

# 6-month OPERATION UPDATE

**Lesotho | Drought**



*A keyhole garden in Mafeteng*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Emergency appeal №: MDRLS008</b><br/> <b>Emergency appeal launched:</b> 06/09/2024<br/> <b>Operational Strategy published:</b> 06/09/2024</p> | <p><b>Glide №:</b> DR-2024-000071-LSO</p>   |
| <p><b>Operation updates:</b> 6 month<br/> <b>Date of issue:</b> 09/04/2025</p>  | <p><b>Timeframe covered by this update:</b><br/>         From:06/98/2024 - 17/02/2025</p> |
| <p><b>Operation timeframe:</b> 12 months<br/>         (06/09/2024 – 31/08/2025)</p>   | <p><b>Number of people being assisted:</b> 87,381</p>                                     |
| <p><b>Funding requirements (CHF):</b><br/>         CHF 5 million through the IFRC Emergency Appeal<br/>         CHF 7 million Federation-wide</p>   | <p><b>DREF amount initially allocated:</b><br/>         CHF 750,000</p>                   |

*To date, this Emergency Appeal, which seeks CHF 5,000,000 is 11.64 % per cent funded. Further funding contributions are needed to enable the National Societies in the region, with the support of the IFRC, to continue with the preparedness efforts of and provide humanitarian assistance and protection to people on the move.*

## **A. SITUATION ANALYSIS**

### **Description of the crisis**

Lesotho is highly vulnerable to a range of severe climatic and weather-related hazards, which include droughts, heavy rainfall leading to flooding, hailstorms, cold fronts, and heavy snowfall. Over the past two years, the country has significantly impacted by recurring extreme La Niña and El Niño events, which have exacerbated food insecurity, damaged infrastructure, and negatively affected the health and well-being of its people. During the 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 rainy seasons, Lesotho experienced extreme rainfall over two consecutive years, resulting in poor crop harvests. The heavy rains led to waterlogged soils, which severely hampered crop growth and development. Additionally, the infrastructure, particularly shelters, was heavily damaged, and stored crops in many households were destroyed by rains, making them unsafe for human consumption. Livestock farmers in Lesotho also suffered significant losses due to disease outbreaks, with one notable incident being the Blue Tongue outbreak recorded in Mafeteng. This outbreak led to the death of two hundred sheep and goats, further exacerbating the economic hardships faced by farmers. The loss of livestock did not only impact on the farmers' livelihoods but also contributed to food insecurity, as these animals are crucial sources of both food and income.

In response to these challenges, many vulnerable individuals who rely on rain-fed agriculture, small livestock production and on-farm casual labor were forced to adopt negative coping strategies, such as selling their productive assets, to rebuild and maintain their houses. As the communities were still struggling to recover from the previous disasters, the country was hit by El Niño-induced dry conditions and recurrent heatwaves during the 2023/2025 period, further worsening the situation. According to the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment 2024/25 report, the combined impacts of previous heavy rainfall, drought, and ongoing food insecurity have resulted in over 22% of the population requiring immediate humanitarian assistance from January-March 2025. The current food insecurity situation called for the government of Lesotho to declare a state of emergency concerning food security in July 2024. In response, the Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS), and other development partners, humanitarian, and UN agencies, mobilized resources to address the crisis. In September 2024, IFRC launched an Emergency Appeal IN support of LRCS's response to the ongoing El Niño-induced droughts and food insecurity.

According to the Lesotho Meteorological Service (LMS) October-November-December (OND) 2024 seasonal performance report, Lesotho experienced below-normal rainfall in the southern districts. The report also highlighted that from October 2024 to February 15, 2025, Lesotho faced additional adverse weather conditions influenced by tropical cyclones, such as CHIDO and DIKELELI, along with other climate-induced factors. These events disrupted the usual rainfall patterns, resulting in prolonged dry spells and extreme heat across the country. This period coincided with the planting season and the beginning of the green harvest, which further exacerbated agricultural challenges. Furthermore, in September and October, the country experienced recurrent cold fronts that caused the deaths of approximately 120 sheep and goats in Mokhotlong and Thaba Tseka. This loss of livestock, coupled with the harsh climatic conditions, significantly worsened food insecurity in Lesotho. The impact of these weather events was confirmed by the Lesotho Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report from January 2025, which stated that all ten districts in the country are in crisis. The IPC January-March 2025 update indicated that about 335,000 people, approximately 22% of the rural population, are in dire need of humanitarian response.

### **Seasonal Climate Outlook February 2025 to June 2025 and its impact for the next three months**

February to July 2025, Lesotho is expected to experience normal to above-normal rainfall, providing promising conditions for agricultural activities. The months of March to July are typically characterized by temperatures ranging from cold to warm, with occasional snowfall events. Although above-normal rainfall is expected, this may prove beneficial for Winter cropping production, as it supports the growth of winter crops. However, the upcoming period is also expected to bring significant climatic hazards, including heavy rainfall, snowfall, and colder weather conditions, as the country transitions into the winter season. These factors could impact both agriculture and daily life, requiring careful preparation and management hence the need to intensify early warning messaging.

Despite these potentially favorable conditions for agriculture, Lesotho continues to face substantial socio-economic challenges, as highlighted in the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment and the January 2025 IPC report. The country is

grappling with declining income sources, particularly from livestock sales, which have been negatively affected by increased market competition and restrictions on livestock movement across the border to the Republic of South Africa (RSA), where other markets offer greater opportunities. Furthermore, the ongoing rise in food and non-food prices, including the costs of fuel and electricity, has severely strained household purchasing power. As the season progresses, it is expected that humanitarian assistance will diminish, further intensifying the financial burdens faced by vulnerable communities.

## Summary of response

### Overview of the host National Society and ongoing response

Since August 2024, the Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and other partners, has been actively implementing initiatives through this Emergency Appeal. These initiatives include multipurpose cash transfers, support for food security and livelihoods through the distribution of vegetable seeds and fruit trees. Additionally, LRCS has provided training on climate-smart agriculture and food preservation techniques to enhance the resilience of local communities. In addition to these efforts, LRCS has also supported nutrition and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) campaigns in all the targeted districts, ensuring comprehensive support to vulnerable communities. To further strengthen its capacity to manage and execute the Emergency Appeal, IFRC has deployed two surge staff members, one specializing in finance and the other in operations, to assist LRCS in its efforts.

The Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS) is a key partner in the government's humanitarian response, supporting disaster management efforts through active participation in coordination meetings and by being a member of the National and district-based Drought Humanitarian Response Team. Both the LRCS Secretary General (SG) and Disaster Manager actively participate in Humanitarian Coordination Team (HCT) meetings, collaborating with other NGOs, UN agencies, and key stakeholders at both strategic and technical levels. LRCS has a Disaster Management department and over two hundred volunteers in five districts, trained on WASH, CEA, PGI and emergency response, who also play a vital role in implementing emergency response operations with technical support from LRCS headquarters.

LRCS, with support from the IFRC, has provided multi-purpose cash grants, livelihood support, and WASH and health initiatives to address food insecurity. In May 2024, IFRC allocated CHF 711,203 to assist 12,500 people, which was later increased to CHF 5 million. The LRCS has provided cash assistance to 2,500 households using mobile service providers like Mpesa, Ecocash, and C-pay, following a detailed beneficiary identification process in partnership with the Department of Disaster Management Affairs (DMA) and local communities.

LRCS has also facilitated SIM card registrations for cash transfers and held stakeholder meetings to ensure smooth operations. The organization continues to mobilize resources from both internal and external donors, having hosted visits from USAID and the UN Secretariat, and submitted concept notes to several donors, including USAID, WFP, ECHO and the Japanese Embassy and the African Development Bank. These efforts aim to secure additional support for addressing Lesotho's ongoing drought and food insecurity crisis. More detailed information about the response can be seen below.

### 1. National Society Capacity Building, Strengthening and Monitoring

To enhance LRCS's ability to effectively respond to the ongoing Emergency Appeal, IFRC deployed surge personnel, specifically a Finance and Operations Manager, for a four-month period. This strategic deployment aimed at building LRCS's capacity to manage the appeal operations. Furthermore, LRCS conducted a monitoring visit to Lesotho to track the progress of the ongoing interventions and provide guidance to local teams in February 2025. The monitoring team visited three districts Mafeteng, Maseru, and Quthing engaging with key stakeholders such as the Department of Disaster Management (DMA), the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MoAFS), the Ministry of Finance (MoF), and the Rural Water Supply division. These meetings ensured alignment with government efforts and provided valuable feedback on the current operations. The community monitoring visit in Dili-Dili, Mohlakeng and Thabana Morena revealed that apart from buying food and basic needs, beneficiaries also utilized the cash transfers to start

some income-generating activities, such as starting small businesses (piggery project), demonstrating the effectiveness of the support in fostering economic resilience.

## **2. Multipurpose Cash Transfers**

As part of the El Niño-induced Food Insecurity Emergency Appeal, LRCS has been providing essential financial assistance to 2,500 vulnerable households in Maseru, Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek, Quthing, and Qacha's Nek. Each household received three-month transfers at the value of M1,500.00 per month. The cash transfers were facilitated through mobile financial service providers, including Vodacom Mpesa, Econet-Ecocash, and Chaperone-C-pay, ensuring efficient and accessible support for recipients. To assess the impact of these cash transfers, two Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) surveys were conducted, providing valuable data on the effectiveness of the assistance, and helping to inform future interventions. It was reported that in addition to using the cash for purchasing food and other essential household items, some beneficiaries reported using the funds to generate income through activities such as piggery farming and other income-generating ventures.

## **3. Food Security and Livelihoods**

To address household food insecurity, shade nets and a variety of vegetable seeds which include spinach, rape, beetroot, and carrots, were distributed to 2,500 households. Additionally, in December 2024, 500 households received field crop seeds, such as maize and beans, to support summer cropping. Unfortunately, 30% of the beneficiaries who received field crops seeds reported that they were unable to plant them due to delays in receiving the seeds, resulting in the planting season passing before they could begin. Therefore, to further support crop production and mitigate the impact of this delay, LRCS is planning to extend its assistance by providing 1,500 households with support for winter cropping. Each of these households will receive seeds for winter crops, such as beans, peas, or wheat, ensuring that they can still engage in productive agriculture during the winter season. This initiative is aimed at enhancing food security by offering an alternative cropping season and helping households maintain a consistent food supply throughout the year. Contribution of vegetables to food security is significant where market gardening is practiced. Income generated can be used to buy food and meet some underlying deficiencies at household level. This will be emphasized during distributions.

## **4. Water and Sanitation**

- A total of 11,592 people were reached through WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) campaign and Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) messaging which highlighted the link between WASH & PGI and food security. For example, Access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene practices significantly reduces the incidence of waterborne diseases like diarrhea, which can lead to malnutrition and stunting in children. Improved health enables individuals to engage more effectively in productive activities that increase food availability, accessibility and utilization. This was done during the training on climate smart agriculture, food preservation and during the distribution of seeds and fruit trees.
- As part of efforts to enhance water access in the targeted districts, mapping of water sources was conducted across five districts. This exercise identified three critical water sources: one in Ha Ntlama, Maseru, where the pump system requires maintenance, and two in Qacha's Nek, specifically in Tebellong, where the focus will be on covering and rehabilitating the water sources. These initiatives are aimed at improving water supply for both agriculture and domestic use which ultimately supports the sustainability for the affected communities, particularly during the drought.

## **Needs analysis.**

Lesotho is currently facing a severe food insecurity crisis, exacerbated by consecutive La Niña and El Niño-induced weather events over the past four years. During the 2023/24 period, an El Niño-driven drought has significantly worsened the country's food security situation, putting more than 22% of the population at risk of food insecurity between October 2024 and March 2025. According to the January 2025 IPC update report, the entire country is now classified as being in crisis as of January 2025. Key factors contributing to this emergency include a decline in income sources, poor agricultural practices, and other socio-economic factors such as increasing food prices, and poor green

harvest. The prolonged dry spells and recurring heatwaves experienced from October to December 2024 have worsened the situation, severely impacting both human food availability and livestock health. All the ten districts are now in crisis and require immediate, humanitarian support to alleviate these critical food shortages and help the population recover from the ongoing disaster.

**Food Security and Livelihoods:** Lesotho is facing a severe food insecurity crisis exacerbated by ongoing drought and socio-economic challenges such as declining income sources and rising food prices. Agricultural production has decreased due to prolonged drought, and the 2023/24 summer cropping season has experienced variable rainfall and heatwaves, impacting livelihoods and food access. Rising temperatures and dry conditions have caused premature crop drying, reducing expected harvests, and increasing food prices, which puts vulnerable households at greater risk.

The upcoming winter cropping season is also threatened by above-normal temperatures and cold temperatures, further straining food availability, with many households relying heavily on local market food purchases despite low incomes and declining sources of income. Livestock farmers have faced setbacks due to an El Niño-induced outbreak of Bluetongue disease, affecting sheep in Maseru and Mafeteng, leading to significant losses. This has worsened the food security and livelihood situation, necessitating urgent humanitarian support.

Health challenges are also severe, with high rates of malnutrition and stunting, particularly among children aged 2-3. Around 40% of children under five suffer from chronic malnutrition, with significant deficiencies in essential micronutrients like iron and vitamin A. These health challenges, combined with poor food handling in households, call for targeted interventions to improve nutrition and health outcomes for Lesotho's children. The latest IPC report confirms the country is in crisis and requires urgent humanitarian assistance.

#### **Water, Sanitation and Hygiene:**

The ongoing drought has had a profound impact on water sources across Lesotho, disrupting both rural and urban access to clean water. While this challenge is felt nationwide, the effects have been particularly severe in rural areas, where communities rely heavily on unprotected water sources such as springs and wells. In many of the targeted districts, over 20 water sources are in dire need of rehabilitation, 6 were assessed but due to the costs involved in rehabilitating the NS will only be able to rehabilitate 3 water sources for both gardening and home consumption. The water scarcity experienced between January and March was exacerbated by the El Niño phenomenon, further compounding the difficulties faced by households in accessing clean water. This prolonged dry period also had detrimental effects on both rain-fed and irrigated agricultural systems, which are critical to the livelihoods of many rural households. Consequently, there is a pressing need to rehabilitate existing water sources and build new ones to better prepare for future climate-related shocks and to mitigate the risk of water shortages.

In rural parts of Lesotho, water scarcity has also led to an increase in diarrheal diseases as a result of poor WASH practices, which remain a significant public health concern. These diseases are particularly dangerous for infants and young children and are a leading cause of morbidity and mortality in these age groups. Such illnesses tend to peak during periods of water scarcity, like the current drought. To combat this, it is crucial to implement widespread sanitation and hygiene education to help prevent waterborne diseases and protect vulnerable populations from further health risks.

#### **Protection, Gender, and Inclusion:**

Farmers in Lesotho, who rely on rain-fed agriculture and small livestock like chicken, goats, sheep, bees, rabbits etc due to their adaptability, less feed requirements, resilience to climate fluctuations, diseases and lower water requirements, are highly vulnerable to climate-induced shocks like droughts and erratic rainfall. During crises, vulnerable groups such as women, girls, children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities face even greater risks, including heightened threats of sexual exploitation, gender-based violence, and difficulty accessing services and information. These groups are often isolated, increasing their vulnerability.

Interventions will focus on supporting these marginalized populations, who lack resources to cope with shocks and are more prone to abuse and neglect. Prioritizing their needs through increased community awareness and inclusive disaster response strategies can help reduce their exposure to risks and foster more resilient communities.

Urgent action is needed to address safeguarding issues, including child protection and gender-based violence, with comprehensive strategies to protect vulnerable individuals. Immediate action is needed to ensure the well-being of those most at risk during drought-related emergencies.

**Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery:** The country faces recurrent climatic hazards that significantly impact household food security, livelihoods, and overall economic development. According to the Lesotho Meteorological Service, the situation has been exacerbated by persistent heat waves and dry weather, resulting in premature crop drying and posing a threat to the upcoming dry harvest scheduled for May 2024. Lesotho operates with two distinct planting seasons: Winter and Summer and any planning involving farming must consider those elements for appropriate community-based solutions. The Winter planting season commences in June, while the summer planting starts in August.

The forecast for the upcoming winter season (April to July) suggests that Lesotho will experience favorable rainfall, which is expected to benefit winter cropping. These rains will support agricultural activities and contribute to better crop yields during the season. However, along with the beneficial rainfall, the country is also anticipating lower temperatures typical of the winter season. These colder temperatures could pose challenges, particularly for livestock, which may struggle with the harsh conditions. Additionally, cold weather could have negative impacts on human health, increasing the risk of illnesses related to low temperatures. While rainfall is a positive development for agriculture, it is crucial to prepare for and mitigate the health risks associated with the colder winter conditions. Additionally, the lack of widespread understanding and limited access to early warning systems significantly impairs communities' capacity to proactively prepare for and respond to disasters. The timely distribution of early warning information is crucial for all sectors, including farmers, schools, and the broader community, as it enables them to take necessary precautions and safeguard lives and livelihoods. However, vulnerable groups such as the elderly, individuals with disabilities, herders, and farmers are often left out of these vital information-sharing processes, leaving them at greater risk. Closing this gap in communication is essential to ensure that everyone, especially marginalized populations, receives the information they need. By improving access to early warning systems and making them more inclusive, communities can strengthen their resilience and enhance their ability to respond effectively to potential disasters. Effective disaster preparedness initiatives must include mechanisms that ensure all members of the community, especially the most vulnerable, are well-informed and ready to act when needed.

### **Community Engagement and Accountability:**

For a successful drought response operation, it is important to focus on:

1. **Inclusive Participation:** Ensure all government departments and community members, including vulnerable groups like female-headed households and people with disabilities, are actively involved in planning and decision-making processes.
2. **Effective Communication:** Utilize diverse communication channels such as local radio stations, community forums, Red Cross volunteers, and participatory video approaches to disseminate information and gather feedback
3. **Capacity Building:** Provide training and resources to enhance community members' skills in drought preparedness, response, and recovery.
4. **Collaborative Planning:** Engage government, community stakeholders in co-developing early warning messages and response strategies to ensure they are relevant and actionable.
5. **Transparency:** Maintain clear and open communication about the intervention's goals, processes, and outcomes to build trust and ensure accountability
6. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Develop and Implement robust systems to monitor the effectiveness of the intervention and evaluate its impact, allowing for adjustments based on community feedback
7. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish channels for community members to provide feedback and report concerns, ensuring their voices are heard and addressed.
8. **Responsiveness:** Act promptly on community feedback and concerns, demonstrating a commitment to addressing issues and improving the intervention.

By focusing on these needs, the intervention can foster stronger community involvement and accountability, leading to more effective and sustainable drought response efforts. **This operation will prioritize Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) as a core principle**, ensuring that the needs and concerns of the community are central to all decision-making processes. To achieve this, the Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS) will utilize a range of CEA tools to effectively assess and understand the needs of the community, guiding the process of identifying and targeting vulnerable individuals. Public gatherings, facilitated by local authorities, will be organized to ensure that vulnerable populations are identified based on well-established and transparent selection criteria. Additionally, the operation will implement a two-way communication strategy, actively seeking and incorporating feedback from the community at every stage of the intervention. Methods such as suggestion boxes, help desks, and direct interactions will be used to gather insights and ensure that community members have a platform to voice their concerns, questions, and suggestions. This approach not only promotes transparency but also guarantees that the assistance provided is both inclusive and responsive to the real needs of the affected populations. By prioritizing community involvement and feedback, the operation aims to foster trust, improve service delivery, and enhance the overall effectiveness of the humanitarian response.

## Operational risk assessment

This operation has aligned itself with the IFRC Risk Management Framework where risks are identified, analyzed, monitored, and managed to mitigate their associated impacts. The NS and IFRC Surge teams will be conducting monthly meetings to review and monitor the identified risks and discuss mitigation measures. The National Society has the Finance Director as a Risk Management Focal person who coordinates issues related to risk management. However, the rollout of risk mitigation measures is under the responsibility of the Secretary General in liaison with the Head of Cluster Delegation in Pretoria. The National Society has already developed a risk management register in line with the IFRC Risk Management Framework which will be reviewed and regularly updated. The table below provides a summary of some of the risks identified and their mitigation measures:

| Risk  | Likelihood | Impact | Mitigating actions   |
|---|------------|--------|--|
| Security Risk   | Low        | High   | LRCS will use mobile FSPs for cash transfers to ensure that people are not travelling very far to redeem their cash but rather the FSP travel to the communities and the beneficiaries only travel short distances.  |
| <b>Inadequate Targeting and duplication of effort</b> | Medium     | High   | The intense verification exercise will be conducted working closely with relevant stakeholders.  |
| <b>Inflation and Market</b>                           | Low        | Medium | Conduct market assessment to monitor the situation.  |
| <b>Fraud and Corruption:</b>                          | Low        | High   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LRCS will put measures in place to allow transparency in all its procurement process.</li> <li>- LRCS will continuously review the suppliers' register and conduct background checks to suppliers and service contractors.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Limited funding</b>                                | High       | High   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review the available resource mobilization strategy and plans.</li> <li>- Hire a resource mobilization person to focus on fund raising.</li> <li>- Prioritize activity implementation</li> </ul>                                      |

## B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

### Update on the strategy

The LRCS would like to scale up support for crop production by diversifying into winter cropping season to complement the rain-fed cropping season. The support for the winter season was not specific in the operations strategy and therefore this operations update seeks to amend as below:

Inclusion of new seed varieties of wheat, beans, and peas to support 1,500 beneficiaries during winter season. This will translate into reaching a total of 2,000 households (five hundred households already supported by rain-fed and 1,500 households will be the new target during winter cropping season).

Under rain-fed, only five hundred beneficiaries were reached due to limited funds and therefore the LRCS will prioritize support for winter cropping targeting crop seeds such as wheat, peas, and beans. These seed varieties are best suited for winter cropping as shown in table below:

| Seed Varieties | Quantity | Reach     |
|----------------|----------|-----------|
| Wheat          | 4 KG     | 1,500 HHs |
| Beans          | 4 KG     |           |
| Peas           | 4 KG     |           |


Procurement and distribution of winter crops to 1,500 households (wheat (4kg), peas(4kg), and beans(4kg)).

## C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL REPORT

LRCS, under the coordination of DMA with technical guidance from IFRC led the Emergency Appeal implementation LRCS focusing on both immediate needs and long-term resilience. The operation integrated a Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) approach, ensuring community involvement, ownership, and accountability. Key interventions included livelihood support through multi-purpose cash, climate-smart agriculture, WASH improvements, health interventions, and cross-cutting areas like Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI), risk reduction, climate adaptation, and recovery. This comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach aimed to address the immediate impacts of the drought while building sustainable community resilience for the future.

### PLANNED OPERATIONS

#### RESPONSE PILLAR 1: FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

|   |  |                        |                           |
|---|--|------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | <b>Multi-purpose Cash</b>  | Female > 18: <b>83</b> | Female < 18: <b>7,800</b> |
|   |  | Male > 18: <b>42</b>   | Male < 18: <b>3,900</b>   |
| <b>Objective:</b>   | <i>To improve household food security and provision of immediate relief to affected families</i> |                        |                           |
| <b>Key indicators:</b>  | <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>Actual</b>          | <b>Target</b>             |
|   | # of households of beneficiaries to receive cash assistance                                      | 2500                   | 5,000                     |
|   | # of households who received cash  | 2,462                  | 5,000                     |
|   | # of post distribution monitoring (PDM) conducted and reported                                   | 2                      | 3                         |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| # of monitoring visits and engagement of communities that are documented on the use of cash | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|

L RCS engaged three Financial Service Providers (FSPs) during the Emergency Assistance (EA) program to facilitate the transfer of cash to 2,500 households across five targeted districts but only 2,462 HHs were able to redeem their cash. For the first payment, each household received cash through one of the following FSP's platforms: Vodacom's Mpesa, Econet's Ecocash. Some delays in payments occurred due to updates in the Econet system. In response to these issues, LRCS also engaged assistance with Chaperone C-pay to ensure the continuation and completion of the payments.

The success rates for the cash payments were as follows:

- The first payment achieved a collection success rate of 94.8%, using Mpesa, Econet, and C-pay.
- The second payment saw a success rate of 94.7%.
- The third payment had a success rate of 96.7%.

Two monitoring visits were conducted, and as part of the monitoring process, two Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) assessments were conducted as well. The first PDM took place in November, while the second one began on the 22nd of February and is expected to be completed by the 28th of February 2025. During the monitoring, it was observed that in addition to using the cash for purchasing food and other essential household items, some beneficiaries reported using the funds to generate income through activities such as piggery farming and other income-generating ventures.




*A group of beneficiaries in Ha Teko, Mohlakeng CC who started a piggery business*

## RESPONSE PILLAR 2: HEALTH AND NUTRITION

|   |  |                           |               |
|---|--|---------------------------|---------------|
|  <b>Health &amp; Nutrition</b>   | Female > 18:<br><b>898</b>   | Female < 18: <b>5,345</b> |               |
|   | Male > 18: <b>450</b>  | Male < 18: <b>4,899</b>   |               |
| <b>Objective:</b>   | <i>Strengthening holistic individual and community health of the population impacted through community level interventions and health system strengthening</i> |                           |               |
| <b>Key indicators:</b>  | <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>Actual</b>             | <b>Target</b> |
|   | <i># of nutrition campaigns conducted (2 per district)</i>   | 4                         | 10            |
|   | <i># of people reached with health prevention activities</i>   | 11,592                    | 87,381        |
|   | <i># of groups engaged in the health discussion, training, or consultations (4 per district)</i>   | -                         | 20            |
| <p>Four nutrition campaigns were carried out in collaboration with the government-led initiatives focused on nutrition, food security, and breastfeeding. These campaigns took place in two districts, Qacha's Nek and Quthing, reaching a total of <b>11,592 individuals</b>. The campaigns in the other districts are yet to be implemented. The people were engaged through health prevention messages integrated into the lead farmers' training sessions. Moving forward, more health prevention messages on hygiene and nutrition will be disseminated as part of ongoing support for farmers, particularly through peer-to-peer education and community-based initiatives. These efforts aim to enhance the overall well-being of farmers and their communities by promoting better health practices and food security strategies. Groups engaged in health discussion, training, or consultations will be reported in the next reporting cycle.</p> |  |                           |               |

## RESPONSE PILLAR 3: WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE

|   |  |                              |               |
|---|--|------------------------------|---------------|
|  <b>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</b>    | Female > 18:<br><b>898</b>   | Female < 18:<br><b>5,345</b> |               |
|   | Male > 18: <b>450</b>  | Male < 18: <b>4,899</b>      |               |
| <b>Objective:</b>   | <i>Ensure safe drinking water, proper sanitation, and adequate hygiene awareness of the communities during relief and recovery phases of the Emergency Operation, through community and organizational interventions</i> |                              |               |
| <b>Key indicators:</b>  | <b>Indicator</b>   | <b>Actual</b>                | <b>Target</b> |
|   | <b># of rehabilitated and constructed water sources</b>  | 0                            | <b>6</b>      |
|   | <b># of people reached through WASH campaigns</b>  | 11,592                       | <b>87,381</b> |
| <p>Assessments of water sources have been ongoing with support from the government. No major WASH activities were done.</p> |  |                              |               |

## CROSS-CUTTING SECTORS


PROTECTION, GENDER, AND INCLUSION (PGI), COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY (CEA), RISK REDUCTION, CLIMATE ADAPTATION, RESILIENCE, AND RECOVERY

|   |  |                            |                           |
|---|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|
|  | <b>Protection, Gender, and Inclusion</b> | Female > 18:<br><b>898</b> | Female < 18: <b>5,345</b> |
|   |  | Male > 18: <b>450</b>      | Male < 18: <b>4,899</b>   |

**Objective:** *Promote equitable access by all to quality basic services by considering basic needs based on gender and other diversity factors*

| Key indicators: | Indicator   | Actual | Target        |
|-----------------|---|--------|---------------|
|                 | # of community members reached through gender-based violence and child protection awareness campaigns, disaggregated by gender and age. | 11,592 | <b>87,381</b> |
|                 | # of households identified and registered beneficiaries representing vulnerable groups  | 2,500  | <b>5,000</b>  |

Community Engagement meetings were held to ensure transparency and address grievances about beneficiary identification, with a focus on including vulnerable groups such as the chronically ill, physically challenged, orphan-headed households, the elderly, and large households. Over 11,592 people received Protection, Gender, and Inclusion (PGI) messages during cash and farm input distributions, and this outreach will continue to expand. PGI initiatives were also integrated into verification, registration, and Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) activities. Additionally, **492 lead farmers** were trained in the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and they will help spread PGI messages within their communities.

|   |  |                            |                              |
|---|--|----------------------------|------------------------------|
|  | <b>Community Engagement and Accountability</b> | Female > 18:<br><b>898</b> | Female < 18:<br><b>5,345</b> |
|   |  | Male > 18:<br><b>450</b>   | Male < 18:<br><b>4,899</b>   |

**Objective:** *Communities in high-risk areas are prepared for and able to respond to disaster*

| Key indicators: | Indicator   | Actual | Target        |
|-----------------|---|--------|---------------|
|                 | # of people engaged and reached with CEA activities                   | 11,592 | <b>87,381</b> |
|                 | # of established CEA Feedback approaches (using toll free line)       | 1      | <b>1</b>      |
|                 | % of feedback collected that are successfully treated or responded to | 90     | <b>100</b>    |
|                 | # of group discussions conducted (6 per district)                     | 10     | <b>60</b>     |



## Risk Reduction, climate adaptation and Recovery

Female > 18:  
**898**

Female < 18: **5,345**

Male > 18: **450**

Male < 18: **4,899**

### Objective:

*Communities in high-risk areas are prepared for and able to respond to disaster*

### Key indicators:

#### Indicator

**Actual**

**Target**

# of participants trained on climate-smart agriculture techniques and food preservation methods, disaggregated by gender and age.

11,592

**7,000**

# of targeted communities receiving early warning messages based on the upcoming seasonal outlook.

20,000

**20,000**

Community-Based Response Teams (CBRTs) revived and trained, disaggregated by geographic area (7 groups with 20 members each).

0

**140**

- A total of 11,592 individuals were reached with climate-smart agriculture techniques and food preservation methods through training sessions organized by the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Additionally, through the efforts of our volunteers and awareness-raising campaigns, 20,000 people received early warning messages to help them prepare for the upcoming season. This initiative will continue to expand, reaching more communities in the future.
- Community-Based Risk Assessment training for the strengthening of CBRTs will begin in March 2025.

## Enabling approaches



## National Society Strengthening

### Objective:

*Strengthening the National Society's capacity to deliver humanitarian*

### Key indicators:

#### Indicator

**Actual**

**Target**

# of technical volunteers recruited (Communications and DM)

2

2

# of Branding and Visibility materials procured - banners (3), T-shirts (40) and Caps (40)

6 Gazebos; 6 pieces of Red Tablecloth

Banners (3) T-shirts (40) Cap (40)

# of volunteers insured

80

80

Lessons learnt Workshop

0

1

## Update

- The LRCS through its branches recruited and ensured **80 volunteers** to assist with the drought response activities. These volunteers were instrumental in supporting the registration, monitoring and facilitation of the PDMs. In addition to these volunteers, two technical experts were brought on board to provide support for Disaster Management (DM) and Communications operations.
- To enhance visibility and promote LRCS and IFRC's profile, various visibility materials were procured. Which included the purchase of six gazebos, each measuring 3x4.5 meters and accompanied by carry bags for easy transport. Additionally, six red tablecloths were acquired to further support the branding and visibility efforts during events and distributions. No Lessons Learnt workshop has been conducted yet.
- All volunteers engaged were insured.



## Coordination and Partnerships

**Objective:** *Enhance coordination and partnerships among Movement and non-Movement partners to support stronger and more localized implementation approaches and effective response delivery*

| Key indicators: | Indicator   | Actual | Target |
|-----------------|---|--------|--------|
|                 | # of project launch and introductory meeting targeting key stakeholders conducted                               | 1      | 1      |
|                 | regular internal coordination meetings conducted involving partners (weekly, monthly)                           | 18     | 28     |
|                 | # of external coordination meetings with DMA and other national actors (HCT, Inter-agency and cluster meetings) | 4      | 12     |
|                 | # of market assessments conducted   | 0      | 1      |
|                 | # of assessment reports submitted PDM   | 1      | 1      |
|                 | # of monitoring visits  | 15     | 28     |

- The Emergency Appeal was launched and 1 meeting was held which included all key stakeholders from all the 5 districts to ensure that everyone was aware of the LRCS initiatives. The launch was a huge success in setting up the work that the NS has been doing. As part of coordination and technical support, LRCS organized **18 internal coordination meetings** across five districts, focusing on planning and monitoring the implementation of activities. **4 stakeholder review meetings** with NDMA and other national actors were held in each district, except Mohale's Hoek, to gather project feedback.
- Routine **weekly coordination** and planning meetings have been held to evaluate progress, discuss future, and monitor the drought situation.
- The LRCS Disaster Manager and the IFRC Operations Manager actively participate in coordination meetings organized by the Disaster Management Authority (DMA) and other humanitarian agencies, where they share updates and discuss operational plans.
- Both the LRCS Secretary General (SG) and Disaster Manager attend strategic and technical meetings of the Humanitarian Coordination Team (HCTs), ensuring strong participation in high-level coordination.

- A total of **15 monitoring field visits** have been conducted, involving both LRCS and government officers, to provide on-the-ground technical support for drought operations. These monitoring visits will continue to track the progress of ongoing implementation.
- **Membership Coordination:** LRCS is working closely with IFRC in the drought response, leveraging resources and technical expertise in program operations and finance management. This support was further strengthened by deployment of two surge personnels: the Surge Operations Manager and Surge Finance personnel.
- **Engagement with External Partners:** LRCS, in coordination with IFRC, remains actively involved in drought coordination meetings led by DMA, covering key sectors such as Cash, Health, WASH, Food Security, and Livelihoods. These meetings provide an opportunity to share operational updates and progress.
- LRCS continues to engage with key government departments, including the DMA, Rural Water Supply (WASH), Ministry of Health (for healthcare promotion), Ministry of Agriculture (focused on food security and livelihoods), and the Department of Social Development. LRCS also coordinates with the Meteorological Department to stay updated on weather forecasts, ensuring that operations align with current and upcoming conditions.



## IFRC Secretariat Services

**Objective:** *Provide leadership and policy guidance to the National Society, donors, and partners on programme operations.*

| Key indicators: | Indicator   | Actual | Target |
|-----------------|---|--------|--------|
|                 | # of regional surge deployed (Ops Manager and Finance)                                  | 2      | 2      |
|                 | Risk registers are set up, mitigation measures identified and monitored once per month. | 5      | 12     |
|                 | IFRC Monitoring and supervision   | 15     | 20     |

- The IFRC surge system deployed a Surge Operations Manager and Finance for technical support who started in October 2024 and concluded in February 2025. The deployed IFRC Surge Operations and Finance continue to provide technical support to LRCS team to ensure smooth implementation and reporting of operations.
- Around October, the IFRC Surge System deployed a Communications Audio-Visual Surge with the assistance of the Cluster Communications Assistant to enhance storytelling and documentation efforts. The Comms teams conducted field visits to capture the stories of community members, particularly farmers who have been most severely affected by drought. These stories were shared with the public via social media platforms.
- A Partnerships and Resource Mobilization consultant was deployed to support new partnerships and resource mobilization for the prolonged drought. **15 field monitoring** were undertaken to the fields to deliver training support, deliver farm inputs and monitor the quality of activities being implemented by the NS and IFRC staff.
- In accordance with the IFRC Risk Management Framework, the operation is committed to identifying and analyzing risks associated with activities and operations monthly through a risk register. Risks will be continuously monitored, and the register will be updated on a regular basis to ensure informed decision-making.

- There were no security concerns in the country, but the situation is continuously being monitored.

## **D. FUNDING**

To date, LRCS has received 11.64% of the total funding requested for the Federation Wide Appeal. This funding will significantly contribute to meeting the needs of the drought affected population. However, mobilization of more funds is underway. The financial report below provides a summary of current financial status: income and expenditure.

## Contact information

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

### Lesotho Red Cross Society:

- **Secretary General** (or equivalent); Sechaba Mokhameleli, smokhameleli@redcross.org.ls, +266 58861206
- **Operational coordination:** Sebongile Hlubi, Acting- Disaster Management Coordinator, shlubi@redcross.org.ls, +26658014081

### At the IFRC:

- **IFRC Country Cluster Delegation:** Mr Kopano Masilo, Head of the Delegation; email: [kopano.masilo@ifrc.org](mailto:kopano.masilo@ifrc.org), phone: +27 66 3203886
- **IFRC Regional Office for Africa:** Rui Alberto Oliveira, Regional Operations Lead; email: [rui.oliveira@ifrc.org](mailto:rui.oliveira@ifrc.org), phone: +254 780 422276
- **IFRC Geneva:** Santiago Luengo, Senior Officer, Operations Coordination; email: [santiago.luengo@ifrc.org](mailto:santiago.luengo@ifrc.org), phone: 41 (0) 79 124 4052

### For IFRC Resource Mobilization and Pledges support:

- **IFRC Regional Office for Africa:** Louise Daintrey, Head of Strategic Engagement and Partnerships; email: [louise.daintrey@ifrc.org](mailto:louise.daintrey@ifrc.org), phone: +254 110 843 978

### For In-Kind donations and Mobilization table support:

- **IFRC Africa Regional Office for Logistics Unit:** Allan Kilaka Masavah, Head, Global Humanitarian Services & Supply Chain Management, Africa; email: [allan.masavah@ifrc.org](mailto:allan.masavah@ifrc.org)

### For Performance and Accountability support:

**Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, And Reporting enquiries IFRC Regional Office for Africa:** Beatrice Okeyo, [beatrice.okeyo@ifrc.org](mailto:beatrice.okeyo@ifrc.org) PMER Manager Phone: +254 732 203 081

#### Reference documents



Click here for:

- Previous [Appeals and updates](#)
- Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA)

## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief, the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable, to **Principles of Humanitarian Action** and **IFRC policies and procedures**. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate, and always promote all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

# Emergency Appeal

## INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORT

| Selected Parameters |           |           |          |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Reporting Timeframe | 2024-2025 | Operation | MDRLS008 |
| Budget Timeframe    | 2024-2025 | Budget    | APPROVED |

Prepared on 18 Mar 2025

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

### MDRLS008 - Lesotho - Drought

Operating Timeframe: 15 May 2024 to 31 Aug 2025; appeal launch date: 03 Sep 2024

## I. Emergency Appeal Funding Requirements

| Thematic Area Code                                    | Requirements CHF |
|---|------------------|
| AOF1 - Disaster risk reduction                        | 0                |
| AOF2 - Shelter  | 0                |
| AOF3 - Livelihoods and basic needs                    | 0                |
| AOF4 - Health   | 0                |
| AOF5 - Water, sanitation and hygiene                  | 0                |
| AOF6 - Protection, Gender & Inclusion                 | 0                |
| AOF7 - Migration                                      | 0                |
| SFI1 - Strengthen National Societies                  | 0                |
| SFI2 - Effective international disaster management    | 0                |
| SFI3 - Influence others as leading strategic partners | 0                |
| SFI4 - Ensure a strong IFRC                           | 0                |
| <b>Total Funding Requirements</b>                     | <b>0</b>         |
| <b>Donor Response* as per 18 Mar 2025</b>             | <b>581,912</b>   |
| <b>Appeal Coverage</b>                                |                  |

## II. IFRC Operating Budget Implementation

| Thematic Area Code                                    | Budget         | Expenditure    | Variance       |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| AOF1 - Disaster risk reduction                        | 0              | 32,020         | -32,020        |
| AOF2 - Shelter  | 0              | 0              | 0              |
| AOF3 - Livelihoods and basic needs                    | 554,803        | 242,767        | 312,035        |
| AOF4 - Health   | 12,926         | 1,300          | 11,627         |
| AOF5 - Water, sanitation and hygiene                  | 23,268         | 14,295         | 8,972          |
| AOF6 - Protection, Gender & Inclusion                 | 0              | 0              | 0              |
| AOF7 - Migration                                      | 0              | 0              | 0              |
| SFI1 - Strengthen National Societies                  | 110,899        | 118,674        | -7,775         |
| SFI2 - Effective international disaster management    | 0              | 0              | 0              |
| SFI3 - Influence others as leading strategic partners | 0              | 0              | 0              |
| SFI4 - Ensure a strong IFRC                           | 9,307          | 21,097         | -11,790        |
| <b>Grand Total</b>                                    | <b>711,203</b> | <b>430,154</b> | <b>281,049</b> |

## III. Operating Movement & Closing Balance per 2025/9998

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Opening Balance                                 | 0              |
| Income (includes outstanding DREF Loan per IV.) | 1,331,912      |
| Expenditure                                     | -430,154       |
| <b>Closing Balance</b>                          | <b>901,758</b> |
| Deferred Income                                 | 0              |
| Funds Available                                 | 901,758        |

## IV. DREF Loan

|                                  |        |         |              |   |                      |         |
|----------------------------------|--------|---------|--------------|---|----------------------|---------|
| * not included in Donor Response | Loan : | 750,000 | Reimbursed : | 0 | <b>Outstanding :</b> | 750,000 |
|----------------------------------|--------|---------|--------------|---|----------------------|---------|

# Emergency Appeal

## INTERIM FINANCIAL REPORT

| Selected Parameters |           |           |          |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Reporting Timeframe | 2024-2025 | Operation | MDRLS008 |
| Budget Timeframe    | 2024-2025 | Budget    | APPROVED |

Prepared on 18 Mar 2025

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

### MDRLS008 - Lesotho - Drought

Operating Timeframe: 15 May 2024 to 31 Aug 2025; appeal launch date: 03 Sep 2024

## V. Contributions by Donor and Other Income

| Opening Balance                             |                |              |                  |                |                  |                 | 0 |
|---|----------------|--------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|---|
| Income Type                                 | Cash           | InKind Goods | InKind Personnel | Other Income   | TOTAL            | Deferred Income |   |
| DREF Response Pillar                        |                |              |                  | 750,000        | 750,000          |                 |   |
| European Commission - DG ECHO               | 381,537        |              |                  |                | 381,537          |                 |   |
| Japanese Red Cross Society                  | 58,581         |              |                  |                | 58,581           |                 |   |
| Other                                       | -217,211       |              |                  |                | -217,211         |                 |   |
| Red Cross of Monaco                         | 9,370          |              |                  |                | 9,370            |                 |   |
| The Netherlands Red Cross                   | 349,635        |              |                  |                | 349,635          |                 |   |
| <b>Total Contributions and Other Income</b> | <b>581,912</b> | <b>0</b>     | <b>0</b>         | <b>750,000</b> | <b>1,331,912</b> | <b>0</b>        |   |
| <b>Total Income and Deferred Income</b>     |                |              |                  |                | <b>1,331,912</b> | <b>0</b>        |   |