - Influence others as leading strategic partners			0
SFI4 - Ensure a strong IFRC	37,407	15,828	21,579
<b>Strategy for implementation Total</b>	<b>179,110</b>	<b>47,430</b>	<b>131,680</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>494,071</b>	<b>113,338</b>	<b>380,733</b>

# FBAF Early Actions

## INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2022-2024	Operation	*
Budget Timeframe	*	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 26/Feb/2025

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

### MDRLS006 - Lesotho - Drought (EAP2022LS01) / \*

### III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
<b>Relief items, Construction, Supplies</b>	<b>1,321</b>		<b>1,321</b>
Clothing & Textiles	1,321		1,321
<b>Land, vehicles &amp; equipment</b>	<b>1,866</b>	<b>3,453</b>	<b>-1,587</b>
Computers & Telecom		614	-614
Others Machinery & Equipment	1,866	2,840	-973
<b>Logistics, Transport &amp; Storage</b>	<b>4,168</b>		<b>4,168</b>
Distribution & Monitoring	4,168		4,168
<b>Personnel</b>	<b>158,390</b>	<b>34,199</b>	<b>124,190</b>
National Staff	33,360	9,988	23,372
National Society Staff	125,029	24,147	100,882
Volunteers		64	-64
<b>Workshops &amp; Training</b>	<b>14,972</b>	<b>12,053</b>	<b>2,919</b>
Workshops & Training	14,972	12,053	2,919
<b>General Expenditure</b>	<b>13,210</b>	<b>12,332</b>	<b>879</b>
Travel	5,661	3,151	2,510
Information & Public Relations	4,355	1,678	2,677
Office Costs	1,166	837	330
Communications	1,260	474	786
Financial Charges	768	1,740	-971
Shared Office and Services Costs		4,452	-4,452
<b>Contributions &amp; Transfers</b>	<b>269,989</b>	<b>44,384</b>	<b>225,606</b>
Cash Transfers National Societies	269,989		269,989
National Society Expenses		44,384	-44,384
<b>Indirect Costs</b>	<b>30,155</b>	<b>6,917</b>	<b>23,237</b>
Programme & Services Support Recover	30,155	6,917	23,237
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>494,071</b>	<b>113,338</b>	<b>380,733</b>