



ZRCs Volunteers at one of the polling stations in Mberengwa district, 2023

Appeal: MDRZW022	Total DREF Allocation: CHF 160,105	Crisis Category: Yellow	Hazard: Other
Glide Number: -	People Affected: 1,000,000 people	People Targeted: 10,000 people	
Event Onset: Slow	Operation Start Date: 02-08-2023	Operational End Date: 30-11-2023	Total Operating Timeframe: 3 months

Targeted Areas:

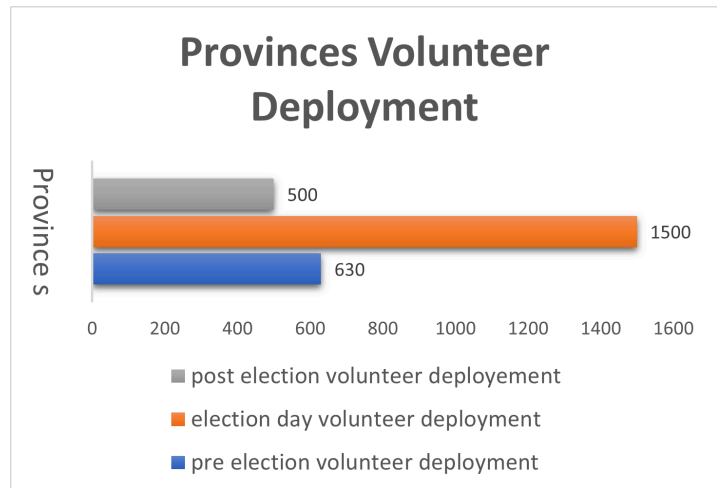
Bulawayo, Harare, Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Masvingo, Matabeleland North, Matabeleland South, Midlands

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.

- Vote Counting and Results: The vote-counting process was generally quick and results were announced within the required time limit. When results were finally declared, they were met with mixed feelings. During this period, which spanned from 24th to 28th of August 2023, the ZRCS deployed 500 volunteers that were on standby to offer FA services if need arises.
- Several Media also made articles on the elections.



ZRCS Volunteers covering STAR rallies in Midlands Province



Scope and Scale

Categorization of districts hotspots followed the past experiences on elections in the different provinces, NS capacity in those districts, current economical and socio-political situation in these various areas. As such, understanding the districts and province mapping was key. The Republic of Zimbabwe is broken down into 10 administrative provinces, which are divided into 59 districts and 1,200 wards. Administrative division of the country at district level is as follows:

- Bulawayo Province with district of Bulawayo
- Harare Province with district of Harare
- Districts of Manicaland (Buhera, Chimanimani, Chipinge, Makoni, Mutare, Mutasa, Nyanga)
- Districts of Mashonaland Central (Bindura, Guruve, Mazowe, Mbire, Mount Darwin, Muzarabani, Mukumbura, Rushinga, Shamva)
- Districts of Mashonaland East (Chikomba, Goromonzi, Marondera, Mudzi, Murehwa, Mutoko, Seke, UMP (Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe), Wedza (Hwedza)
- Districts of Mashonaland West (Chegutu, Hurungwe, Kariba, Makonde, Mhondoro-Ngezi, Sanyati, Zvimba, Kadoma, Chinhoyi)
- Districts of Masvingo (Bikita, Chiredzi, Chivi, Gutu, Masvingo, Mwenezi, Zaka)
- Districts of Matabeleland North (Binga, Bubi, Hwange, Lupane, Nkayi, Tsholotsho, Umguza)
- Districts of Matabeleland South (Beitbridge, Bulilima, Gwanda, Insiza, Mangwe, Matobo, Umzingwane)
- Districts of Midlands (Chirumhanzu, Gokwe North, Gokwe South, Gweru, Kwekwe, Mberengwa, Shurugwi, Zvishavane).

The NS has based the analysis of hotspots categorization represented in the Map on several criteria including socio-economical, politic representation, population which play a key role on number of voters and rallies, past impact on previous elections etc. Indeed, based on previous election experiences, where violence was likely to manifest at rallies and in communities due to political differences and intolerance. Violence also flared up after announcement of results. Areas with significant political volatility were singled out by the NS for prioritization in the election's preparedness plan. Such areas were therefore identified (in categories A and B depending on level of potential for violence) as shown in the map. In general, ZRCS anticipated the following category of districts to be likely affected:

- Highest priority in Harare and Bulawayo provinces. These are the main cities in the country and represent a significant part of economy and socio-political diversity.
- Main districts with biggest population and potential voter. The most populated provinces being Harare, Bulawayo, Manicaland, Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Mashonaland West, Midland, Masvingo.
- Districts with highest representation of socio-economic diversity and development: such as Gwoke, Mberengwa, Mutare, Chipinge, Buhera, Moromonzi, Gurewha. especially the most populated and politicize. These are also the biggest districts. It was estimated that more than 3,000,000 people were living in the most populated districts and the main districts in the various provinces. Main cities/districts that represent the economical heart of the province and cumulate the highest population. The more populated, the more important were the rallies, the voters and the possible demonstrations complexity. In 2018, more than nine thousand polling points were set-up, and it is expected to have more this year with the growing population and the revision of percentage of votes per category. More rallies were expected also in these areas as well as more polling point, voters and voices for any political debates pre- and post-electoral.
- Districts with some social criteria to be closely monitored as areas with ongoing persistent humanitarian crisis. The campaigns and potential unrest were foreseen to raise other social and economic claims, outbreak of xenophobic violence in the country and displacements.



the election processes.

The ICRC supported through training of volunteers in SAFER Access and the trained volunteers were expected to cascade the training to their branches. ICRC took an active part on the movement coordination even if remotely and was informed on the NS plan under the IFRC DREF support.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	No
National authorities	The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) was responsible for administering elections in coordination with other relevant bodies. ZEC invited Election Observers locally and internationally to be part of the process. The EU, SADC, COMESA and AU sent teams of Observers to the country. Civil Society actors were also involved in the process. Some of the Observers were already in the country while some came a few days before the poll. The Department of Civil Protection (DCP) maintained regular coordination with relevant bodies in terms of needs and interventions. The National Society used its existing partnership with the Ministry of Health and Child Care on emergency medical services before, during, and after the elections. DCP shared and circulated the contingency plan with ZRCS and all the branches at risk of election violence and were informed on the key interventions that would take place for the various scenarios as outlined in the contingency plan.
UN or other actors	There was no support from the UN agencies.

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission was responsible for administering elections in coordination with other relevant bodies. The International community engaged the electoral commission through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and deployed election observers in the country. ZRCS is an active member of the Civil Protection structures nationally at all levels and maintained regular coordination with relevant bodies in terms of needs and interventions. The leadership team followed up and participating in some of the planning meetings convened by the Department of Civil Protection and Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC). The National Society will use its existing partnership with the Ministry of Health and Child Care on emergency medical services before, during, and after the elections. DCP shared and circulated the contingency plan with ZRCS and all the branches at risk of election violence were informed on the key interventions that would take place for the various scenarios outlined in the contingency plan.

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Election campaign rallies in hotspot areas could have led to violence which could result in injuries, separation of family members, and significant psychological effects.

As such, the population in these high-risk areas needed support in terms of first aid care, medical evacuation, and referral to hospitals in the event of serious cases. In addition, volunteers and staff involved in activities were exposed to any potential tensions/fights which could result in injuries and deaths if health and safety recommendations were not respected. This could have caused Public psychological trauma, in both the affected communities and the volunteers/staff responding thus requiring psychosocial support. Prepositioning of first aid kits and fuel to ensure the full capacity of ZRCS in the event of tensions. Certified First Training was also required for volunteers whose certification period had reached expiry. Prepositioning Protective, and Visibility Materials: The materials were distributed to hotspot branches before the elections. This assisted branches to provide first aid services during campaign rallies and during the voting period. In addition, visibility materials (ID cards, bibs, stickers, and flags) were made available to the branches for security and visibility purposes, both playing an essential role in this type of intervention.

There was an ongoing cholera outbreak in the country with cases high in Manicaland, Harare Metropolitan and Matabeleland South provinces. Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) remained a priority to help reduce the adverse effects of cholera within the communities. The rallies provided a thriving ground for the spread of cholera. Given the crowds that are associated with



major rallies, it was also imperative that cholera prevention measures were undertaken at these events to avoid such events becoming super-spreaders.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

A humanitarian response to protect people's health, fundamental rights, and lives amidst a context of social unrest was required. It is necessary to provide guidance and support to affected people so they can obtain the essential information on the range of protection services offered by the appropriate entities responsible for guaranteeing and restoring their civil rights, as well as direct referrals. As a result, ZRCS will strengthen the volunteer's capacity in topics that will allow them to provide better services to the community in need. Also, civil unrest and violence bring together different groups of people, such as women, children, adolescents, persons with disabilities, or minority groups to significant security risks, especially if they do not receive timely medical attention. Considering the importance of protection issues, the ZRCS finds it essential that the volunteers know the minimum standards of PGI to provide priority and specialized attention to these groups in the different lines of response. It is considered necessary to map actors and referral routes for victims of gender-based violence and children and adolescents

Furthermore, the situation was projected to be worst in migrant host areas linked to the recent rise in anti-immigrants in South Africa. This left immigrants and refugees fearing for their safety and these attacks has left some Zimbabweans dead. These tensions were spearheaded by 2 unregistered community organizations called Operation Dudula and the Alexandra Dudula Movement. Operation Dudula was said to be a splinter group from a faction in the Put South Africa First movement, an organization that first popularized and renewed anti-immigration campaigns on social media before finding expression on the ground.

There was expected displacements as a result of xenophobia acts or unrest were expected in the worst case scenario. Leading to a significant number of Zimbabweans, hence the need for Restoration of Family Links (RFL) support. There is also an issue on Zimbabwean Exemption Permit (ZEP) on which the South African Department of Home Affairs issued a directive that it would no longer renew the ZEP visa and applicants for the ZEP visa were granted a grace period up until 31st December 2023. This was a devastating blow to many Zimbabweans in South Africa as there were a huge amount of ZEP visa holders in South Africa who were affected by this directive. Sadly, there were two scenarios for those who did not qualify for the visa and needed to return to Zimbabwe. If they refused to return and did not apply for the visa, they were to be deported back to Zimbabwe.

From historical trend of population movements pre and post elections in the most likely scenarios RFL support was a priority that needed to be covered. This analysis emphasized the situation of migrant and Zimbabwean communities conflict experienced in Dubala.



Community Engagement And Accountability

- Public information to people on respect and protection of the Red Cross emblem, humanitarian action, and the medical mission.
- Humanitarian role messages are diffused within the community.
- Volunteers and humanitarian staff have institutional visibility.

This type of event is usually associated with several information flow and misinformation as well, rumours' and behaviour of the communities not contributing to calm the situation or promote the access to the communities in different scenarios. The lack of understanding of humanitarian work by the actors involved could generate risks to the safety of the humanitarian personnel of the ZRCS, such as attacks. Institutional engagement was a priority as well as engaging political actors in advance of the election and security services to ensure the risk communication and promote the right messages on RCRC that would enhance the access and safety.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

The allocation from DREF aimed to contribute on the readiness of the Zimbabwe RC ahead of the elections and held early actions to mitigate impact of expected troubles during elections. The intervention also intended to provide resources for immediate post-electoral response and deployment of emergency first aid team in previous phase of the election calendar following the needs in the timeframe of the DREF.

To prepare for and when necessary, the NS provided first aid and relevant humanitarian services to victims of conflict and non-conflict related humanitarian needs occurring before, during and after the harmonized general election of 2023. Hence, priority sub-objectives included:

- Prepositioning of essential emergency relief.
- Preparedness and readiness of branches identified as hotspots districts (refer to the map).



- Enhancing the engagement and advocacy at community and institutional on peace, Red Cross and Red Crescent principles.
- Respond to the alerts in case of community level impact ahead of, during and after the general elections scheduled for 23 August 2023.

Operation strategy rationale

The operation was going to last approximately 3 months from 1 August 2023 to 31 October 2023 in 10 provinces, with focus on activities that ensured:

- First aid and emergency stock prepositioning.
- NS preparedness and readiness of personnel.
- Advocacy and engagement at community and institutional level that will enhance dissemination of ZRCS role.
- Response teams deployed to assist with first aid and conduct early actions in public events such as rallies, vote days etc.

The operation also ensured that appropriate measures were taken at these events to ensure that people who attended were not exposed to the risk of cholera infection. Closer cooperation was done with the Ministry of Health and Child Care and the Police to ensure adequate safety precautions were in place before each major rally.

Following forecasted scenario analyzed by ZRCS, districts teams were mobilized for at 3 steps of actions as per below:

1) Preparedness of NS pre-election:

a) Capacity strengthening of the Emergency response team.

Based on learning of 2018, NS enhanced reactivity by ensuring the readiness of a bigger team. Hence ZRCS trained in total 1,756 Volunteers already identified in respective hotspots.

To build the capacity of these teams:

- 600 TOTs (60 per province) were selected and trained in PSS and Safer Access (SA) these cascaded the orientation to other team members during the district-based FA trainings. This complemented the trainings done through the British RC and ICRC support.
- A total of 1,750 underwent first aid training organized at district level. PSS and SA orientation were conducted as an addendum to these trainings to reduce the costs of mobilizing two distinct members. - Full ERT where 1,756 volunteers were trained and made ready to rotate.

b) Institutional engagement and ZRCS acceptance.

This covered advocacy for safe access and promotion of the neutrality of ZRCS in their action. ZRCS ensured the different institutions involved in the election process acknowledged the objectives of this intervention and where possible, contributed to promote the NS intervention. The actions also counted on engagement and right use of media briefings on RCRC principles but also advocated on their role as game changers.

c) Community engagement to enhance ZRCS image and engage community for acceptance and knowledge on RCRC mandate and principles: The coverage prioritized the politically volatile areas (category map in this section) to enhance the NS mandate acceptance.

Advocacy on safe access at community and institutional level was enhanced through dissemination of ZRCS role. This was done through: meetings, group discussions, teaching sessions, media engagement, and branding of deployed team. Continuous presence of the NS from rallies to vote worked well on setting a clear consistency of NS that enhanced acceptance. That learning was used and strengthened with a visible team on all stage of this election period.

2) Deployment and Coverage of the Emergency Response Team:

Emergency first aid services were required during the campaign, voting, and post-election periods to address potential unrest or health incidents like fainting due to heatstroke or hunger during voting. The NS set up first aid services, prioritizing the elderly and disabled, and ensuring COVID-19 guidelines were followed. A total of 70 rallies were covered by 140 Emergency Response Teams (ERTs), with 820 volunteers.

a) Pre-election Rallies and Campaigns:

Coverage of 50 major rallies with 500 volunteers: Given the risk of violence and stampedes at rally venues, the NS covered the 50 largest campaign rallies in 10 target areas. A total of 100 ERTs (500 volunteers) were deployed, with 2 ERTs at each rally, consisting of 5 members per team.

Coverage of additional district/provincial rallies by 120 volunteers: The NS provided support at 20 smaller rallies at provincial or district levels, deploying 120 volunteers (12 per province) in teams of 3.

This campaign coverage increased the visibility of the NS and fostered acceptance at lower levels, helping facilitate smoother operations during voting and beyond.

b) Election Day (23rd August):

In 2018, the NS covered only 7% (700) of the total 9,670 polling stations. In 2023, the plan targeted 25 hotspots per province, with an additional 8 teams deployed in Harare, covering 258 polling stations. Out of the 1,756 trained volunteers, 1,546 were deployed for the full voting day to cover polling stations in hotspot areas. Four NS staff from the head office supported operations in the provinces, while other teams monitored polling stations from the ZRCS HQ. Given the NS's aging fleet, there was a significant logistics gap, and support for 4 all-terrain vehicles was underscored.



c) Post-election (5-day Period):

A team of 100 ERTs (500 volunteers) was mobilized from 23rd to 28th August, continuing surveillance and responding to emergencies in hotspot districts. Depending on the timing of the poll results, teams remained deployed in the field during this period. If the result announcement extended beyond 5 days or violence escalated, the NS would scale up first aid, emergency shelter, and psychosocial support (PSS) services. Continuous monitoring ensured the operation remained adaptive to emerging needs.

The NS also engaged in humanitarian diplomacy, lobbying the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to prioritize vulnerable groups at polling stations. Given the operating environment, ensuring that all volunteers were insured was critical. Where resources were limited, the NS ensured that only insured volunteers were deployed as first-line responders, while others took less risky roles. Capacity-building efforts focused on Child Protection (CP), Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), and Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI), strengthening teams to prevent exclusion risks and enabling safe referrals to healthcare services when needed.

The NS also advocated for election candidates, local authorities, political parties, and the general population to promote the Red Cross's values and the importance of peaceful coexistence. This helped position the NS to respond effectively in cases of hostility. The NS worked with the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC) to promote peaceful conflict resolution and tolerance among political actors, extending these messages to rallies across the country, even those not directly covered by the ZRCS.

Targeting Strategy

Who was targeted by this operation?

The target of this operation was:

- Bulawayo Province with district of Bulawayo
- Harare Province with district of Harare
- Districts of Manicaland (Buhera, Chimanimani, Chipinge, Makoni, Mutare, Mutasa, Nyanga)
- Districts of Mashonaland Central (Bindura, Guruve, Mazowe, Mbire, Mount Darwin, Muzarabani, Mukumbura, Rushinga, Shamva)
- Districts of Mashonaland East (Chikomba, Goromonzi, Marondera, Mudzi, Murehwa, Mutoko, Seke, UMP (Uzumba-Maramba-Pfungwe), Wedza (Hwedza)
- Districts of Mashonaland West (Chegutu, Hurungwe, Kariba, Makonde, Mhondoro-Ngezi, Sanyati, Zvimba, Kadoma, Chinhoyi)
- Districts of Masvingo (Bikita, Chiredzi, Chivi, Gutu, Masvingo, Mwenezi, Zaka)
- Districts of Matabeleland North (Binga, Bubi, Hwange, Lupane, Nkayi, Tsholotsho, Umguza)
- Districts of Matabeleland South (Beitbridge, Bulilima, Gwanda, Insiza, Mangwe, Matobo, Umzingwane)
- Districts of Midlands (Chirumhanzu, Gokwe North, Gokwe South, Gweru, Kwekwe, Mberengwa, Shurugwi, Zvishavane)

The target considered the areas with the highest potential for violence which were mainly the metropolitan provinces, the most populated provinces.

The middle case and most likely scenario from NS contingency plan estimate approximately 10,000 people being affected by the elections especially in the electioneering period by abstaining, violence or through protests. This intervention remained under the middle case and most likely scenario with a scope of around 10,000 people that may need direct support. This was the target of the DREF. The group of people targeted was also based on the projected caseload for the 3 phase of the elections: the campaigns, the elections/voting days and the post-elections.

- For the first two phases, people at higher risk were anticipated to be the people attending rallies during the campaign and those participating in the voting process on the polling days. Main risk being for the people in the identified districts hotspot, rural communities where violence were at a higher probability.
- After the elections, in the scenario of dissatisfaction on the outcome of the election results, violence were anticipated to affect a wider range of people and other groups beyond the people involved in the voting or rallies. In that case, the risk and target was mainly focused on the population called for protests, out for demonstrations or simply the people in the areas where protest could be reported.

In all scenarios, the ZRCS priority was the people that could be the most vulnerable in each of the above situations. This included elderly, pregnant women, children, persons with disabilities, residents in rallies and voting points, security officers, and electoral officers, volunteers and staff mobilized and deployed. NS teams' deployment and intervention aimed at targeting those groups amongst the victims of the violence. For a total target of 10,000 people in the 3 phases of the election process.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

Below are some of the projected needs which arose and the response actions.

- Injured people [FA, PSS].



- Internally Displaced People and returning migrants / asylum seekers, [RFL, shelter, reintegration, PSS].
 - People whose shelters have been destroyed [temporary shelter, PSS]
 - Priority will be given to the sick, elderly, children, women and persons with disabilities.
 - Sexual gender-based violence (PSS and link/refer to relevant service providers.
- The NS took 60% of the caseload since most non-state actors were likely to be barred from operating if the scenario for the 2008 election was repeated and given the sensitivity involved.

Total Targeted Population

Women	3,000	Rural	35%
Girls (under 18)	2,500	Urban	65%
Men	2,700	People with disabilities (estimated)	7%
Boys (under 18)	1,800		
Total targeted population	10,000		

Risk and Security Considerations

Please indicate about potential operation risk for this operations and mitigation actions

Risk	Mitigation action
Increased workload for staff and volunteers already assigned to other interventions	A clear distribution of tasks was ensured so that the coordination of the various interventions run smoothly. The NS refocused its strategy, prioritizing hot spots to ensure it operated within its capacities.
Possible violence during election could also exposed Personnel are exposed to safety and security risks.	Use of emblem and other visibility items. Strict adherence to existing safety protocols and coordination with relevant authorities regarding security environment.
Political and security tensions	Modules on Safer Access was delivered to volunteers, with the application of SAF being emphasized.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

Support for political parties was polarized along urban-rural and regional lines and driven by patronage. Youth unemployment and poverty were endemic, making demonstrations prone to occur. Since the early 2000s, every election held was marked by violent incidents, discontent, demonstrations, and riots both before and after the elections across the country. Post-election dissatisfaction sometimes lasted for several months, often due to disappointment with election results, compounded by hardship, lack of basic needs, and limited life opportunities and rights. In light of these factors, the August 23, 2023 elections were anticipated to follow a similar trajectory. This expectation was based on sporadic intra-party violence during the March 2022 by-elections and throughout the 2023 campaign period. Drawing lessons from past elections, particularly those marked by violence in urban areas, the situation was likely to impact the population in identified hotspot areas, thus requiring effective humanitarian support. The main opposition party had raised concerns about election coverage, with some cases taken to court.

To minimize the risk to RCRC personnel from crime, violence, or road hazards, active risk mitigation measures were implemented. Security orientations and briefings were provided to all teams before deployment to ensure their safety. Standard security protocols addressing general norms, cultural sensitivity, and an overall code of conduct were enforced, while minimum-security requirements were maintained. ZRCS security plans were applied to all NS staff throughout the operation. Area-specific Security Risk Assessments were conducted for any operational area where NS personnel were deployed, and corresponding risk mitigation measures were implemented. This also extended to vehicles, particularly ambulances, facilities, and personnel in Provincial Branches. Mitigating operational risks required proper equipment, identification, visibility, life insurance activation, and training of humanitarian staff and volunteers on safer access and operational security. As a result, personnel involved in first aid, pre-hospital care, psychosocial support, and family reunification operations were provided with protective gear to enhance their safety.



Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

Yes

Implementation



Budget: CHF 63,880

Targeted Persons: 10,000

Assisted Persons: 393

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of monitoring vehicles deployed	13	13
# of first aid teams response teams deployed in 10 provinces	160	140
# of First Aid kits	150	150

Narrative description of achievements

- 150 first aid kits were purchased and delivered to the 10 targeted provinces before the Elections.
- Prepositioning of vehicles was done successfully with all fuel being made available timeously before the polling. 140 ERT were deployed to respond to various alerts in the 10 provinces.
- Referral pathways were established successfully.
- All the targeted action teams that had been intended for deployment were deployed successfully.

Details of the achievements are as follows:

1. First Aid Deployment.

- ZRCS Deployed trained first aid volunteers across the country to provide immediate medical assistance during the election period and voting process.
- ZRCS established strategically located first aid stations at some polling centers, though not all polling stations were covered across all provinces.
- NS mobilized rapid response teams equipped with First Aid Kits to handle emergencies and transport individuals to healthcare facilities if needed.

Impact/Added Value:

- The volunteers deployed in 140 teams provided immediate First Aid services to several individuals experiencing minor injuries, dehydration, and other health issues, preventing escalation into more serious conditions.

Pre-Election Period: Up to 22 August 2023:

Voter Registration and Education: The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission accredited Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS) Staff and volunteers to assist who were to provide First Aid coverage during the registration period and during election days. From the 16th to 20th of August, 7500 volunteers were deployed by ZRCS, to be on standby to assist in any way possible. There were the volunteers who covered the pre-election period.

Campaigning: Political campaigns were marked by rallies and door-to-door campaigns. During this period, ZRCS had 620 volunteers who were on standby assisting with First Aid (FA) services at different political parties' rallies across the country. We covered most of the Star Rallies where there the President of the political parties were the main speakers and also other rallies which attracted bigger crowds.

Election Day: 23 to 24 August 2023

Polling Station Setup: Despite logistical challenges, polling stations were established nationwide, though some experienced delays in opening due to the late arrival of materials. ZRCS deployed 1500 volunteers with 150 volunteers per province, to assist with FA services across the country.

ZRCS as commissioned ensured a reassuring presence at some polling stations, which enhanced the sense of security among voters and



election staff, thereby encouraging higher voter turn-out.

Post-Election Period:

During this period, which spanned from 24th to 28th of August 2023, the ZRCS deployed 500 volunteers that were on standby to offer FA services if need arises.

The objective of the DREF support was to ensure that elections were conducted smoothly through ensuring safety for all, including NS team. The National Society (NS) Identified key staff and volunteers across the country to be on standby from different departments that were going to assist in gathering critical updates across the country and offer First Aid services after undergoing a SAFER Access training. Information was gathered from all NS provinces three times a day and consolidated centrally.

2. Health and Safety Education

- ZRCS conducted health and safety education campaigns to inform the public about basic first aid practices.
- Health and safety messages were heavily promoted by the NS in the communities and around the involved parties rallies. ZRCS distributed educational pamphlets and posters at polling stations and community centers across the country to achieve a wide range and amount of people.
- NS utilized community networks to share health and safety messages. ZRCS used the representatives, volunteers, direct engagement, raised awareness among tens of thousands of voters about how to prevent and respond to common health issues and injuries, fostering a more informed and prepared populace.
- The referral pathway that was used pre/post/during election times was that of local health centers. Our volunteers were connected to the nearest Health Facility which they will contact in case of a need for referral of casualties. All this was being done in liaison with the Ministry of Health and Child Care. However, no major event took place which warranted referral of casualties to MoHCC
- Alerts were received mainly from suburbs in Harare province which received voting materials lately and the people at the Provincial Command Center had to send more volunteers in those areas as more cases of people complaining about headache and some fainting were reported. However, these were managed well.
- Overall, 393 people were assisted with First Aid interventions.

Lessons Learnt

- It would be good to consider replenishment of already present kits as this would result in more kits being available when using a similar amount of funds. The kits referred here are First Aid Kits which the NS already had and only needed to be replenished. However, which were procured were also useful as they added to what was already there.
- Need to have more volunteers trained in PSS as we have seen by-elections coming up in areas that weren't viewed as hotspots initially due to evolving contexts.
- The budget did not cater for the movement of Provincial Managers travelling to monitor the deployed personnel and this needs to be addressed.
- There is need for a contingency budget just in case the voting period is extended in some areas as what happened in the last election.

Challenges

- There was an incident that occurred in Bulawayo on 10 September 2023 (outside the projected response period) after the elections that was later linked to the political tension that followed the announcement of results as well as other subsequent election reports. More than 10 people, including four (4) police officers were injured during the incident with an unconfirmed number of cars and buildings also damaged as well.
- The travelling of managers to ensure adequate monitoring of the deployed personnel was restricted in that the budget was not catering for them but adjustments were made to ensure that all could be done successfully.
- The Elections were marred with some logistical challenges which later resulted in Voting being done over 2 days as opposed to the originally scheduled 1 day. Voting in some places went well into the night and this had a result of violating the Volunteer mobilization time limit.



Protection, Gender And Inclusion

Budget: CHF 0

Targeted Persons: 10,000

Assisted Persons: 8,708



Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of volunteers trained on Minimum Protection Approach, Safe Referral, prevention and mitigation of violence, code of ethics, security policy Framework for Safer Access	600	750
# of NS volunteers have signed the Code of Conduct and have received a briefing in this regard	600	750
# of training on safeguarding and inclusion (PGI, CEA, SGBV, Child safeguarding)	600	750

Narrative description of achievements

• Basic training for volunteers: This training was combined with the SAFE Access and First Aid training due to limited available time, as all the trainings were critical for the success of the exercise.

Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) Training Key Focus Areas:

- Understanding PGI: Participants were educated on the principles of PGI and the importance of integrating protection, gender, and inclusion in all activities.
- Identifying Vulnerabilities: 750 volunteers were trained to recognize and address the needs of vulnerable groups, including women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.
- Promoting Inclusive Practices: The training emphasized the importance of inclusive practices to ensure equitable access to services and participation for all community members.

Issues Addressed:

- Cultural Sensitivities: NS addressed challenges related to cultural beliefs and practices that could affect the implementation of PGI principles.
- Resistance to Change: Some resistance from community members and participants was mitigated through dialogue and awareness-raising efforts.
- Resource Limitations: Resource constraints were overcome by integrating PGI training with other essential trainings, such as SAFE Access and First Aid, to ensure efficient use of time and resources.

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) was part of the training, with a focus on the importance of referring survivors to organizations that could provide services. Emphasis was placed on survivor-centered approaches to ensure the safety of survivors from further harm. Volunteers were already familiar with organizations in their wards working on the prevention and support of SGBV survivors.

The training also included a brief on child protection and the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), ensuring that volunteers and staff deployed for the DREF adhered to these policies.

Lessons Learnt

- There is a need to have sufficient time to execute such activities in a more organized manner given that this one had a lot of activities being crammed into the limited available time.

Challenges

- With the election being held close to 2 days of Public Holidays, there was a lot of pressure as some volunteers were also involved in the provision of FA services during the Heroes' and Defence Day commemorations.
- Trainings which were related to this DREF: Most of the trainings and other activities were done 5 days before the elections. If the funds had been available at least a month before the elections, it could have given the NS ample time to carry out the activities well.



Community Engagement And Accountability

Budget: CHF 14,880

Targeted Persons: 10,000



Assisted Persons: 7,680

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
% of community feedback responded to	100	100
#of polling station reports generated (Target: at least 10 reports)	10	10
#of media engaged	5	5
#of community meetings conducted	50	46
# of coordination meetings conducted with involved stakeholders	20	18

Narrative description of achievements

- The orientation was done during the SAF Access training and thus ensured that all the volunteers who were deployed were fully aware of the need to continuously monitor the situation.
- Communication with volunteers was also regularly made especially done on voting day where in some areas the voting was extended beyond the initial day 1 into the night as well as subsequently into Day 2. NS messages to promote peaceful polling and actions and principle of the NS reached 7,680 people in the various districts.

Lessons Learnt

- There is need for continuous and consisted Humanitarian diplomacy meetings outside Election period with stakeholders to ensure ease of operation and access during key events.

Challenges

- Staff movements in various stakeholder organisation meant encountering new people in some areas and this had setbacks here and there.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 737

Targeted Persons: 1,600

Assisted Persons: 1,548

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
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Narrative description of achievements

- The Harare CCD supported the NS with capacity to manage the grant. The operational team was inducted on execution of the DREF.

Lessons Learnt

- There is need for more people to be capacitated on how to do reporting.



Challenges

- The DREF was approved a few weeks before the elections and as such there was a very short time to ensure funds were disbursed to the NS, but the CCD continued supporting the NS to apply for imminent DREFS on time.



National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 80,608

Targeted Persons: 1,600

Assisted Persons: 1,548

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of ERT team deployed	258	258
# of volunteers trained in PFA	750	750
#of volunteers trained and deployed to provide care to persons affected/injured before, during and after the 2023 General Elections	1,548	1,548
# of Volunteers deployed on Elections day	1,548	1,548
# of ERT during voting day	250	250
% of rallies covered	40	40

Narrative description of achievements

- The targeted number of volunteers deployed: In total 1,548 volunteers and volunteers supervisors were deployed in 140 teams. The deployment was further detailed in health section. Deployment covered rallies, during 2 voting days and 4 additional post electoral days. ZRCS complemented the deployments covered under this DREF by additional internal resources to ensure adequate number of people were trained, mobilized and ready to support in the various districts. To cover the hotspots districts identified across the provinces, 500 volunteers covered the rallies under this DREF while 1548 covered the polling 2 days and 630 volunteers were mobilized and in alert after the polling days. In most of the districts, the teams deployed included 5-10 volunteers for major rallies and polling points and 3-5 volunteers covering medium rallies. Details of planning under strategy and initial plan.
- However, there was an extension of the voting period in some areas increasing people requiring FA services. The extension also meant that the volunteers had to be available for a longer period of time during the day without sufficient cover support.
- ZRCS ensured the duty of care for volunteers by starting with relevant briefings on First aid, PSS, RCRC principles
- ICRC supported the trainings on Safer access.

Lessons Learnt

- There is need for contingency planning for eventualities such as voting period extension with more volunteers being made ready on standby in case such happens again.

Challenges

- The voting period extension meant volunteers now required meals and not just refreshments as they were now required to stay at polling centres and hotspots for a longer period that had been initially planned.
- There was need to replace some volunteers given the extended period but funds were insufficient to cover all groups with regards to their allowances.



Financial Report

DREF Operation

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Selected Parameters			
Reporting Timeframe	2023/7-2024/4	Operation	MDRZW022
Budget Timeframe	2023/7-2024/4	Budget	APPROVED

Prepared on 28/May/2024

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

MDRZW022 - Zimbabwe - Elections Preparedness

Operating Timeframe: 02 Aug 2023 to 30 Nov 2023

I. Summary

Opening Balance	0
Funds & Other Income	160,105
DREF Anticipatory Pillar	160,105
Expenditure	-156,391
Closing Balance	3,714

II. Expenditure by area of focus / strategies for implementation

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
AOF1 - Disaster risk reduction			0
AOF2 - Shelter		0	0
AOF3 - Livelihoods and basic needs			0
AOF4 - Health	63,880	59,723	4,158
AOF5 - Water, sanitation and hygiene			0
AOF6 - Protection, Gender & Inclusion			0
AOF7 - Migration			0
Area of focus Total	63,880	59,723	4,158
SF11 - Strengthen National Societies	95,488	96,669	-1,181
SF12 - Effective international disaster management			0
SF13 - Influence others as leading strategic partners			0
SF14 - Ensure a strong IFRC	737		737
Strategy for implementation Total	96,225	96,669	-444
Grand Total	160,105	156,391	3,714

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

Please explain variances (if any)

IFRC allocated through the DREF pot CHF 160,105. CHF 156,391 were spent by the end of the intervention to achieve the above described milestones. The balance of CHF 3,714 will returned to the DREF pot. The overall unspent balance is from IFRC delegation monitoring cost and administration cost that were not used as planned within the DREF timeline due to volatile context.

Contact Information

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

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Media Contact: Susan Nzisa Mbalu, Communications Manager, susan.mbalu@ifrc.org

[Click here for reference](#)



DREF Operation

Selected Parameters			
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SFI2 - Effective international disaster management			0
SFI3 - Influence others as leading strategic partners			0
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DREF Operation

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Budget Timeframe	2023/7-2024/4	Budget	APPROVED

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Operating Timeframe: 02 Aug 2023 to 30 Nov 2023

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
Relief items, Construction, Supplies	19,021	19,954	-933
Medical & First Aid	12,969	13,321	-352
Teaching Materials	6,052	6,634	-581
Logistics, Transport & Storage	4,561	4,676	-115
Transport & Vehicles Costs	4,561	4,676	-115
Personnel	66,463	66,508	-45
National Society Staff	5,871	6,714	-843
Volunteers	60,592	59,794	798
Workshops & Training	44,959	43,411	1,548
Workshops & Training	44,959	43,411	1,548
General Expenditure	15,330	12,297	3,032
Travel	1,435		1,435
Office Costs	2,162		2,162
Communications	865	653	212
Financial Charges	1,124	2,052	-928
Other General Expenses	9,744	9,592	152
Indirect Costs	9,772	9,545	227
Programme & Services Support Recover	9,772	9,545	227
Grand Total	160,105	156,391	3,714