



Syrian refugees navigate freezing floodwaters in an informal tented settlement in Lebanon's Akkar governorate. Photo courtesy of Lebanese Red Cross.

Appeal: <b>MDRLB013</b>	Total DREF Allocation -	Crisis Category: <b>Yellow</b>	Hazard: <b>Cold Wave</b>
Glide Number: <b>CW-2023-000026-LBN</b>	People Affected: <b>1,024,200 people</b>	People Targeted: <b>11,890 people</b>	
Event Onset: <b>Slow</b>	Operation Start Date: <b>2023-02-21</b>	New Operational end date:	Total operating timeframe: <b>3 months</b>
Targeted Areas:	<b>Bekaa, North</b>		

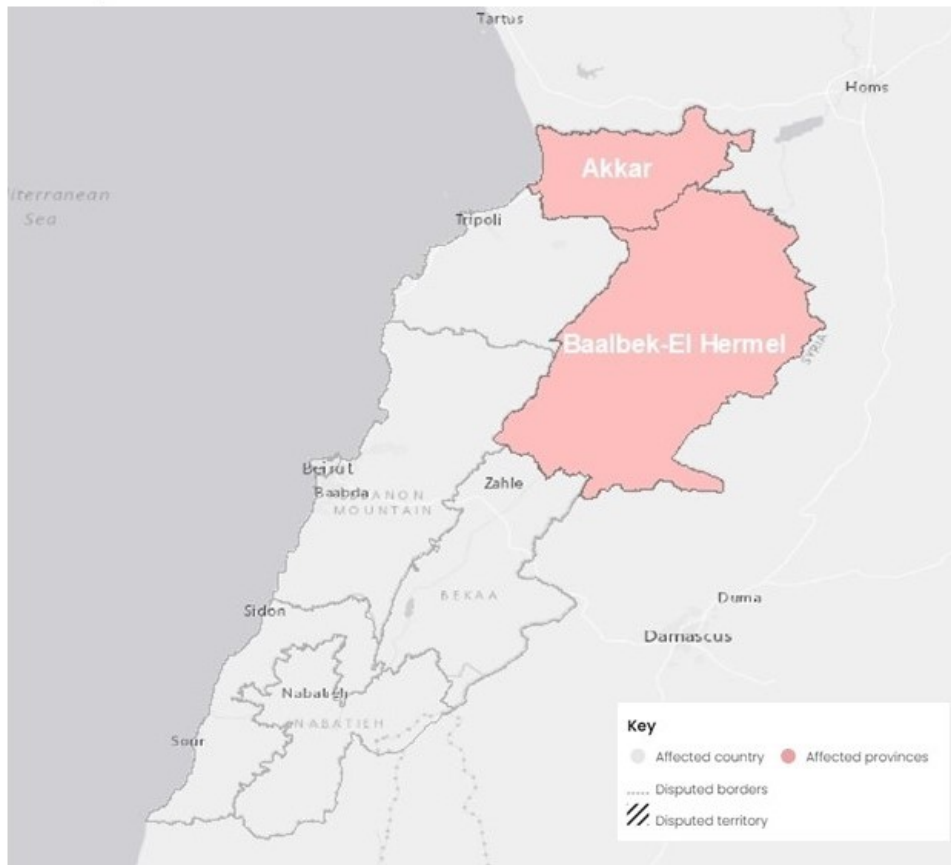
The major donors and partners of the IFRC-DREF include the Red Cross Societies and governments of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Britain, China, Czech, Canada, Denmark, German, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Liechtenstein, Malta, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, and the Netherlands, as well as DG ECHO, Mondelez Foundation, and other corporate and private donors. The IFRC, on behalf of the National Society, would like to extend thanks to all for their generous contributions.

# Description of the Event



LBN: Other - 2023-01 - Lebanon Severe Weather (2023-02-06)

February 22, 2023



The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.

Map depicting the targeted areas

## What happened, where and when?

In February 2023, Lebanon has been hit by a wave of severe winter weather, leading to a drop in temperature with snow at high altitudes and rain at lower altitudes, thunderstorms, and strong winds.

Winter storm Farah hit Lebanon on 31 January 2023 and was followed by a cold spell and heavy precipitation. On 6 February, the weather deteriorated in the North of the country and the Ministry of Education announced the closure of public and private schools nationwide for a period of three days. Data from Interagency Coordination Lebanon indicate that people were impacted in the Bekaa Valley, Beirut and surrounding population centers in Mount Lebanon, and the South and North regions of the country (Interagency Coordination Lebanon 7 February).

In Lebanon's northernmost governorate of Akkar, 1-2 meters of snow were reported at high altitudes (National News Agency 9 February). Many roads were closed for a week or longer due to limited ability of municipalities to clear snow and ice. As of 14 February, many roads still above 1500 meters remained impassable due to snow accumulation (National News Agency 14 February). At lower altitudes in the same governorate, heavy rains led to flooding of waterways including the Kebir River which forms part of the border with Syria.

In the Bekaa Valley, which stretches between two mountain ranges, heavy rains were reported at low altitudes. Flooding occurred at multiple sites, with an additional risk of flooding identified due to rising levels of the Litani



River. In the northern Bekaa Valley in Baalbek-Hermel governorate, three Syrian children drowned when a waterway overflowed. The area was also affected by the closure of cross-mountain roads connecting the region to the rest of the country due to snow and ice accumulation (Al Jazeera 7 February).

These conditions have left communities isolated and unable to access basic goods and services. They pose additional risks to those living in inadequate shelter, including the estimated 22% of Syrian refugees in the country who live in informal tented settlements (ITS) (VASyR 2022). Informal tented settlements are unplanned residential gatherings mainly in rural areas often made of plastic and timber. Movement for residents of ITS has been severely hampered by the accumulation of snow, ice, and floodwaters, with residents reporting difficulty accessing food, water, and fuel for heating.

This comes as Lebanon is attempting to recover from a cholera outbreak in late 2022 and is grappling with severe strain on its healthcare system due to a socioeconomic crisis prevailing in the country since late 2019.



Lebanese Red Cross volunteers distribute bread in one of the informal tented settlements in Akkar governorate. Photo courtesy of Lebanese Red Cross.

## Scope and Scale

Severe weather has affected areas throughout the country to varying degrees. Akkar and Baalbek-Hermel governorates were identified by the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) as particularly affected by the confluence of weather impacts and low coping capacities in these governorates, which are among the most impoverished in the country (see section on Needs - Livelihoods and Basic Needs). Municipalities have limited capacity to reopen roads, leaving blockages particularly for remote communities.

## IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

<b>Secretariat</b>	IFRC Lebanon Delegation is coordinating with members and other stakeholders.
<b>Participating National Societies</b>	Several IFRC members have expressed interest in supporting LRC's winterization response through existing projects and rapid response funds.



# ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

ICRC is implementing winterization programming in Lebanon as part of its regular support in the country.

## Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

<b>Government has requested international assistance</b>	No
<b>National authorities</b>	At a national level, authorities are responding to winter weather conditions through the Disaster Risk Management Unit at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the Civil Defense with the engagement and coordination of relevant local government actors.
<b>UN or other actors</b>	The Interagency Coordination mechanism for Lebanon activated a rapid needs assessment on 1 February, and its network of partners is supporting affected populations with temporary relocation support, in-kind shelter relief items, and referrals. As of 14 February, UN Lebanon Crisis Response Plan partners supported over 1,260 households with assistance including shelter kits, relief items including mattresses, blankets, hygiene kit, and supported 149 individuals with temporary relocation.

### Are there major coordination mechanisms in place?

LRC coordinates its support to Syrian refugees in informal tented settlements with other humanitarian actors through existing mechanisms. The water sector in Lebanon is coordinated by the UNICEF and with the presence of the main actors in the country during the initial influx of refugees, the informal tented settlements were divided across them to avoid any duplication of service provision and to maximize nationwide coverage. The water sector in which LRC is a main actor meets on a monthly basis to discuss the needs, progress and ensure enhanced coordination, ad hoc meetings are also conducted to address urgent needs related to the sector.



# Needs (Gaps) Identified

## Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The storms have impacted the ability of affected populations to access basic goods and services. This is due in part to access issues, with thousands of affected families facing extremely restricted movement and isolation from markets due to accumulation of snow, ice, and floodwater. In addition, road closures have an adverse impact on the income of those engaged in informal or daily labor. Affected families have reported difficulty accessing basic food and water, with some residents of ITS in the Aarsal district of Baalbek-Hermel resorting to melting snow for drinking water.

Resilience in these communities has been eroded by socioeconomic strain before and during the country's complex humanitarian crisis which worsened in 2019. The first Lebanon IPC Acute Food Security Analysis in 2022 shows food insecurity in the targeted regions is higher than the national average. In Akkar, 55% of residents and 60% of refugees were reported to be at IPC phase 3 or higher, indicating a need for urgent humanitarian action. This can be compared to the lower national rates of 33% and 46% for residents and refugees, respectively. In Baalbek, 50% of residents and 55% of refugees were at IPC phase 3 or higher, and in Hermel this figure was 50% for residents and 60% for refugees (FAO, WFP and Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture January 2023).

In addition, high prices of fuel impact families' ability to adequately heat their homes. With the phasing out of subsidies since the onset of Lebanon's economic crisis in 2019 and the depreciation of the Lebanese currency, the imported diesel fuel used for heating has become prohibitively expensive for many households. As of mid-February, the cost of a single 20-liter tank of diesel cost more than twice the monthly minimum wage of 675,000 Lebanese lira (Lebanese Directorate of Oil February 2023). Secondary risks to health and the environment have been identified as people without access to fuel or wood resort to burning plastic for heat.

## Protection, Gender And Inclusion

The risks posed by winter weather conditions are heightened by inadequate access to safe housing, a reality for many vulnerable families in Lebanon, including refugees, migrants, and households impacted by the socio-economic collapse. The closures of schools and transportation due to weather conditions may increase isolation of vulnerable groups, including children. A higher proportion of female-headed Syrian households live in ITS. (VASyR 2022).

## Health

Severe weather patterns, combined with deteriorated living conditions faced by many, heighten certain health risks to vulnerable populations. Palestinian Red Crescent - Lebanon Branch has highlighted respiratory illnesses as a particular concern for communities living in substandard housing. Other notable health risks include injuries from traffic accidents, already a public health risk in Lebanon which is exacerbated by flooding, snow, ice, and fog at high altitudes leading to conditions of low visibility.

Access to healthcare is a concern amid Lebanon's complex crisis including economic collapse since 2019, ongoing



COVID-19 pandemic, and cholera outbreak in late 2022. Lebanon's healthcare system has been severely strained by the crisis in the country, while on the individual level the cost of treatment stands as one of the main barriers to access. This concern is particularly acute for Lebanon's refugee population, who make up more than one in four in the country and face gaps in healthcare coverage.

Healthcare for Syrian refugees is supported by UNHCR in cooperation with Lebanese authorities. Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are ineligible for state healthcare services and have historically relied on UNRWA to defray the costs of treatment. However, recent UNRWA monitoring highlights the impact that increasing costs of hospitalization on Palestinian communities seeking healthcare. (UNRWA Protection Monitoring 2022). UNRWA's hospitalization policy covers part of hospital expenses, while a growing number of Palestinian families are unable to cover the difference. The 2022 MSNA indicated that among Palestinian refugees who had a recent unmet healthcare need, the cost of treatment had been a major barrier for 45% of respondents. This figure was particularly high in Baalbek-Hermel at 64% and in Beirut at 86% of respondents (REACH Lebanon 2022 MSNA).

## **Water, Sanitation And Hygiene**

Lebanon's ongoing complex crisis has had detrimental impacts on WASH conditions in the country, with the country seeing its first cholera outbreak in 30 years in late 2022. Sanitation and hygiene needs are also pronounced in informal and collective shelters, as well as Palestinian gatherings. In informal tented settlements housing Syrian refugees, one in three households lack access to improved sanitation facilities (VASyR 2022). There is a linkage between WASH conditions and some of the risks associated with winter weather conditions, as waste management can cause blockages in rivers which increase flooding risks, while flood conditions pose sanitation hazards.

## **Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery**

The current weather conditions come against a backdrop of increasing extreme winter rainfall events in Lebanon driven by climate change (Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Center 2021). Lebanon's vulnerability to the impacts of rainfall and winter weather is exacerbated by structural challenges including urban sprawl, underdeveloped and undermaintained drainage systems, and a crisis of waste management which impedes existing drainage systems. The readiness of local stakeholders to cope with the adverse weather conditions is strained due to the complex crisis in the country.

# **Objective and Strategy Rationale**

## **Overall objective of the operation**

The objective of this DREF operation is to reduce the impact of the ongoing severe weather conditions on 11,890 people by providing affected Lebanese and Syrian refugee families in Akkar and Baalbek-Hermel governorates with in-kind and voucher-based assistance to meet their basic needs, and by easing access to healthcare services for affected Palestinian refugees.



The operation will be conducted over a duration of 3 months and will be implemented by the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC), in parallel with the Palestinian Red Crescent Society Lebanon Branch (PRCS-L), which will focus its intervention on healthcare access in and around Palestinian refugee camps.

## Response strategy implementation

To achieve above stated objective, the LRC in parallel with PRCS-L will ensure the following services are provided to the targeted communities.

Livelihoods and Basic Needs (Target: 11,700 People or 2,600 households with a household multiplier of 4.5 due to targeting of both Lebanese and Syrian families)

LRC will distribute food parcels to 2,000 households, intended to meet the basic nutritional needs of a family of 5 for one month.

LRC will distribute bread and drinking water to an additional 600 households requiring partial support to meet basic food needs. Each households will receive 2 packages of bread and 1 gallon of water, intended to supplement families' supplies to meet their basic needs.

LRC will also distribute fuel vouchers to 2,000 households to ensure that families have access to fuel for heating, which has become increasingly unaffordable amid Lebanon's ongoing socioeconomic crisis. Based on LRC's continuous engagement in the targeted areas, it is known that households are equipped with heating stoves, but the high cost of fuel rendered the usage of them inaccessible, therefore fuel vouchers were identified as an appropriate solution. The distribution is accompanied with short key messages regarding the safe usage of heating stoves.

This DREF operation represents a contribution to LRC's overall winterization response, which has also received bilateral support from Participating National Societies.

Healthcare (Target: 190 people)

Given the limited access to health care systems by vulnerable refugee and host communities in the targeted areas, which is exacerbated by the ongoing socio-economic crisis, there is need to ensure the targeted families have access to health care during the winter period. This will ensure that individuals affected by health impacts of the winter weather, particularly respiratory illnesses and injuries related to traffic accidents, have the ability to receive treatment regardless of ability to pay.

To ensure this is done with dignity, PRCS-L will ensure Palestinian refugees and other economically vulnerable patients in the target areas receive free health care by covering hospital bills for three months.

## Targeting Strategy

### Who will be targeted through this operation?

The Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) adopted a comprehensive approach to address the needs of communities affected by severe weather events. Recognizing the limitations of in-kind distributions in achieving long-term results, the strategy emphasized transitioning towards sustainable solutions. This involved comprehensive assessments, fostering partnerships, implementing targeted interventions, and maintaining ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The overarching aim was to empower affected communities, bolster their resilience, and ensure sustainable outcomes that surpassed just meeting immediate needs. The strategy also underscored the importance of transitioning from short-term emergency assistance to longer-term solutions. To achieve this, LRC collaborated with stakeholders, partners, and local communities to ensure a coordinated approach, aiming for sustainable outcomes.



PRCS-L services target economically vulnerable Palestinian patients across Lebanon through the 5 hospitals it operates near and within Palestinian camps and gathering located in Bekaa, Tripoli, Beirut, Saida, and Tyre. DREF funds will assist PRCS-L to cover bills for patients who require care related to the winter weather conditions, including illness and accidents. PRCS-L support will take place through its existing network of five hospitals throughout Lebanon, to which Palestinian refugees travel to seek care

### Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The selection of beneficiaries for assistance was a meticulous process. A robust beneficiary registration process was set in motion, documenting essential information such as names, demographics, and specific needs. This ensured accurate identification of target beneficiaries and that aid reached the intended recipients. Regular monitoring visits were conducted to distribution sites to oversee the process, ensuring adherence to guidelines and standards. Feedback mechanisms were also in place, where post-distribution monitoring exercises were conducted to gather beneficiary perspectives and opinions. This feedback was instrumental in refining future distributions and ensuring that the assistance was tailored to their specific needs. The LRC also recognized the importance of engaging with the community continuously, involving community committees, workers, and trusted leaders to ensure culturally appropriate and effective response efforts. PRCS-L targeted patients at its hospitals who are unable to cover costs of treatment based on vulnerability screening by PRCS-L personnel.

## Total Targeted Population

Women:	-	Rural %	Urban %
Girls (under 18):	-		
Men:	-	People with disabilities (estimated %)	
Boys (under 18):	-		
Total targeted population:	<b>11,890</b>		

## Risk and security considerations

### Please indicate about potential operational risk for this operations and mitigation actions

Risk	Mitigation action
Poor weather conditions inhibit access to affected populations.	Continuous monitoring of needs and capacities across the operational areas and dynamic allocation of resources to ensure efficient response.
Staff and volunteers face exposure to transmissible illnesses such as cholera and COVID-19 during the response.	Ensure all staff have received the full dosage of one of the WHO approved COVID-19 vaccines and access to safe drinking water and they are trained on modes of transmission.
Lebanon's economic crisis leads to volatility in the price of items and consumables.	Keeping RCRC Movement Partners and other non-Movement Partners updated on the financial situation and shortages and soliciting support to compensate the shortage in funding. Follow-up and regular updates to stakeholders and suppliers. Rely on the use of local materials.



Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation



# Implementation

	<b>Secretariat Services</b>	<b>Budget</b>	CHF 3,938
		<b>Targeted Persons</b>	0
		<b>Persons Assisted</b>	0
<b>Indicators</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Number of deployments in support of the operation		1	1

	<b>Livelihoods And Basic Needs</b>	<b>Budget</b>	CHF 219,644
		<b>Targeted Persons</b>	11700
		<b>Persons Assisted</b>	14265
<b>Indicators</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Number of people reached with food assistance		11700	14265
Number of people reached with fuel vouchers		9000	10751
% of beneficiaries who are satisfied with the distribution process of the assistance		90	88
% of beneficiaries who are satisfied with the quality of the food parcel		90	88
% of beneficiaries who reported satisfaction with the fuel voucher		90	97

## Narrative description of achievements

The Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) undertook a comprehensive distribution initiative in response to the severe weather conditions that affected Aarsal and Akkar areas in Lebanon. The primary focus was to provide essential items to the affected communities, ensuring their immediate needs were met. This included the distribution of food parcels, fuel vouchers, water packs, and bread packs. The food parcels were particularly crucial, ensuring that families had access to basic nutritional requirements, thereby supporting their overall health and reducing the risk of malnutrition. Additionally, the distribution of bread and water packs addressed immediate food and hydration needs, especially during the challenging weather conditions.



**Monitoring and Feedback:** To ensure the effectiveness and transparency of the distribution process, several monitoring activities were carried out. A robust beneficiary registration process was implemented, which documented relevant information such as names, demographics, and specific needs. This helped in accurately identifying the target beneficiaries and ensuring that aid reached the intended recipients. Regular monitoring visits were conducted by trained personnel to distribution sites. These visits involved verifying the quantities and quality of the distributed items and confirming adherence to pre-established guidelines and standards. Any discrepancies or issues identified during these visits were promptly addressed. Monitoring activities also included feedback mechanisms, where a post-distribution monitoring (PDM) exercise was conducted after the distributions with a sample of the targeted population.

**Reasons for Overachievement:** During the funding request phase, the budget calculations for fuel vouchers and food parcels were based on prices at that time. However, by the time the funding was received, the prices had changed. This led to a situation where, during the procurement phase, the available budget was greater than the total number of in-kind and voucher assistance initially planned. As a result, the LRC was able to procure additional food parcels and fuel vouchers without overspending from the budget lines set for these activities. This change during the procurement phase increased the total number of procured goods. Consequently, LRC updated the distribution plan to distribute all the procured goods after replenishing the initial stock. This expansion allowed the LRC to target additional households from the affected areas, leading to the overachievement in distribution numbers.

### Lessons Learnt

1. **Comprehensive assessment and targeting:** Conducting a thorough assessment of the affected communities and their specific needs is crucial for effective targeting of beneficiaries. The project successfully identified the immediate needs for fuel vouchers, food parcels, water packs, and bread packs, ensuring that the assistance reached the most vulnerable individuals and households.

2. **Community engagement and awareness:** Providing clear instructions and sharing awareness about the content and proper storage of food parcels, as well as safe handling of fuel vouchers and fuel supplies, is essential. The efforts made by LRC volunteers to educate beneficiaries on the proper usage and storage of distributed items helped maximize the impact of the assistance and prevent potential hazards.

3. **Coordination and logistics planning:** Logistical complexities, such as reaching remote and underserved areas with challenging terrain and limited infrastructure, require extensive coordination, resource mobilization, and strategic planning. The project highlights the importance of establishing strong coordination mechanisms with relevant stakeholders, ensuring timely and efficient distribution of supplies to the target communities.

4. **Equitable distribution and avoiding exclusion:** In contexts of large-scale need and economic crises, ensuring equitable distribution and preventing exclusion is paramount. The project successfully navigated the challenge of a high number of people in need, balanced the needs of both Lebanese and Syrian communities, and mitigated the impact of the severe weather conditions by carefully planning and implementing measures to prevent discrimination or marginalization.

### Challenges

- Lebanon's economic crisis leads to volatility in the price of items and consumables.
- The huge need within both the Refugees and Host community
- The distance between distribution points and the beneficiary residing location.

	<b>Health</b>	<b>Budget</b>	CHF 46,664
		<b>Targeted Persons</b>	190



		<b>Persons Assisted</b>	161
<b>Indicators</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Number of people served by PRCS-L hospitals with inpatient care		190	161
<b>Challenges</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PRCS are facing a chronic lack of medical consumables and medicines which may affect service provision even in cases where patient bills are covered. In addition, hospital capacity is constantly stretched by faulty agreements with UNRWA along with other challenges.</li> </ul>			

	<b>National Society Strengthening</b>	<b>Budget</b>	CHF 96,630
		<b>Targeted Persons</b>	0
		<b>Persons Assisted</b>	0
<b>Indicators</b>		<b>Target</b>	<b>Actual</b>
Number of learning exercises conducted and documented		1	0
<b>Narrative description of achievements</b>			
According to LRC, the intervention was very straightforward in nature, and small in scale, no LLW was deemed needed			



# Financial report

## DREF Operation

### FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

#### MDRLB013 - Lebanon - Severe Weather

Operating Timeframe: 21 Feb 2023 to 31 May 2023

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2023/2-7	Operation	MDRLB013
Budget Timeframe	2023/2-5	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 31/Aug/2023

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

### I. Summary

<b>Opening Balance</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Funds &amp; Other Income</b>	<b>366,875</b>
DREF Response Pillar	366,875
<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>-366,928</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>-53</b>

### II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items			0
PO02 - Livelihoods	219,644		219,644
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash			0
PO04 - Health	46,664		46,664
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene			0
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion			0
PO07 - Education			0
PO08 - Migration			0
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery		362,937	-362,937
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability			0
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			0
<b>Planned Operations Total</b>	<b>266,308</b>	<b>362,937</b>	<b>-96,630</b>
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			0
EA02 - Secretariat Services	3,938	3,991	-53
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	96,630		96,630
<b>Enabling Approaches Total</b>	<b>100,567</b>	<b>3,991</b>	<b>96,576</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>366,875</b>	<b>366,928</b>	<b>-53</b>



[Click here for the complete financial report](#)

## Contact Information

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

- **National Society contact:** Georges Kettaneh, Secretary General, georges.kettaneh@redcross.org.lb
- **IFRC Appeal Manager:**  
Hossam Faysal, Regional Head of Health, Disasters, Climate & Crises (HDCC) Unit - MENA, hosam.faysal@ifrc.org, +961 71 802 916
- **IFRC Project Manager:**  
Cristhian Cortez Cardoza, Head of Delegation for Lebanon, cristhian.cortez@ifrc.org, +961 71 802 926
- **IFRC focal point for the emergency:**  
Cristhian Cortez Cardoza, Head of Delegation for Lebanon and Iraq, cristhian.cortez@ifrc.org, +961 71 802 926
- **Media Contact:** Mey Al Sayegh, Head of Communications, IFRC MENA, mey.elsayegh@ifrc.org, +961 03229352

[Click here for the reference](#)

