



SYRIA

IFRC network mid-year report, January – June 2023

12 December 2023

IN SUPPORT OF THE SYRIAN ARAB RED CRESCENT



14

National Society branches



5,749

National Society staff



8,031

National Society volunteers

PEOPLE REACHED

Ongoing emergency operations



28,000

Climate and environment



800,000

Disasters and crises



28,000

Health and wellbeing



1.5M

Migration and displacement



4,000

Values, power and inclusion



331,000

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

in Swiss francs (CHF)

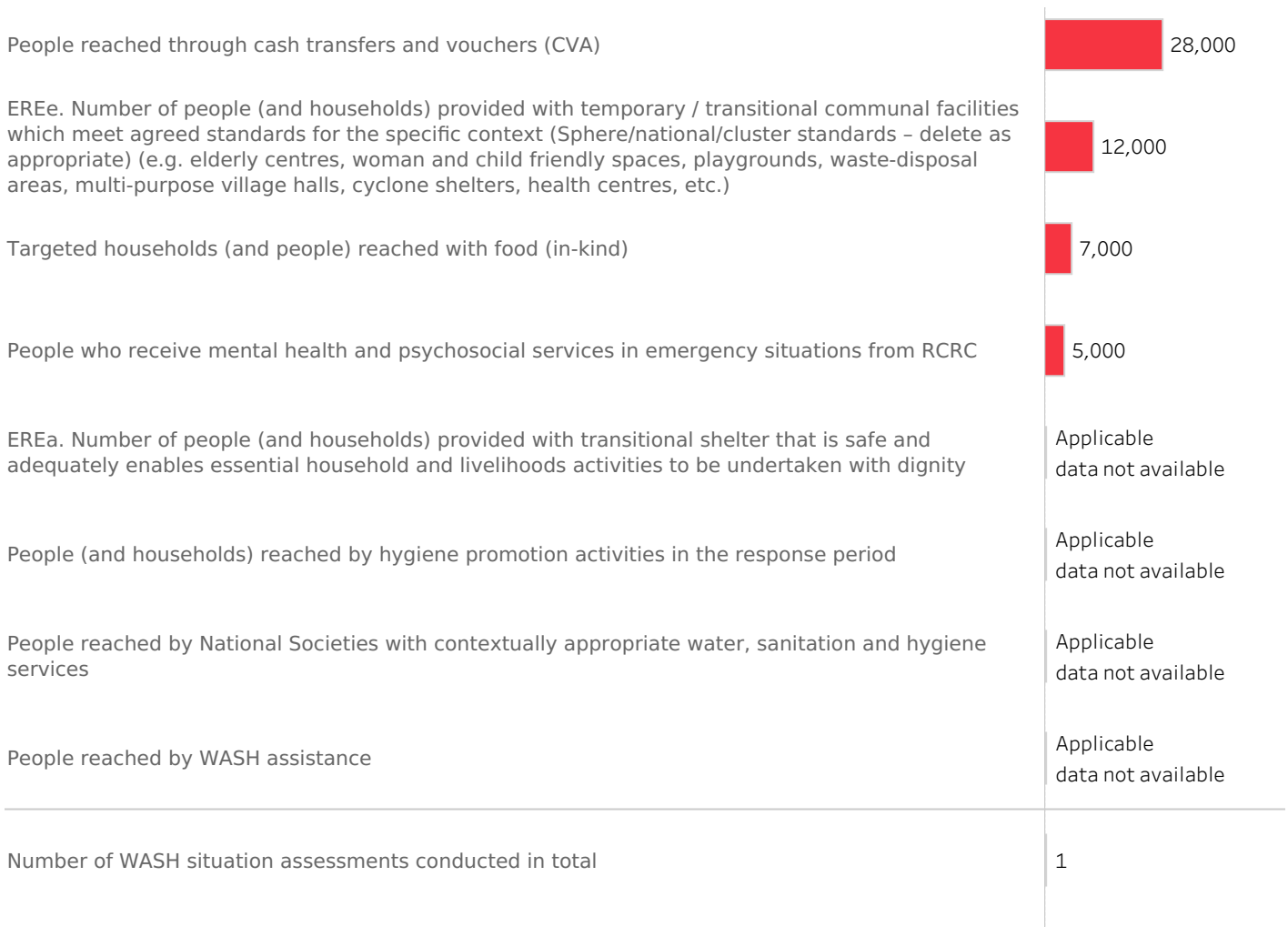
Total		Funding requirements		200M
IFRC	Longer-term	Income		3M
Participating National Societies		Funding requirements		15.4M
		Income		10.5M

[Click here for more financial information](#)





Appeal numbers **MAASY002, MDRSY009**

ONGOING EMERGENCY INDICATORS

MDRSY009 / Syria / *Earthquake*



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

	People reached with heatwave risk reduction, preparedness or response	 800,000
Climate	People reached with activities to address rising climate risks	Applicable data not available
	People reached with activities to address environmental problems	Applicable data not available
	National Society is implementing environmental or climate campaigns focused on behaviour change, plastic reduction or clean-ups	Yes
	National Society is developing and implementing strategies and plans that address rising climate and environmental risks	Yes
Disasters and crises	People reached per year with support services, in-kind, cash and voucher assistance for emergency response and recovery	28,000
	People reached with shelter support	12,000
	People reached with livelihoods support	6,000
Health and wellbeing	People reached with contextually appropriate health services	 2M
	People reached with contextually appropriate water, sanitation and hygiene services	 300,000
	People reached with psychosocial and mental health services	4,000
Migration and displacement	Migrants and displaced persons reached with services for assistance and protection	4,000
	Number of Humanitarian Service Points (HSPs) that provided assistance and/or protection to people on the move along land based migration routes	Applicable data not available
Values, power and inclusion	People reached by protection, gender and inclusion programming	 331,000
	Community Engagement and Accountability is integrated and institutionalized in the National Society policies, operations, and procedures (with clear benchmarks)	Yes

ENABLING FUNCTIONS

Strategic and operational coordination	Number of formal interagency/international coordination platforms the IFRC network is part of	5
	Number of government led coordination platforms the National Society is part of	Applicable data not available
National Society Development	All volunteers are covered by health, accident and death compensation	Yes
	One National Society Development plan is in place	Yes
	Strategy for strengthening the auxiliary role developed or implemented	Yes
Humanitarian diplomacy	Domestic advocacy strategies are developed, aligning, at least in part, with global IFRC advocacy strategies	Yes
	National Society is participating in IFRC-led communication campaigns	Yes
Accountability and agility	National Society has demonstrated progress in digital transformation according to the digital maturity model outlined in the IFRC Digital Transformation Strategy	Yes
	National Society has functioning data management systems that inform decision making and support monitoring and reporting on the impact and evidence of the IFRC network's contributions	Yes
	National Society has strengthened integrity and reputational risk mechanisms	Yes
	PSEA policy is in place to enforce prevention and support survivors	Yes

IFRC NETWORK SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES

National Society	Multilateral Support	Bilateral Support					
		Climate	Migration and displacement	Values, power and inclusion	Enabling Functions	Disasters and crises	Health and wellbeing
American Red Cross	●						
Australian Red Cross	●						
Austrian Red Cross	●						
Belarus Red Cross	●						
British Red Cross	●	●		●	●	●	
Bulgarian Red Cross	●						
Canadian Red Cross Society	●				●	●	●
Croatian Red Cross	●						
Danish Red Cross	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Finnish Red Cross	●			●	●		●
French Red Cross	●						
German Red Cross	●				●	●	●
Icelandic Red Cross	●						
Irish Red Cross Society	●						
Italian Red Cross	●		●			●	●
Japanese Red Cross Society	●						
Kazakh Red Crescent	●						
Korean Red Cross	●						
Kuwait Red Crescent Society	●						
Lithuanian Red Cross Society	●						
Maldivian Red Crescent	●						
Netherlands Red Cross	●						
Norwegian Red Cross	●	●			●	●	●
Philippine Red Cross	●						
Red Crescent Society of Azerbaij..	●						
Red Crescent Society of Kyrgyzst..	●						
Red Crescent Society of the Isla..	●						
Red Crescent Society of Turkme..	●						
Red Cross of Monaco	●						
Red Cross of Montenegro	●						
Red Cross of North Macedonia	●						

IFRC NETWORK SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES (CON.)

Red Cross of North Macedonia	●						
Red Cross Society of China	●						
Saudi Red Crescent Authority	●						
Singapore Red Cross Society	●						
Slovenian Red Cross	●						
Spanish Red Cross	●						
Swedish Red Cross	●			●	●	●	●
Swiss Red Cross	●						

■ Planned

■ Supported

OVERALL PROGRESS

Context

In March 2023, the Syrian crisis entered its thirteenth year, marking another grim milestone for Syrians throughout the region. Syria remains one of the world's most complex humanitarian emergencies, where 6.9 million people are internally displaced, and 90 per cent of the population is now estimated to live below the poverty line. Syria's population reached 22.1 million in 2022 and its Human Development Index (HDI) value declined from 0.644 in 2010 to 0.567 in 2020, ranking at 151 out of 189 countries (source: UNDP).

On 6 February 2023, two earthquakes of 7.7 and 7.5 magnitude respectively, struck southern and central Turkey and northern and western Syria. Many buildings collapsed amidst already precarious living and very harsh weather conditions. More than six million people were affected by the earthquakes in Syria and physical damage and losses are estimated at USD5.2 billion and reconstruction and recovery needs at over USD8 billion (source: World Bank).

The Ministry of Health (MoH) reported that 1,414 people lost their lives and 2,357 people were injured in the Government of Syria held areas.

Major infrastructure damage has been witnessed with 276 destroyed buildings and more than 300 partially damaged, including the complete destruction of 248 schools. Water and sanitation facilities and pipelines of houses in areas affected by high intensity shocks have been either damaged or destroyed. The earthquake has also damaged community water and sanitation facilities. While food insecurity pre-dated the earthquake, the situation has worsened as the earthquake left thousands of households unable to access food. The major destruction and damage to houses, buildings and infrastructure have limited the access to a means of livelihood among affected populations. People who were already in debt struggle to repay due to a reduced means of income.

Despite the continuing efforts of humanitarian actors, the situation in Syria remains dire, further complicated by a worsening economy, waves of hostilities and mass displacement, the lingering aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, a Cholera outbreak and now the impact of the earthquakes. A decade of protracted crisis and economic collapse has left more than 15.3 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. Crucial infrastructure such as schools, healthcare facilities, and water supply systems have been extensively damaged and remain largely unrepaired. In areas where hostilities have subsided, families struggle to access basic services. An increasing number of children, estimated at two million children, are not attending school in order to support their families with an additional income. As a result, 15.3 million Syrians are estimated to require some form of income and livelihoods support in 2023, with 12.1 million estimated to be food insecure, and 2.9 million people at risk of sliding into food insecurity, <https://www.unocha.org/syrian-arab-republic>.

Macro-economic conditions continued to deteriorate in 2023 and appear to be worsening. The combined effects of currency depreciation, soaring prices, reduced fiscal revenue, increasing domestic debt and widespread losses in livelihoods have plunged additional segments of the population into humanitarian need, most notably in areas historically less affected by hostilities and displacement. The downturn of the Syrian economy is further exacerbated by the introduction of sanctions, which has added an additional burden on the Syrian economy and led to a record level price increase of essential goods, a sharp declining value of the Syrian pound (SYP) which has lost 93 per cent of its value against the US dollar since April 2019, and considerable fuel and gas shortages throughout the country. The Central bank devalued the local currency in early April, the second time in 2023, to trade at SYP 6,532 to a US dollar from SYP 4,522. Soaring prices and insufficient incomes mean millions of families are struggling to make ends meet, amid an unparalleled economic crisis.

Key achievements

- Following the earthquakes, the **Syrian Arab Red Crescent** launched a massive response covering all directly and indirectly affected governorates. IFRC supported the response by launching an International Emergency Appeal that aimed to reach 2.5 million people.
- The IFRC supported with the procurement of medical equipment at the Al-Zahra hospital in Damascus with funding from the **Italian Red Cross**. **Danish Red Cross** supported the Syrian Red Crescent to reach over 150,000 people through health, Mental health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and protection services through 25 service

centers in 12 Governorates. The **Swedish Red Cross** supported the Syrian Red Crescent in installing solar power in Salanya Primary Health Centre (PHC) increasing the total PHCs with solar power to 4 out of 5. The installations saw a notable increase in the number of patient consultations.

- In relation to the Strategic Priority concerning Migration and Displacement, cash transfers were provided to 141 vulnerable female headed households. **Danish Red Cross** supported the Syrian Red Crescent to implement a livelihoods model aimed at improving the life skills of the displaced and underprivileged youths and adults. They also collaborated with Red Cross Red Crescent partners to customize and develop a comprehensive Microeconomic Initiatives (MEI) approach for the Syrian Red Crescent.
- In terms of National Society Development, Syrian Red Crescent with the support of the IFRC, secured funding from the Empress Shoken Fund of CHF 30,000 for a 12-month project to launch the Syrian Red Crescent e-learning platform and to digitize its policies.
- Regarding Humanitarian Diplomacy, the IFRC facilitated a Syrian Red Crescent/**Turkish Red Crescent** International Resilience Workshop in Geneva. The IFRC Syria Delegation continued to promote a stronger positioning of Syrian Red Crescent, IFRC and its membership in the overall response and recovery through strengthened advocacy and humanitarian diplomacy efforts.
- In collaboration with **Norwegian Red Cross**, the IFRC supported the implementation of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.

Changes and amendments

During the period under review, an earthquake of magnitude 7.5 struck western Syria. This led to a shift in focus to the Earthquake Emergency Appeal to support 2.5 million people. The earthquake response is designed to allow for integrated responses, and to transition the unified planning process and ongoing programmes into a Federation-wide multi-year country plan.

IFRC NETWORK ACTION

ONGOING EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Emergency Appeal name	Syria Earthquake Appeal
Appeal number	MDRSY009
Timeframe	24 months (7 February 2023 – 28 February 2025)
Funding requirements	IFRC Appeal: 100 million Swiss francs Total Federation-wide: 200 million Swiss francs (CHF 100 million for immediate response and CHF 100 million for recovery and resilience)
Appeal link	Syria Earthquake Revised Emergency Appeal
Operational strategy	Syria Earthquake Operational Strategy
Most recent operations update	Syria Earthquake Operational Update

Following the earthquakes, that were categorized ‘red’ according to the IFRC severity scale, Syrian Red Crescent launched a massive response operation covering all directly and indirectly affected governorates. IFRC supported the response by launching an International Emergency Appeal <https://www.ifrc.org/press-release/turkiye-and-syria-earthquakes-six-months-ifrc-calls-urgent-support-meet-immense>.

Syrian Red Crescent mobilized staff and volunteers nationwide, for example, the Branches in Dara’a and Deir-ez-Zor played an instrumental role in the facilitation and clearance of relief convoys that came to Syria over the land

border. Throughout the earthquake response, the Disaster Management department continued to implement regular programmes and operations.

For details please see Revised Emergency Appeal, Operational Strategy and latest Operations Update (links above).

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Climate and environment

IFRC technical support on climate and environment to Syrian Red Crescent is expected to increase during the second half of this year. Understandably, earthquake response in early February became the focus of support and activities throughout this reporting cycle. In June 2023, the Climate and Resilience team met with Syrian Red Crescent and shared the draft Climate Fact Sheet developed for Syria and translated into Arabic. IFRC also presented on Resilience at the Earthquake Plan revision workshop.

Another area of increasing engagement is with the WASH Health Promotion team. IFRC will be working with the Team to integrate climate change into their Health Promotion training expected to be delivered in September. Also, Syrian Red Crescent is working on community-based disaster risk reduction (DRR) through the implementation of the Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (EVCA). Building on the training Syrian Red Crescent completed in 2022, the IFRC regional office is supporting Syrian Red Crescent with ongoing technical implementation of the EVCA tool.

British Red Cross is supporting a regional programme (Iraq, Yemen, Palestine and Syria) to build up the climate resilience of Internally Displaced People (IDPs), refugee and host populations, by enhancing and promoting the co-production of forecast-based action with local, national and regional coordination mechanisms. These mechanisms include community led coordination committees to Anticipatory Action (AA) regional dialogue platforms promoting the collaboration at country level to enhance the National Disaster Risk Management coordination mechanism. The project aims to strengthen and accelerate operational anticipatory and early action initiatives in the MENA region. In addition to generating wider collaboration and learning on AA for refugees and IDPs to increase resilience, this project fills a wider research and operational gap by focusing explicitly on conflict-affected areas.

On early recovery interventions such as livelihoods, there is an increased focus on climate and environmental crises adaptation to mitigate extreme events of disasters and climate-triggered natural phenomena.

Supported by **Danish Red Cross**, this initiative aims to decrease reliance on traditional energy sources, such as fuel, and transition towards greener alternatives. By the end of this reporting period, **Norwegian Red Cross** successfully installed solar panels and batteries in four of Syrian Red Crescents' Primary Health Centers and in the children's hospital in Aleppo.

To address the energy needs of the water pumps under rehabilitation, **Norwegian Red Cross** has been exploring innovative solutions. As part of this effort, hydropower consultants were dispatched to Syria to conduct assessments for two potential hydropower sites. The consultants' visit took place during May 2023, and the assessment report is expected to be released by the end of August. The inclusion of hydropower as an energy source for water pumps not only reduces reliance on conventional electricity but also harnesses the excess water flow to generate renewable energy, thus contributing to climate action goals.

As part of efforts to promote climate-resilient behavior, the Hygiene Promotion Team has been actively disseminating messages and conducting awareness campaigns on climate change and ways to reduce consumption, particularly during periods of drought.



Disasters and crises

During the first half of 2023, Syrian Red Crescent continued to be at the frontline in responding to the needs of the conflict and disaster affected population throughout Syria, with support from various actors. Syrian Red Crescent, as the largest provider of humanitarian assistance in Syria in partnership with UN agencies, International NGO's and the Movement reaching on an annual basis more than six million people many of whom receive assistance regularly, continued to prioritize essential humanitarian assistance country wide, employing a 'do-no-harm' approach in the community.

During the reporting period, Syrian Red Crescent's case load for food distribution was radically cut due to the sharp decline in donor funding in the distribution of food parcels. At the end of 2022, Syrian Red Crescent was still able to reach 5.5 million people with food parcels, however, significant funding cuts among donors resulted in a reduction of 2.2 million people from the case load of food parcel recipients by the end of the reporting period. This is mainly as a result of funding cuts that forced the WFP to cut food and cash-for-food assistance for 2.5 million food insecure people from July 2023 onwards. This is despite the devastating February 2023 earthquakes that affected millions of vulnerable people.

Over the years, Syrian Red Crescent estimates that with its interventions around two million people were lifted from 'below the zero poverty line' and were removed from the food distribution case load to a stage where the families were no longer in need of acute life-saving food assistance but were able to cover their absolute minimum food needs, while Syrian Red Crescent covered their other needs through, for example, hygiene kits. However, tragically, the impact of the earthquakes in the directly affected governorates plunged these families back into poverty.

Syrian Red Crescent supported more than 9,500 students living in non-government controlled areas and in Lebanon in areas controlled by the Government of Syria to sit their secondary school exams in schools. Syrian Red Crescent facilitated safe crossing and transport for the students and in some cases for their caretakers, and provided canned food, bread and non-food items (such as mattresses, blankets etc.) in the community centers which were serving as temporary accommodation. In these interventions, Syrian Red Crescent supported close to 3,000 students to cross into government-controlled areas from Ar-Raqqa daily during the exam period. Syrian Red Crescent also provided legal services to the students, and all were provided with a personal identification. This type of support is instrumental for the future of the students and their possibility to pursue further studies.

Safe evacuations from Rukban camp located between the Syrian and Jordanian border continued during the reporting period. Syrian Red Crescent also was able to support family reunification between government controlled and non-controlled areas in its capacity as a recognized and accepted humanitarian actor.

Syrian Red Crescent continued to build the capacity of the communities and the local authorities in understanding the concepts of disaster risk reduction and disaster preparedness. Pilot community-based disaster risk reduction projects in Homs and Aleppo continued and were modified after the earthquakes to also include preparedness and response related to the earthquake.

In Damascus governorate, Syrian Red Crescent supported communities in contingency planning.

With pre-positioned food and non-food items supported by the IFRC, Syrian Red Crescent was able to reach 16,359 people (men; 4,175, women: 5,764, boys: 2,579 and girls 3,841 between January – June 2023). Items provided included standard food parcels, mattresses, blankets and hygiene kits. The importance of prepositioning relief stocks realised in the immediate days after the February earthquakes.

However, due to severe funding shortages, in the first half of 2023, IFRC had not been able to build adequate stocks of relief items compared to the original targets set for 2023 (standard food parcels and non-food items to reach 50,000 persons, respectively).

During the period covered by this report, IFRC has continued to support the strengthening of Syrian Red Crescent's livelihood capacities working closely with Livelihoods Unit in the revision of monitoring reports (baselines, endlines, Post Distribution Monitoring) to develop clear monitoring information (qualitative and quantitative), and in providing technical support on applying the Household Economic Security (HES) approach, carrying out workshops, among other activities. Syrian Red Crescent, IFRC, Movement partners and ICRC continue to work in coordination to standardize different tools. Together with Syrian Red Crescent, the IFRC is a member of the Food Security and Agriculture Sector

and the Agriculture Working Group in Syria. Continuing with the activities started in 2022, in Deir Ezzor, 78 households were selected in 2022, headed by women with experience in dairy products processing, who received kits to restore their livelihoods activities.

A total of 720 people were reached through the livelihoods programme (141 households headed by women) in Deir Ezzor and Rural Damascus. 141 vulnerable female headed households with previous entrepreneurial experience with an average family size of five persons were selected into the project, of which 93 were widows.

A 3-day training about basic business management skills was conducted in December 2022. The topics included in the training were: basic concepts, understanding the market, basic marketing skills, basic financial management skills and business plan. Two transfers were made to the beneficiaries through an FSP as it was conditional on them attending the training and purchasing the goods, they had planned in their business plan. The first transfer was in January 2023 and the second transfer was at the end of February 2023.

In the next months, post-distribution monitoring will be conducted to measure the beneficiaries' satisfaction with all the activities and services provided through the project, as well as an end line questionnaire that will measure the project impact from the interventions.

This intervention was carried out with the support of the **Italian Red Cross** and as part of "Humanitarian Assistance and Protection for People on the Move", and these activities will also be mentioned in the section on migration and displacement below.

The **Danish Red Cross** supported the Syrian Red Crescent, and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society to implement a livelihoods model aimed at improving the life skills of displaced and underprivileged youth and adults. This model assists them in developing both employability and entrepreneurship "soft" skills, as well as enhancing specific technical "hard" skills through referrals to available training programmes. As a result of this initiative, more than 200 Syrians and Palestinians have received skill-based training, cash grants, and support to start their own business proposals, thereby enhancing their employment and entrepreneurship prospects.

Additionally, the Danish Red Cross has actively collaborated with RCRC partners to customize and develop a comprehensive Microeconomic Initiatives (MEI) approach for the Syrian Red Crescent. This approach serves as another livelihoods model that is being put into practice by the Syrian Red Crescent. In the Deir Ezzor governorate, 100 young individuals have been provided with training and cash grants to revitalize, expand, and diversify their chosen business and employability models.

Disaster risk management approach in Syrian Red Crescent

Significant progress and remarkable achievements have been made during the first six months of the year mainly to enhance the auxiliary role of the Syrian Red Crescent.

During the Earthquake response, the National Society was able to adapt and effectively respond to the diverse range of evolving crises and disasters. Their auxiliary role in disaster risk management has gained widespread recognition and acknowledgment positioning the National Society well with different stakeholders.

The **Danish Red Cross** partnered with the IFRC to strengthen the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) processes of the Syrian Red Crescent. Through this collaboration, a pool of trainers was established to facilitate and oversee the planning and implementation of PER activities across Syrian Red Crescent branches.

Recognizing the importance of Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and response preparedness, Syrian Red Crescent placed a high priority on activities such as the systematic collection of field evidence related to hazards, risks, and exposures. This data served as a crucial basis for informed decision-making and resource allocation in disaster response. Syrian Red Crescent initiated preparations for a community-based resilience initiative and building upon the training in EVCA provided to Syrian Red Crescent staff and volunteers in the previous year, they will now coordinate a comprehensive risk assessment in target communities. This assessment will form the basis for resilience planning, allowing for the identification of key vulnerabilities and the implementation of appropriate measures to enhance community resilience.

The National Society's tireless efforts in strengthening response mechanisms and refining disaster management strategies have yielded positive outcomes and paved the way for more efficient and effective assistance being provided to those affected by crises and disasters. During February, Syrian Red Crescent together with the IFRC and the financial support of the **Danish Red Cross**, organized a facilitator training for Preparedness for Effective Response

(PER). During the preparation of the Emergency Appeal, Syrian Red Crescent used the results from the previous PER plan of action to enhance the preparedness and operational capacity of the National Society. Two technical visits to support the Disaster Management team of the National Society were undertaken in order to discuss the technical areas that Syrian Red Crescent believes need improvement (Enhancing Emergency Operations (EOC) Contingency planning and Risk Scenario).

The earthquake response plan workshop considered learning from several operations that need to be included in the long-term to reinforce of the operational capacity of the National Society. The PER learnings from operations are available in English and Arabic can be accessed [here](#).

Anticipatory Action as part of the disaster risk management approach

Syrian Red Crescent was included in the regional proposal submitted to the UK Meteorological service in consortium led by **British Red Cross**, IFRC, the Climate Center and WFP. This project aims to build up the climate resilience of Internally Displaced People (IDPs), refugee populations, and host communities in Iraq, Yemen, Palestine, and Syria by enhancing and promoting the co-production of forecast-based action with local, national, and regional coordination mechanisms. The proposal aims to strengthen community led coordination committees, Anticipatory Action regional dialogue platforms and promote the collaboration at country level to enhance the National Disaster Risk Management coordination mechanism.

In addition to generating wider collaboration and learning on Anticipatory Action (AA) for refugees and IDPs to increase resilience, this project fills a wider research and operational gap by focusing explicitly on conflict-affected areas. Syrian Red Crescent will enhance the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) in scenario planning by using these approaches in close coordination with the local authorities and other stakeholders.

During the early stages, the National Society, together with other actors will explore the weather forecast for action in Syria, to conduct a feasibility study for forecast-based action. Identifying and building on each country's baseline will have the long-term impact of strengthening the systems which will build both displaced people and host communities' resilience. The project is expected to strengthen the overall Anticipatory Action ecosystem in the region as well as enhancing the level of preparedness of the local actors in Syria using the scientific information.

During the first half of 2023, the **British Red Cross** scaled-up the Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVAP) due to the growing needs of communities resulting from the earthquakes of 2023, climate-triggered natural phenomena, and current economic decline.

British Red Cross took the shared leadership to provide technical support and coordination on the cash and voucher assistance (CVA) component for the earthquake response. This has reduced the burden on the Syrian Red Crescent's CVA Unit by harmonizing a unified response, indicators and reporting. Additional resources have been put on place, a CVA Earthquake delegate and a CVA Earthquake Project office. **Danish Red Cross** seconded a delegate into the current structure in the initial months of the response to support an initial planning phase. In addition, information management resources have been allocated (in coordination with IFRC and Netherland Red Cross) to develop a 'deduplication' system and a unified CVA database that promotes coordination and the scale-up on the use of this modality of humanitarian assistance.

Following the earthquake, **Danish Red Cross** promptly extended its support to the Syrian Red Crescent and Palestinian Red Crescent Society to effectively respond to the needs of people affected by the disaster. The interventions focused on addressing the short and long-term consequences of the disasters, investing in resilience, and enhancing disaster preparedness. All the interventions and technical assistance provided, including both regular in-country support from the Danish Red Cross and the deployment of surge capacities, aimed not only to address immediate needs but also to build and enhance local capacities for a meaningful, sustainable, and resilience-oriented response. To achieve this, existing health and MHPSS facilities were expanded to address the growing needs and services gaps. Danish Red Cross supported the operation with ten mobile and static health and MHPSS facilities in Latakia, Homs and Aleppo. Throughout the process, consideration was given to environmental impact and sustainability, with the incorporation of solar panels whenever feasible. This approach ensured that the response efforts aligned with long-term resilience-building objectives and minimized adverse effects on the environment.

As part of the earthquake response efforts, **Norwegian Red Cross** is actively supporting the rehabilitation of collective shelters in Aleppo. These shelters serve as crucial safe havens for displaced individuals and ensure access to clean water and sanitation facilities which is of utmost importance to maintaining health and dignity during such challenging times.

During the period under review, the **Swiss Red Cross** supported 100 women with cash grants to help build their livelihoods and support their basic needs. The final installments are planned for Quarter 3 of 2023.

Additionally, Syrian Red Crescent supported 532 families with cash for winterization. The entire winter package amounted to 943,000 SYP /HH (approx. 300 CHF according to the official exchange rate or 190 CHF according to the informal rate) covering 4 months. In total, 1000 families in Homs were covered (between **Danish Red Cross, British Red Cross** and **Swiss Red Cross**).



Health and wellbeing

The acute watery diarrhea (AWD) and cholera outbreak that started in 2022 continued to pose a threat to the wellbeing of the population. While the infection rates decreased in January the devastating earthquakes on 6th February resulted in an increase in the prevalence of AWD/Cholera related to disrupted and damaged water and sanitation facilities, dense living conditions in collective centres with inadequate sanitation facilities and continued strain on the weak public health system.

During the reporting period, Syrian Red Crescent continued to provide services and respond to different health and non-health-related emergencies in coordination and in line with the strategic objectives and response priorities of the Syrian Ministry of Health (MoH) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). By supporting increased access to primary health care services through the supported health facilities, strengthening management and prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) through the Community Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) project, and prioritizing care to the disabled through the support to the physiotherapy and disability inclusion project, IFRC made sure that Syrian Red Crescent continued to operate within its set strategy to serve the most vulnerable populations. Syrian Red Crescent also continued to implement activities in response to the Cholera epidemic focusing on prevention, community/clinical management, and referral.

Starting from the official declaration of the Cholera outbreak, a closely coordinated water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and health response was underway led by the MoH. Syrian Red Crescent played an important role in the nationwide Cholera response. Coordination was made with the MoH, the Ministry of Education, WHO, UNICEF and other local and international actors.

After the February 6 earthquake, Syrian Red Crescent became part of the Syrian High Relief Committee and a national committee that was headed by the Syrian Prime Minister and established to coordinate the earthquake response. Also, on behalf of the RCRC movement partners, Syrian Red Crescent coordinated with UN agencies, INGOs, and the national authorities to ensure an effective response, avoid duplication and maximize synergies.

Additionally, as a part of the nationwide earthquake response, Syrian Red Crescent's health and WASH volunteers attended a training session with WHO in order to make sure a unified approach was adopted during the emergency response period.

In Quarter 1 of 2023, Syrian Red Crescent's community health teams were active in the field with a focus on communicable and non-communicable disease prevention. In parallel to the Cholera emergency response, the Community based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) teams continued implementing activities targeted at promoting a healthier lifestyle and preventing disease. The IFRC provided technical assistance in terms of tools and advising on the modality of interventions.

During the implementation of activities, Syrian Red Crescent made sure to maintain a continuous coordination mechanism with other Risk Communication and Community Engagement Response (RCCE) actors in country. This was achieved by taking part in the national RCCE working group led by WHO and UNICEF to share knowledge and experiences whenever possible.

Syrian Red Crescent's teams continued to provide support for the proper and dignified management of the dead in disasters as a key pillar of humanitarian response. This included receiving the bodies of people who died while trying to cross the Mediterranean during the reporting period.

Also, during the reporting period, Syrian Red Crescent continued to provide services and respond to different health emergencies. Supported by IFRC, the EMS roadmap took place and internal analysis of EMS services took place with the Syrian Red Crescent director.

Since the first introduction of COVID-19 vaccines in Syria, Syrian Red Crescent played a key role in advocating for and promoting the uptake of the vaccines and ensuring that the 'last mile' populations have access to COVID-19 and routine immunization. Syrian Red Crescent's CBHFA teams coordinated with the MoH and WHO to make sure mobile vaccination teams got access to hard-to-reach areas. COVID-19 vaccination Risk Communication and Community Engagement Response (RCCE) activities were largely carried out and resulted in increasing the vaccination coverage in many targeted areas.

Syrian Red Crescent operates a hospital in Damascus that is equipped to provide essential medical care and specialisations including gynaecology, cardiology, endocrinology, neurology, paediatric care, gastroenterology as well as full laboratory and X-ray services. In 2022, IFRC supported Syrian Red Crescent with the procurement of highly specialized imagery and cardiology medical equipment at the Al-Zahera hospital in Damascus with funding from the Italian Red Cross and Piemonte Region. This equipment continues to be used to and by this reporting period, a total of 9,021 patients benefitted from diagnosis and treatment with this equipment.

IFRC led the health services assessment exercise, which included developing the assessment with a consultancy firm, training on a services mapping tool, a tailored financial analysis tool and training of Syrian Red Crescent health coordinators on financial analysis. Data correction will be completed in July then data analysis will follow.

With the technical support of IFRC, Syrian Red Crescent's CBHFA volunteers from across the country attended a training on the Epidemic Control for Volunteers (ECV). This training was designed to equip participants with an understanding of the common infectious diseases that cause outbreaks and how they are spread, as well as how to prevent and control them and how to assist during outbreaks at the community level.

Danish Red Cross has continued to support the Syrian Red Crescent in maintaining the scale of the health and MHPSS facilities in often inaccessible and vulnerable areas, and in meeting the needs of people facing prolonged and often, multiple displacements. Danish Red Cross' support is aimed at addressing functional and structural gaps and improving access for the most vulnerable Syrian and Palestinian refugees facing protection concerns and lacking essential services. Over 150,000 people have received health, MPSS and protection services through 25 service centers supported by the Danish Red Cross in twelve governorates.

Under its WASH intervention, **Norwegian Red Cross** is working on improving and ensuring safer access to clean water and sanitation. As water and sanitation is vital to public health and a prerequisite to good health and the preservation of human dignity. Norwegian Red Cross interventions will strengthen sustainable access to safe drinking water, improve hygiene practices and contribute to reducing waterborne diseases and outbreaks.

During the period under review the **Norwegian Red Cross** supported the interventions below:

- A Water Pumping Station Rehabilitation in Abo el Kos, Doumir Rural, Damascus: As of today, Norwegian Red Cross has successfully rehabilitated a water pumping station in Abo el Kos, Doumir rural, Damascus. Through this rehabilitation project, the water pumping station has been restored to operational capacity, ensuring sustainable access to safe drinking water for over 300,000 beneficiaries in the region. Additionally, the installation of solar panels at the site provides a sustainable and environmentally friendly source of energy to power the pumping station, reducing dependence on traditional energy sources.
- School Rehabilitation in Rural Damascus: Norwegian Red Cross has undertaken the rehabilitation of 61 schools in rural Damascus. By ensuring that schools have access to clean water and sanitation facilities, it is promoting a healthy learning environment for students and educators alike. This initiative contributes to reducing waterborne diseases among the school population and supports the preservation of human dignity by providing essential amenities.
- Project in North and East Syria (NES), Deir el Zor (Highly Affected by Climate Change and Drought):
- In response to the challenges posed by climate change and drought in the NES region of Deir el Zor, Norwegian Red Cross has initiated a project to improve water access and sanitation facilities. This project aims to build resilience in the face of adverse climatic conditions, benefiting communities that have been significantly impacted by the changing climate.
- Norwegian Red Cross has undertaken the rehabilitation of elevated tanks in Tartous, Latakia, and Idlib. By improving the infrastructure responsible for water distribution, Norwegian Red Cross is making a significant contribution to public health and well-being

The **Swedish Red Cross** continued to support five Syrian Red Crescent Primary Health Centers in the Hama (1), Homs (3) and Deir Ezzor (1) Governorates. The support included the coverage of running costs, salaries, medical supplies, medicines and additional technical support through the Swedish Red Cross health delegate. In addition, Swedish Red Cross supported Syrian Red Crescent in installing solar panels in Salamya Primary Health Center meaning that four out of the five PHCs now have solar panels installed. The PHCs already with solar panels have seen a noticeable increase in the number of consultations (an additional 173 consultations, 111 services, and 164 laboratory tests on average per month). Swedish Red Cross has also supported six mental health clinics in Aleppo (1), Rural Damascus and Damascus city (5) with coverage of running costs, salaries and consumables. Swedish Red Cross also supported two Syrian Red Crescent community centers in Aleppo (1) and Rural Damascus (1) with coverage of running costs, salaries, and equipment. Services provided by these centers include psychosocial support, livelihoods, legal awareness sessions, case manager access, child protection awareness and referral services among others. With Swedish Red Cross support, the Syrian Red Crescent Psychosocial Support (PSS) unit also took lead in training the staff of the Primary Health Centers and Mental Health clinics in Protection, Gender and Inclusion mainstreaming with a specific focus on dignity, access, participation, and safety (DAPS) and on psychological first aid trainings for primary health care staff.

The **Swiss Red Cross** supported the Syrian Red Crescent with provisional automatic external defibrillators (AEDs). Syrian Red Crescent and Swiss Red Cross worked on the development of protocols specific to the use of AEDs and this activity empowered Syrian Red Crescent to develop emergency protocols for other life-saving activities. Syrian Red Crescent also incorporated the AED training into their overall curriculum. Training of Syrian Red Crescent volunteers on the use of AEDs are on-going and will finish by the end of the year. The equipment will be put in use in Quarter 4 of 2023.

Swiss Red Cross has been supporting Syrian Red Crescent's cholera emergency response plan focusing on raising awareness at community level about the threat and treatment of cholera through Syrian Red Crescent's health promotion activities. Additionally, Swiss Red Cross has provided hygiene items, jerry cans, soap and chlorine tablets that are being distributed in the affected areas.



Migration and displacement

Syrian Red Crescent's approach to migration is to provide holistic and unhindered humanitarian assistance and support to early recovery and resilience strengthening interventions for the most vulnerable people affected by hostilities or disasters. This includes internally displaced persons in formal camps such as Al Hol and Al-Arish and informal camps, to host communities and to IDPs who have returned to their areas of origin. It also covers people who are forced to migrate due to environmental degradation, climate change and economic factors that are making traditional forms of life and livelihoods unsustainable.

As one of the seven MENA National Societies involved in the Global IFRC Cross Regional Proposal/Case for support "Humanitarian Assistance and Protection for People on the Move", Syrian Red Crescent has been supported by the IFRC MENA Regional Delegation and the IFRC Country Delegation in developing a programme targeting returnees, IDPs and host communities with livelihoods interventions with the support from the Italian Red Cross, as reported in the livelihoods section. The project started in 2022 and aimed to support female heads of household's employability in Deir Ezzor and Rural Damascus by building their capacity on basic business management skills and providing them with a conditional cash grant to engage in income-generating activities.

- 720 people were reached through the livelihoods programme (141 households headed by women) and 4,099 through the Protection activities (the 141 families reached through the livelihoods project and 559 more families from the project intervention areas, making a total of 700 families reached).
- 8 staff and volunteers attended one training course to build their capacity on Psychosocial support (PSS), Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Awareness topics. Moreover, capacity building provided to volunteers by other partners on technical areas such as risk education, Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI), Protection, and basic Psychosocial support (PSS).
- Awareness-raising activities for IDPs and returnees included PSS, Child Protection and Risk Education were conducted for 4,099 people.



Values, power and inclusion

During the reporting period, the Syrian Red Crescent Community Services and Protection (CSP) unit, provided psychosocial support services in community centers and through mobile teams targeting people in need, children, adolescents, caregivers, and people with disabilities. The activities included, case management, resilience and life skills workshops, and awareness-raising sessions for a) psychological stress (adults and children), loss and grief, and children and adolescents' developmental stages; b) child protection issues such as early marriage, violence against children, child labor, exploitation, school dropout, bullying, children separated from their parents and other related issues c) risk education awareness about explosive ordnance and unexploded remnants of war to raise awareness of the people living in areas contaminated with mines and explosives. Syrian Red Crescent volunteers trained in Risk Education awareness used wordless picture books, plays, and posters.

For activities targeting people with disabilities, the aim of the Syrian Red Crescent Community Services and Protection (CSP) unit is to integrate people into psychosocial support activities. For Case Management (Referrals), the National Society uses the intervention and referral plan developed by mapping social services for internal referral through Syrian Red Crescent projects or external referral to other local NGOs.

Syrian Red Crescent continued to integrate psychological and social services in different sectors, such as health and physiotherapy team, nutrition and protection. All these services are provided throughout the country.

The number of people reached through awareness sessions was 213,927, there were 34,759 sessions held on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and 59,519 Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV/GBV) awareness sessions.

Syrian Red Crescent continued to implement PGI mainstreaming activities and a workshop was held on February 13-14, 2023, with the participation of 25 staff and volunteers from Rural Damascus.

There were also specialized Protection, Gender and Inclusion activities, and Syrian Red Crescent, with the support of the **British Red Cross** and its Gender Based Violence (GBV) team, conducted the 8-day GBV Basic Concepts Trainer of Trainers (ToT) in June to establish a local network of trainers on Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). Eighteen Syrian Red Crescent staff/volunteers from different governorates participated. The ToT included SGBV Basic Concepts, SGBV causes and contributing factors, SGBV consequences and signs of abuse, GBV guiding principles and the survivor-centered approach, how to handle a GBV disclosure, provide Preparedness for Effective Response (PFA), and how to safely refer survivors to specialized services.

The Syrian Red Crescent Community Services and Protection (CSP) unit provided 22,742 specialized services (case management) to victims of violence, discrimination, or exclusion (especially concerning GBV and child protection).

During the first half of 2023, **British Red Cross** supported a pilot project to mainstream Gender Based Violence into cash programmes. This intervention focused on strengthening capacities on GBV by developing a network of certified trainers.

Danish Red Cross continued to focus on improving the access of the most vulnerable people to basic health and MHPSS services. This includes the establishment and expansion of static and mobile service points in collaboration with the host National Society. Particular attention is given to improve physical access for people with specific protection concerns, such as disabilities. Support also included organizing studies to understand the communities' need to customize CEA approaches and tools. Danish Red Cross signed an agreement with the IFRC Psychosocial Resource Center for the expansion of activities into the Syrian Red Crescent MHPSS programming and services.

Swedish Red Cross provided both technical and financial extensive support for Syrian Red Crescents Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) work.

Related to Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), the project supported an institutionalization training with staff from Syrian Red Crescents Mental Health clinics, Primary Health Centers and community centers. As a follow-up, the Syrian Red Crescent's CEA focal point joined Swedish Red Cross field visit with the aim of assessing CEA pilots in Primary Health Centers. During the Earthquake response, Swedish Red Cross was tasked as the CEA technical lead.

The **Swiss Red Cross** collaborated with Syrian Red Crescent's Health Promotion department to look at their Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) and Protection, Gender and Inclusion work. A joint workshop was conducted in March 2023 between the Health Promotion team and Community Based Health and First Aid (CBHFA) team (supported financially by the **Swedish Red Cross**). The workshop focused on ensuring joint messaging between the team and included a session from the community services and PGI team.

ENABLING LOCAL ACTORS



Strategic and operational coordination

Syrian Red Crescent continued to convene coordination meetings and summits, share its expertise and knowledge of the political, socio-economic, and humanitarian environment and played a central role in co-creating and delivering the Movement's collective response, in accordance with its operational plans and capacity. Following the earthquake, a mini Summit took place between Syrian Red Crescent, the IFRC and the ICRC resulting in a Joint Statement on the earthquake in Syria that reiterated the Movement partners' commitment to strong collaboration and coordination, and to complement each other's activities. Syrian Red Crescent took the lead in establishing an operational level platform for the coordination of both the earthquake response and regular programmes. Operational and technical coordination mechanisms were strengthened with daily meetings in the days immediately after the earthquake. Syrian Red Crescent, in its capacity as the lead humanitarian agency in Syria, played an instrumental role in the national disaster response providing guidance and expertise in national level inter-agency and government coordination mechanisms such as the High Relief Committee and Cluster meetings.

The Membership Coordination Meetings where ICRC has an observer status took place on bi-weekly basis bringing together representatives of Syrian Red Crescent, IFRC, ICRC and in-country participating National Societies to ensure sharing of information, joint planning, efficient coordination of resources and aligned strategies related to partners' support of the Syrian Red Crescent. The Strengthening Movement Coordination and Cooperation (SMCC) initiative is applied by all Movement partners in Syria with the best placed partner identified for each sector to support Syrian Red Crescent in joint planning, monitoring and resource mapping. The partners agreed on a common way to best use the respective Movement components and optimize the reach and quality of humanitarian assistance.

The Movement Security Framework Agreement was signed in June and outlines the roles and responsibilities of each Movement Partner when it comes to security. While Syrian Red Crescent has the Lead Agency role, including having the lead on security support, the ICRC continues to provide strong security support to all Movement Partners. The Movement Security Framework Agreement also enhances the interoperability of security systems to ensure agile support can be provided during operations.

The processes for developing joint and common humanitarian diplomacy messages took on a new momentum following the February earthquakes. The IFRC organised a conference with the permanent missions in Geneva for the Syria/Turkey earthquake and media interviews were given. Syrian Red Crescent and IFRC actively engaged with donors, relevant government agencies and stakeholders to strengthen Syrian Red Crescent' role and to build public trust and understanding of the auxiliary role and activities of the National Society.

Syrian Red Crescent has prioritized collective accountability and greater collaboration with its partners to ensure the effective implementation of decisions throughout the organization at the national and international levels as a member of the IFRC global network.

The National Society has continued to apply new approaches to strengthen collaboration and ensure accountability by disseminating its policies and Code of Conduct. For instance, the Syrian Red Crescent E-learning platform, which will be created through funding from the Empress Shöken Fund, will enable the National Society leadership, staff, and volunteers, especially at the branch level, to raise awareness and improve knowledge of the Movements structure, policies and principles.

In terms of supporting National Society leadership in development opportunities, Syrian Red Crescent's National Society Development and Strategic Planning Manager participated in the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) Training of Trainers organized and hosted by IFRC with the support of UNICEF on February 19–23 to enhance CEA competencies and become the CEA Certified Trainer.

The Director of the Performance and Partnership Support Department took part in the international workshop (April 24–29) organized and conducted by the Swiss Red Cross to develop its International Strategy with the active participation of sister National Societies to strengthen cooperation and provide tailored support to National Societies. The Director also participated in a Resource Mobilization Skill Share Conference.

During the reporting period, the **Danish Red Cross**, operationalised its strategic partnership with ICRC on Branch Development in fragile contexts, and supported Syrian Red Crescent in ensuring that the Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA), PMEAL and Information Management elements of branch development plans of action were supported. Tailored support in these areas will continue to be provided, in close coordination with other Movement partners.



National Society development

Syrian Red Crescent Performance and Partnership Support Department (PPSD) Director and National Society Development & Strategic Planning (NSD & SP), and Community Services and Protection Units' Managers attended meetings organized and hosted by IFRC MENA Membership Services (January 24–26) to provide orientation to Syrian Red Crescent staff on different aspects of IFRC Membership Services on National Society Development, Protection, Gender and Inclusion (PGI) and Safeguarding, Youth and Volunteering, and ensure harmonized approaches. Syrian Red Crescent staff introduced their workplans including PGI and the Safeguarding Plan of Action for 2023 including the idea of a Working Group to ensure coordination and cooperation between the units.

The Due Diligence Assessment (DDA) of Syrian Red Crescent is being conducted at the headquarter and branch levels to provide reasonable assurance that the National Society has the capability and capacity to deliver quality programmes and to identify and understand potential risks and how they can be mitigated and managed to ensure successful programme implementation and effectively manage funds. The DDA is conducted by Crowe Professional Auditors LV, funded by the **British Red Cross**, and focused on the capabilities and capabilities of Syrian Red Crescent Headquarters and three out of 14 branches.

The draft DDA report for the headquarters has been finalized. Work is currently underway on the DDA branch report. The final DDA report will include findings and observations, detailed SMART recommendations on identified gaps, control weaknesses, potential mitigation measures, and a set of priority actions to address these gaps/issues, and to be integrated into the broader programme plan and reported through the regular risk and programme management process for future strengthening and mitigating actions.

Relevant staff from the IFRC have held several meetings with Syrian Red Crescent on Financial Sustainability (FS) to present the main areas of FS at both the strategic and operational levels, the IFRC-led financial sustainability community of practice and its benefits, and to support the working group established by the Syrian Red Crescent composed of the National Society Development and Strategic Planning, Grant Management and Partnership Support Units' staff and IFRC NSD Delegate and Senior PRD Officer in Syria.

Based on bi-weekly meetings of the Working Group (April-June), the draft Financial Sustainability Plan, with a special emphasis on core costing and local resource mobilization, has been developed and is currently being finalized.

Syrian Red Crescent has completed the Working With Project Partners (WWPP) capacity review and risk assessment process as one of the mandatory requirements for the National Society Investment Alliance Accelerator Fund (NSIA AF), for its 4-year Branch Development project with a total amount of 648,286 CHF (secured in 2022). Based on this model, accompanied by specific risk mitigation measures, the National Society is transitioning to a Funds Transfer system, replacing the Working Advance and Cash Transfer systems. The Framework Funding Agreement has been submitted to the Syrian Red Crescent leadership for signature.

Because of the Earthquake emergency response, the Digital Transformation Project funded by the IFRC Capacity Building Fund has been extended until December. The project is progressing well, focusing on three priority areas: 1: Development and validation of the Digital Transformation Approach; 2: Defining digital maturity through branch self-assessments in all 14 branches; 3: Development and approval of the Digital Transformation Roadmap.

In April 2023, Syrian Red Crescent, with technical support from the IFRC NSD Delegate, secured funding from the Empress Shōken Fund/ESF totalling CHF 30,000 for a 12-month project to launch the e-learning platform and digitize National Society policies for dissemination among staff and volunteers. Online training courses were developed on; Code of Conduct, policies, "Welcome to SARC" induction course, etc., based on three phases: 1. Design phase for the software platform design 2. Development phase for developing the online training courses, and 3. Dissemination phase.

Syrian Red Crescents Information Management Unit continues its roles of collecting, analyzing data, designing, and issuing reports, designing questionnaires, infographics, maps, and dashboards. During the reporting period, IFRC supported Syrian Red Crescents Information Management team at Headquarters and Information Management coordinators and volunteers in all 14 branches. The main achievements were the conversion of questionnaires from paper-based questionnaires, including the integration of off-line maps, to electronic platforms and unified database with offline maps. The IM team took an active role in the digital transformation (DT) process and spreading its concept in the HQ and branches in coordination with the NSD Unit and the IT Unit, in addition to transferring all questionnaires within this process to Syrian Red Crescent server. Information Management Coordinators in branches served as the technical focal points for community engagement and accountability (CEA) in the Branches. Capacity building initiatives focused on data analysis within the branches and sub-branches.

The **British Red Cross** has offered technical support on MEAL and IM to the cash and voucher assistance (CVA) Unit regarding the earthquake response.

Danish Red Cross has worked closely with the IFRC and the ICRC to develop a unified approach to supporting Syrian Red Crescent in consolidating their National Society Development (NSD) and Branch Development (BD) initiatives. The progress was seen in developing a coherent and singular implementation plan for the National Society, also serving as a tool for the wider coordination and consultation and resource mobilization. Danish Red Cross has identified three branches in Deir Ezzor, Dara'a and Rural Damascus governorates to roll out comprehensive Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) approaches and CEA activities, following the completion of the planning with the branches. The key focus would be on expanding CEA capacities of the branches, supporting activities designed to contribute to the overarching objective of the branch development processes.

Swedish Red Cross deployed a CEA surge delegate for the Earthquake response to support the interventions including drafting the implementation plan. The institutional focus of these efforts aims to ensure that the impact goes well beyond the programmes supported by Syrian Red Crescent. Swedish Red Cross will continue to lead on the CEA file for the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, build on achievements made and ensure further up-take and roll-out of developed policies and tools, through trainings and workshops. Furthermore, Swedish Red Cross also covers the salary of the Syrian Red Crescent CEA coordinator.



Humanitarian diplomacy

The IFRC Syria Delegation continues to promote a stronger positioning of Syrian Red Crescent, IFRC and its membership in the overall response and recovery through strengthened advocacy and humanitarian diplomacy efforts.

The IFRC Syria delegation continuously strives to be an engaged, accountable, and trusted partner to the National Society and its membership, as well as to national and international political decision makers, donors, and partners. This is manifested in numerous briefings and coordination meetings with the Syrian Red Crescent and the membership in and outside Syria, as well numerous briefings with key international back donors and political decision makers. A mini Summit was conducted, and a statement was signed in the aftermath of the Earthquake. In addition, a major RCRC Resilience Workshop is being planned.

Acknowledging the increasingly politicized context in Syria, the IFRC is supporting its membership and Syrian Red Crescent in addressing the highly sensitive communication requirements that come with complex conflict situations through strategic briefings, discussion papers, key messages etc.

A key focus has been put to clarify and communicate the auxiliary role of Syrian Red Crescent to the Syrian Government and in reinforcing the neutrality, impartiality, and independence of the National Society and its humanitarian actions vis-à-vis key local and international stakeholders. A key achievement in this regard, was facilitating the April 2023 Syrian Red Crescent/Turkish Red Crescent International Resilience Conference in Geneva.



Accountability and agility (cross-cutting)

The Movement Security Framework Agreement signed in the first half of 2023 between Syrian Red Crescent, IFRC and ICRC defines the roles and responsibilities of each Movement component present in Syria.

Increased measures to ensure the safety and security of staff including training was provided to three IFRC delegates and the minimum-security standards and Standard Operating Procedures for security in Syria were revised.

The recruitment of critical positions to ensure accountability, integrity and adequate risk management systems following the earthquake was finalized during the reporting period and the positions for Security delegate, Risk Management delegate, PMER delegate and Earthquake response operations manager was successfully filled. The recruitment of a procurement delegate is being finalized.

The IFRC has accomplished several significant milestones in its financial management and capacity-building efforts with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. Firstly, they have successfully implemented the Fund Transfer modality, granting Syrian Red Crescent full financial management and reporting responsibility. This approach has not only empowered the National Society but also contributed to the development of their financial management capabilities. The modality will put in place during the second half of 2023.

Second, in collaboration with the **Norwegian Red Cross**, the IFRC supported implementing ERP system, with CHF 300,000 in funding support. They also support renewed Office of Foreign Assets control (OFAC) exemptions for key systems, Dynamics GP, SQL Server, Windows Server, and Windows Server CALs. These renewals ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and the smooth functioning of the systems.

The IFRC has taken steps to support Syrian Red Crescent in enhancing financial sustainability by developing a TOR (Terms of Reference) for hiring a Core Cost and Cost Recovery Consultant. This milestone aims to reduce dependency on external sources for recovery costs and improve financial sustainability within the organization. The TOR provides clear responsibilities and requirements for the consultant, emphasizing analysis and pricing methodologies.

To ensure timely implementation, the IFRC has set an expected completion date of early 2024 for the Core Cost and Cost Recovery Consultant's role.

Furthermore, the IFRC achieved another significant milestone by planning a joint finance training program in collaboration with Syrian Red Crescent. This program aims to enhance the financial skills and knowledge of staff members in Syrian Red Crescent branches. Through collaborative efforts, leveraging the expertise and resources of multiple organizations, the program promotes a broader range of perspectives and experiences.

Unfortunately, due to a lack of funding, Syrian Red Crescent headquarters and branch staff and volunteers have not received training on the Planning, Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation-Information Management (PMER-IM) and MEAL aspects, nor on project cycle management, including planning, proposal writing, monitoring, and reporting. Syrian Red Crescent had conducted a capacity assessment in the branches to identify the core areas for improvement and capacity-building needs regarding MEAL. The capacity needs identified from the branches were project management, reporting, and MEAL concepts and tools like SMART indicators, and log frames. To date, only a few volunteers have received training on one of the monitoring and evaluation tools.

Syrian Red Crescent has developed a set of standard indicators that align with the goals and outcomes of the programmes to be used to track and measure the progress and impact of their activities. In addition, reporting templates are being developed to facilitate data collection and analysis, which will be disseminated at headquarters and branch levels to ensure consistent and standardized reporting across the organization, accompanied by appropriate training and guidance to the HQ and branch staff and volunteers.

The Syrian Red Crescent MEAL team received technical support to develop and revise plans and monitor the progress and results of emergency response operations.

Danish Red Cross has continued dialogue with the Red Cross Red Crescent partners including Norwegian Red Cross and the IFRC to explore potential opportunities for partnership in supporting the Syrian Red Crescent Society to improve their health management information system.

Norwegian Red Cross is working actively contribute to improving the collective humanitarian impact of the Syrian Red Crescent and continue to develop and make available its own specialized expertise, through supporting the development of procurement manual, HR manual, financial manual, and the ERP system.

Norwegian Red Cross is working tirelessly to support Syrian Red Crescent in implementing an ERP system. With the support of the IFRC, significant progress has been made in this regard. Recently, Norwegian Red Cross has successfully submitted the necessary licenses for Microsoft Dynamics, which is a pivotal step in the ERP system implementation process. Moreover, all the required hardware and software have been procured, and the project is on track to complete the installation by the end of October. The ERP system implementation will significantly enhance Syrian Red Crescents operational efficiency, streamline data management, and improve decision-making processes. By integrating various functions and processes into a single platform, the ERP system will empower the National Society to respond more effectively to humanitarian challenges.

Syrian Red Crescent, with technical support from the IFRC Regional IT & Digitalization Manager, conducted the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Health Check/assessment to identify what issues need to be addressed before the National Society embarks on its digital transformation. The ICT Health Check report has been developed and submitted to Syrian Red Crescent to track and implement the recommendations in a strategic manner supported by the Senior Management.

Syrian Red Crescent has created a pool of 25 trained Digital Transformation Facilitators (selected from a mixture of departments, and three branches: Homs, Aleppo, and Tartous) to conduct and facilitate digital maturity self-assessments across all 14 Syrian Red Crescent branches and support them in assessing capabilities and existing mechanisms for digital transformation. The training was organized and provided (January 30 – 31), with technical support from the IFRC Digital Transformation Team member (Geneva), Regional IT and Digitalization Manager, and NSD Delegate in Syria.

Within the reporting period, the digital maturity self-assessments were conducted in Al Swidaa, Rural Damascus, Homs, and Damascus branches to determine the digital maturity level and assess capabilities and existing mechanisms for digital transformation.

As part of the Syria Red Cross Digital Transformation project funded by the IFRC Capacity Building Fund, the IFRC introduced and launched its Quick Scan digital maturity tool, which aims to measure the ability of the National Society to continuously improve its humanitarian operations through the application of data analytics and digital technologies.

Since Quick Scan uses the Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) approach and provides guidance for strategy formulation, this model has led to the development of the Syrian Red Crescent Digital Transformation approach, which was developed with the support of the IFRC National Society Development (NSD) Delegate in Syria and Regional IT & Digitalization Manager in active consultation with the Syrian Red Crescent headquarters. Two workshops were conducted for Branch programme and support units' staff and volunteers on 12–13 April and 3–4 May; in total, for 45 headquarters and branch staff and volunteers.



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

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

DATA SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

- **Timeframe and alignment:** The reporting timeframe for this overview is covering the period from 1 January to 30 June 2023. However, due to the diversity of the IFRC and differences in fiscal years, this coverage may not fully align for some National Societies. Mid-year reporting data may have been based on estimations, with plans to submit more robust numbers at the annual reporting stage.
- **Missing data and breakdowns:** National Societies have diverse data collection systems and processes that may not align with the standardized indicators. Data may not be available for some indicators, for some National Societies. This may lead to inconsistencies across different reporting tools as well as potential under or over-estimation of the efforts led by all.
- **Reporting bias:** The data informing this Federation-wide overview is self-reported by each National Society (or its designated support entity) and which is the owner and gatekeeper, and responsible for accuracy and updating. IFRC tries to triangulate the data provided by the National Societies with previous data and other data in the public domain.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [IFRC Global Plan and Country Plans](#)
- [Subscribe for updates](#)
- [Donor response](#) on IFRC website
- [Live Disaster Response Emergency Fund \(DREF\) data](#)
- Operational information: [IFRC GO platform](#)
- National Society data: [IFRC Federation-wide Databank and Reporting System](#)

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