DREF Final Report

Syrian Arab Republic Fire 2025

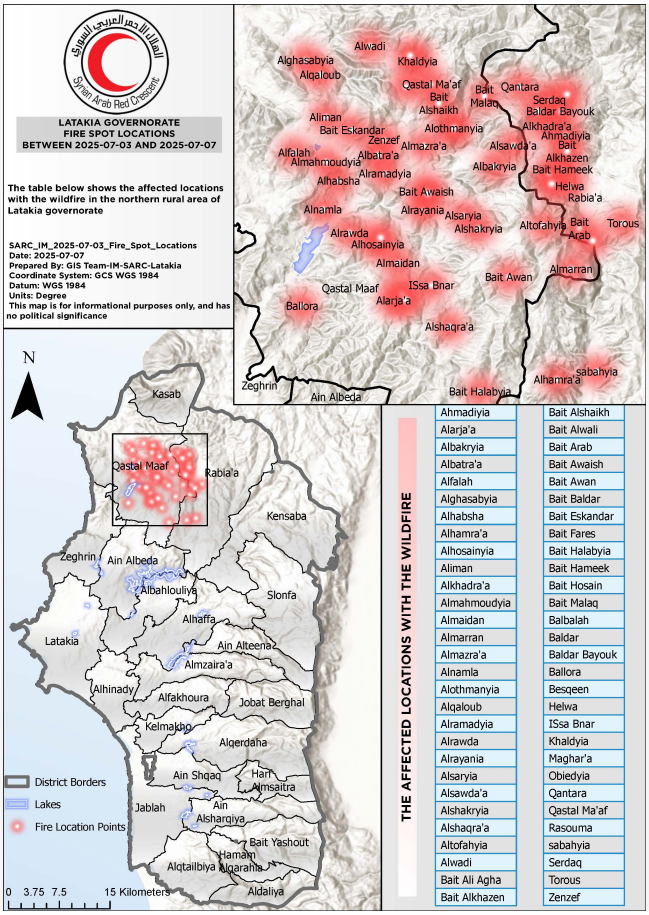


Appeal: **MDRSY015**	Total DREF Allocation: **CHF 999,998**	Crisis Category: **Orange**	Hazard: **Fire**
Glide Number: **WF-2025-000109**	People Affected: **55,000 people**	People Targeted: **30,000 people**	People Assisted: **96,093 people**
Event Onset: **Sudden**	Operation Start Date: **11-07-2025**	Operational End Date: **31-01-2026**	Total Operating Timeframe: **6 months**

Targeted Regions: **Hama, Homs, Lattakia, Tartous**

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

Description of the Event



Date of event

30-06-2025

What happened, where and when?

Beginning in early July 2025, a series of wildfires erupted across western Syria, severely affecting the governorates of Lattakia, Tartous, Homs, Hama, and Idleb. The fires spread rapidly and SARC responded immediately, coordinating with Civil Defence teams in line with its official emergency response mandate from the Ministry of Emergency and Disasters. However, firefighting efforts faced significant challenges due to strong winds, difficult terrain, and the presence of unexploded ordnance from past conflicts, which not only slowed containment but also allowed flames to spread to nearby villages. The fires caused extensive damage, destroying large areas of agricultural and forest land, damaging homes, and forcing the evacuation of numerous families.

Faced with a crisis beyond its domestic capacity, the Syrian government formally requested international assistance on 4 July. The global response was swift and coordinated, with the UN, EU Civil Protection Mechanism, Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon and Greece supporting the response. Satellite monitoring by the Copernicus Emergency Management Service provided critical real-time data to track the fires and guide response strategies.

Despite these efforts, the wildfires continued to spread. The cumulative impact was devastating: an estimated 50,000 people were exposed to the fires, over 2,000 families were displaced, and more than 18,000 hectares of agricultural and forest land were severely damaged. The environmental toll included the loss of at least 150,000 trees, dealing a heavy blow to local ecosystems and livelihoods.

With the extreme heat that persisted into August, new fires re-erupted in parts of rural Lattakia (e.g., Qardaha environs) and the Al-Ghab Plain. Those flare-ups underscored ongoing volatility tied to the heatwave and very dry fuels, especially in rugged, road-limited catchments.

By September, a new and severe wave of wildfires broke out across Rural Homs, Rural Lattakia, and parts of Rural Hama, which marked a significant extension of the crisis beyond the initial July hotspots.

On 21 September, major fires were reported across six villages in Rural Homs—including Ain al-Barida, Al-Jawaniyat, Habnemra, Qurb Ali, Jabal al-Sayeh, and Al-Nasira—damaging approximately 11,000 dunums of agricultural and forest land and affecting more than 552 families. In parallel, new fires ignited in western Hama, damaging agricultural and forested areas already weakened by the summer fire season.

Simultaneously, Rural Lattakia experienced renewed fires in the Rabia/Jabal Turkman areas, which spread across at least eight villages and causing further environmental and livelihood losses. This new wave also resulted in the loss of firefighting vehicles, injuries among responders, and the death of a Civil Defence member.

Together, these repeated outbreaks across Lattakia, Tartous, Homs, and Hama have demonstrated how prolonged drought, recurring heatwaves, and degraded forest conditions fuel new ignition points—requiring sustained emergency response, ongoing monitoring, and increased support for affected communities.



Water trucking in support of firefighting efforts



Aid Distribution - DM team



Emergency Medical Services team

Scope and Scale

The 2025 wildfire crisis in Syria represents one of the region's most severe recent environmental and humanitarian emergencies, ultimately expanding across five governorates (Latakia, Tartous, Homs, Hama, and Idleb). Initially erupting in early July, the emergency dramatically scaled up through successive waves of fires fueled by extreme heat, drought, and high winds in August and late September. This geographic expansion heavily complicated frontline responses, resulting in multiple injuries among first responders, the loss of firefighting vehicles, and one fatality within the Civil Defense.
The cumulative impact of the disaster from July through September includes:

- Population Impact: Approximately 51,000 individuals were directly or indirectly affected, with around 3,000 people forced into temporary evacuation or hosted by relatives.
- Geographic Spread: The footprint of the crisis expanded over time, growing from 144 villages in late August to a total of more than 158 directly impacted villages by the end of September.
- Environmental & Livelihood Losses: Over 28,000 hectares of agricultural and forest land were devastated, destroying crucial economic assets including more than 150,000 trees, olive groves, seasonal crops, livestock, and beehives.
- Critical Infrastructure Damage: Massive power outages halted major water pumping stations (including Al-Zour, Ballouran, Al-Namleh, and the Al-Basit junction), triggering extended water interruptions across dozens of villages and escalating public hygiene risks. Additionally, 117 irrigation systems and essential access routes were heavily compromised.

Operating in rugged terrain further complicated by the presence of unexploded ordnance (UXO), field teams balanced immediate medical and mobile healthcare responses alongside critical logistical support to reinforce firefighting capacities. The compounding, multi-front nature of this disaster underscores the vital necessity of sustained relief, resource replenishment, and structured recovery assistance for highly vulnerable rural economies facing overlapping economic and asset losses.

Source Information

Source Name	Source Link

1. Syria fights 'catastrophic' wildfires for fourth consecutive day	https://www.france24.com/en/middle-east/20250707-syria-wildfires
2. Syria evacuates citizens as wildfires spread, hindered by mines and unexploded ordnance	https://trt.global/world/article/babc0491d79d
3. Syrian firefighters battle new wildfires in Latakia	https://www.trtworld.com/article/828e55b641e1
4. Wildfires engulf forests in Latakia and Homs countryside in Syria	https://english.enabbaladi.net/archives/2025/09/wildfires-engulf-forests-in-latakia-and-homs-countryside-in-syria/
5. Wildfires Lessons learned Workshop report	https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/SYRIADocuments/IQCdtnnG5LdITIlxgjKXxu0uAQsDeN8T5LyI79lJoracvwE?e=765DXx
6. Syrian wildfires spread due to heavy winds and war remnants	https://apnews.com/article/syria-wildfires-latakia-wind-temperatures-0a367cfa0449179c04d046d511ede26d

National Society Actions

Have the National Society conducted any intervention additionally to those part of this DREF Operation?	No

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	The IFRC has a permanent presence in Syria through its Country Delegation in Damascus, supported by the MENA Regional Office. In response to the wildfire emergency, IFRC coordinates closely with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC), providing technical and strategic support in the operation. Through this DREF, IFRC is also offering financial support to address urgent needs, in line with SARC's mandate. Additional support includes coordination, PMER, logistics, finance, security, and preparedness efforts to strengthen SARC's response capacity.
Participating National Societies	RCRC actors support SARC on regular bases, allowing the team to be the first responder, ready to scale up as per needs and support such a response. Many PNSs showed their flexibility to support, during the response and in the later phases in addition to the already ongoing support, and joined IFRC in the task force that was established for the fire response.

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

Present in Syria since 1967, the ICRC is a neutral, impartial, and independent organization with an exclusively humanitarian mission. The ICRC works closely with and supports SARC to meet the food, water, and health needs of people and communities affected by

armed conflicts and other situations of violence and to help them start rebuilding their lives. They also work together to raise awareness about the risks of mines and other explosive remnants. The ICRC works to restore family links between persons who have been separated by conflict and migration and promotes respect for international humanitarian law. Finally, ICRC provides technical advice and support to local authorities and forensics practitioners in managing human remains with respect and dignity.
In this response, as during previous emergencies, ICRC supported SARC DM, WASH, and EMS teams, the provision of emergency food and medical supplies, and participation in the Movement task force.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	Yes
National authorities	Civil Defense and firefighter teams responded to the wildfires. The Ministry of Emergency and Disaster (MOE&D) established an operation room in Lattakia, which includes all the actors and stakeholders, to coordinate the response. Additional support (international) was requested (Turkey, Jordan) and received, for example in the form of firefighting helicopters and response teams. Additionally, the government allocated all the available resources from different governorates to support the teams in the affected governorates.
UN or other actors	UN called for HCT meetings in Lattakia with the Governor and the established OP room, and meetings in Damascus for all humanitarian actors.

Needs (Gaps) Identified

Multi purpose cash grants

Economically, the fires have devastated livelihoods in regions already suffering from extreme poverty and economic instability. The Syrian economy has been crippled by years of conflict, sanctions, and inflation, leaving many families dependent on humanitarian cash assistance. The wildfires destroyed agricultural lands, livestock, and small businesses, stripping families of their primary sources of income. This has led to increased food insecurity and forced reliance on external aid. There is a pressing need for multi-purpose cash assistance programs to help families meet their basic needs and support their recovery.

Health

The fires caused a surge in respiratory illnesses due to smoke inhalation, particularly among children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing conditions. Mental health needs also escalated, as communities faced renewed trauma from displacement, loss of homes, and the destruction of their environment. The delivery of healthcare services was further complicated by access constraints and the destruction of transportation routes. Priorities include extension of support to the deployed mobile health units, provision of medical supplies, and scaling up mental health and psychosocial support services.

Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

The fires intensified the struggle for clean water and adequate sanitation. Many affected areas were already reliant on fragile water trucking systems. The fires destroyed or contaminated natural water sources and damaged infrastructure critical for water delivery. Ash and debris have polluted reservoirs and open wells, increasing the risk of waterborne diseases.

The drought conditions impacting the country and the limited access to water sources impacted the ability of the firefighters to secure the water needed for extinguishing the fires and water trucking was needed to support the effort of the responders. One of the major challenges reported was the burning of power poles connected to the Al-Basit power substation, resulting in further disruption of essential services and complicating emergency response operations. In response to the growing demand for water, the Baloran Water Unit was used as a critical filling point to supply firefighting trucks.

The wildfires have severely affected infrastructure, damaged or destroyed homes, and disrupted transportation, power, and communication networks. The extensive burning of land has jeopardized watersheds and increased the long-term risk of floods and landslides due to changes in soil composition. The fires have also threatened biodiversity and damaged agricultural lands, compounding the humanitarian impact. With the Middle East region facing extreme drought and climate-induced hazards and the expectation of wildfires occurring on a regular basis, future response will require significant scaling up, including the provision of more large-capacity water tankers, protective equipment for volunteers, and emergency supplies for affected communities. Enhanced coordination and international support are critical to ensure an effective, timely, and comprehensive response.

The situation further deteriorated following the September fires in Rural Homs, Rural Hama, and Rural Lattakia, creating additional WASH needs. In these areas, fires damaged small-scale irrigation systems, community cisterns, and informal water points that households relied on for both domestic and agricultural use. Over 552 families in Rural Homs alone now face reduced access to safe water after 11,000 dunums of land and associated water infrastructure were burned. Water trucking needs have increased significantly due to the expansion of affected areas across multiple governorates.

Power cuts caused by fire-damaged electricity lines in Homs and Lattakia have disrupted pumping cycles, while ash and debris have contaminated shallow wells and surface sources, requiring assessment and potential chlorination. Overall, the September fires expanded the geographic footprint of WASH vulnerabilities, underscoring the need for increased water trucking, restoration of small-scale water systems, and enhanced support to responders operating in remote, difficult-to-access areas.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

The IFRC-DREF operation aims to deliver immediate support in order to reduce the humanitarian impact for at least 30,000 people affected by the July 2025 to January 2026 wildfires in Latakia, Tartous, Homs and Hama governorates. This will be achieved by providing targeted assistance to first responders, particularly firefighters, and supporting directly affected families through the distribution of multi-purpose cash assistance, water, and evacuation services, and delivering emergency medical services to both responders and civilians. The operation also includes the deployment of mobile water tanks to reduce firefighting response times in areas with difficult terrain and limited water resources. In addition, the operation will implement community awareness and disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities. The six-month operation includes both immediate response and replenishment components.

Operation strategy rationale

The July 2025 wildfires in Syria caused widespread destruction, affecting thousands of individuals, damaging critical infrastructure, and overwhelming local response capacities. The operational context was marked by complex terrain, limited water resources, and the presence of unexploded ordnance, all of which significantly hampered firefighting and humanitarian access. The government requested assistance in the response to the event, and different actors, including international partners (Lebanon, Jordan, Greece, and Turkey), supported the response.
In late August and September, the situation further escalated with new wildfire outbreaks affecting additional governorates, including Rural Homs and Rural Hama, as well as renewed fires in Latakia. These fires expanded the humanitarian footprint of the emergency beyond the original coastal areas and affected hundreds of additional families, destroyed agricultural land, damaged irrigation systems, and disrupted essential services. The spread of the fires into multiple governorates placed additional strain on SARC's response capacity and necessitated a broader operational strategy that accounted for the growing geographic scope and the cumulative impact of

successive fire waves.
The rationale for that DREF operation was grounded in the need to protect lives and reduce the immediate and long-term humanitarian impact of wildfires. The DREF response focused on the support to first responders, particularly firefighters, with essential supplies, water trucking, and logistical reinforcement to sustain fire suppression efforts and prevent further spread. Simultaneously, support was provided to directly affected families, with water and evacuation support. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and mobile clinics were a cornerstone of the response, addressing the health needs of both civilians and responders suffering from smoke inhalation, burns, injuries, and trauma. Community awareness and disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities were implemented, and affected families were supported with cash assistance to cover basic needs and support their recovery.
The expansion of the fires into Homs and Hama increased the need for coordinated logistics and expanded community outreach, especially in rural areas where access was challenging and baseline services were already limited. Additionally, the expanded geographical scope and coordination with authorities and other actors highlighted the need to adjust the targeting for cash assistance. These new developments reinforced the importance of maintaining and scaling SARC's ability to respond across multiple fronts simultaneously, while ensuring that resources were replenished for continuous operations.
The six-month timeframe allowed for both immediate response and replenishment of critical stocks, ensuring continuity of operations and maintenance of SARC response capacity.
The overall SARC response had a wider scope beyond that operation, with coordination with multiple partners to address the wide range and long-term needs on the ground. That DREF operation focused on the following:

- Multi-purpose cash
  - Multi-purpose cash was essential to ensure addressing the needs of the impacted population, especially those who had lost their shelters and their livelihoods. The operation provided one round of cash assistance to households affected by the wildfires.
- Health
  - The DREF operation focused only on the provision of medical consumables to the responding health units and teams. Other support for the response of the medical teams was provided through partners and other funding streams.
- DRR
  - The operation supported at least two awareness raising sessions in addition to media and IEC materials on wildfires and best practices.
- WASH
  - The operation focused on the provision of drinking water for the affected families and first responders, and the replenishment of the quantities already disbursed from SARC stocks.
  - The operation also supported SARC's capacities for the provision of water trucking and firefighting equipment supporting first responders.

To ensure the capacity of SARC to respond to the disaster, the operation also included elements of support to the National Society, its volunteers, and its operational capacity.

Targeting Strategy

Who was targeted by this operation?

This operation will target at least 30,000 people with a focus on:

Evacuated and fire-affected families, particularly those from villages severely impacted by the wildfires. These families have experienced forced displacement, loss of homes and livelihoods, constrained access to basic services, and heightened exposure to smoke and fire-related hazards.

The selection of these groups is based on identified urgent needs, direct risk exposure, and their critical role in both the response and recovery. Vulnerable households, including elderly persons, persons with disabilities, children, and female-headed households, within the affected areas will be prioritized for assistance. The selection was carried out in close coordination with local SARC branches, community leaders, and updated beneficiary databases which was developed in parallel to lifesaving rescue activities. This data will serve as base line for the next phases services including early recovery activities and resilience restoring.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The targeted communities were already categorized as one of the most vulnerable, with this event. The additional burden caused by the fires moved these families to a very high rank on the severity scale.
The criteria were linked to the geographical locations of the families (residing in the affected areas) for one-time cash assistance. SARC applied additional criteria to prioritize most vulnerable families among affected population.

For health services, SARC extended their existence presence to include the affected communities and provided services to all in need throughout the implementation period.
The DRR messaging and campaigns were carried out to better inform the communities at risk.

Total Assisted Population

Assisted Women	28,347	Rural	100%
Assisted Girls (under 18)	18,739	Urban	-
Assisted Men	29,308	People with disabilities (estimated)	3%
Assisted Boys (under 18)	19,699		
Total Assisted Population	96,093		
Total Targeted Population	30,000		

Risk and Security Considerations (including "management")

Does your National Society have anti-fraud and corruption policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have child protection/child safeguarding policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have whistleblower protection policy?	Yes
Does your National Society have anti-sexual harassment policy?	Yes

Please analyse and indicate potential risks for this operation, its root causes and mitigation actions.

Risk	Mitigation action
Risk of health issues due to smoke inhalation, burns or other injuries	Volunteers involved are well aware of the risks and the good practices in such cases, they are provided with PPEs and are accompanied by health teams
Liquidity challenges to cash assistance	The operation will consider distribution of cash in USD. As of 1 July, transactions in USD are no longer prohibited in Syria

Risk of exposure to unexploded ordinances and mines	Coordination with the authorities and different actors on potential risk areas is continuous, access is avoided to areas with such a risk and areal support for firefighting is preferred in this case

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation:

The fire areas were categorized as accessible security-wise. However, safety risks arose because of the fires, speeding, hard terrain, as well as explosive ordnance contamination in some areas, which made it difficult and risky to predict the next spots and the safer areas during responding.
SARC had instructed all the volunteers and other humanitarian actors to limit their visits and movement to the response area, especially during peak time.
The teams on the ground were following their Safety and Security procedures, and all movements were coordinated with the Ops room.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?	**Yes**

Implementation

Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 705,323
Targeted Persons: 11,000
Assisted Persons: 12,835
Targeted Male: -
Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
number of families benefitting from the Multipurpose cash assistance	2,200	2,567
% of surveyed people whose households received cash transfers are satisfied with the amount received.	90	100

Narrative description of achievements

• The implementation of multi-purpose cash assistance served as a critical operational pillar to address the immediate needs of the impacted population, particularly safeguarding families who had completely lost their shelters and livelihoods to the disaster. Against an initial plan to target 2,200 effected households, the operation successfully delivered a one-time cash distribution of $300 per household to a total of 2,567 affected families through a designated financial service provider. This substantial over-achievement was made possible due to favorable exchange rate variances between the US Dollar and the Swiss Franc (CHF). Without exceeding the total allocated funding, these cost-efficiencies allowed the National Society to maximize resource utility and safely scale up the caseload to include an additional 367 vulnerable families who had been explicitly identified through SARC's comprehensive field assessments. This rapid capital injection empowered the wildfire-affected communities to cover their basic, urgent recovery priorities and navigate immediate financial shocks with dignity during the acute phase of the crisis.
Additionally, 11 eligible affected families were selected and verified for targeting; however, their financial transactions were processed after the official closure of the project timeframe and covered through an alternative funding source. Consequently, these 11 households are excluded from this specific achievement tally and are not reflected in the final financial report for this operation.

•The PDM was conducted via telephone interviews with a sample of beneficiary households, calculated at a 95% confidence level, a 5% margin of error, and an assumed variance rate of 0.5. The sample was selected using a proportional distribution based on the targeted governorates. The interviews were carried out by MEAL teams. However, the data utilized in this final report ultimately included 487 fully completed questionnaires.

Lessons Learnt

• Cash assistance plans must build in structural flexibility from the beginning to accommodate rapid geographic expansions without causing operational delays or role confusion. SARC must contract multiple cash service providers simultaneously to establish redundancy and prevent contract-expiry stoppages, while formalizing a strict institutional policy to safely verify and register beneficiaries who lack documentation during exceptional emergencies.

Challenges

• The operational execution of the cash program was severely strained when the plan suddenly changed mid-response to include new governorates, causing immediate role confusion and implementation gaps. This geographic expansion collided with a major operational crisis: the primary cash service provider's contract expired during the response, and a simultaneous Central Bank decision to halt all bank withdrawals threatened to completely paralyze field distributions. SARC managed to sustain operations only through an extraordinary, formal 24-hour exemption and urgent contract extensions. Furthermore, field teams lacked an institutional protocol for registering and verifying affected families who had lost all official identification documents in the fires, forcing the ad-hoc adoption of non-standard alternative solutions like appointing a "trusted alternative person

Health

Budget: CHF 12,677
Targeted Persons: 15,000
Assisted Persons: 8,408
Targeted Male: 6,900
Targeted Female: 8,100

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of people reached with health services	5,000	8,408

Narrative description of achievements

• Despite severe environmental and operational challenges, the health response successfully delivered vital medical care to 8,408 individuals affected by the wildfires. As dense smoke, power outages, and road closures heavily disrupted static facilities, the intervention successfully adapted by deploying Mobile Health Units (MHUs) and Mobile Medical Teams (MMTs) to ensure continuity of care, alongside community-level health support.
• To meet the overwhelming surge in demand, these dedicated health teams maintained a continuous, round-the-clock (24-hour) daily presence in the field. This constant operational availability allowed them to provide immediate medical attention to a much higher volume of affected individuals who were experiencing acute respiratory distress, trauma, and burns as the crisis rapidly escalated.

Lessons Learnt

• A clear, standardized emergency policy must be instituted to govern the rapid disbursement of funds for urgent medical and logistical needs to prevent field delays. SARC must establish standardized, transparent criteria for volunteer support and overtime across all branches to ensure operational equity and maintain long-term team readiness. Finally, personal safety equipment must be pre-positioned and distributed to branches ahead of time, alongside specialized emergency capacity-building courses and targeted psychological support programs to help personnel manage intense field stress.

Challenges

• The physical implementation of healthcare services was severely disrupted as static health facilities were directly impacted by dense smoke pollution, localized power outages, and road closures, which heavily restricted public access and forced a reliance on mobile medical teams and clinics. Frontline volunteers and health staff faced high risk exposure and restricted physical access to high-heat zones due to a critical shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), including specialized masks, clothing, and footwear. Operations were further constrained by a shortage of basic medical supplies, a lack of flexible emergency funding, and the absence of an organizational mechanism to regulate and compensate volunteer overtime hours.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene

Budget: CHF 112,049
Targeted Persons: 30,000
Assisted Persons: 30,316
Targeted Male: 13,800
Targeted Female: 16,200

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of bottled water distributed	30,000	30,316
# of people reached with water	30,000	30,316

Narrative description of achievements

• The water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) response served as a crucial operational backbone during the crisis, successfully ensuring the immediate availability of clean drinking water for both affected families and frontline emergency responders. Through these direct distribution efforts, the operation successfully reached a total of 30,316 individuals through the provision of emergency water trucking services and the widespread distribution of bottled drinking water, while simultaneously replenishing critical emergency stocks previously disbursed from SARC warehouses.
To sustain the intense firefighting operations on the ground, the intervention actively reinforced SARC's localized operational capacities by facilitating continuous water trucking logistics and deploying specialized firefighting equipment to support first responders under highly complex field conditions.

Lessons Learnt

• To protect vital infrastructure, future water pipelines must be buried, and spring sources must be physically reinforced and opened up along pathways completely free of forest cover. SARC must establish a reserve logistical stockpile consisting of specialized pumps, water tanks, and additional hoses specifically before the fire season begins. Operational capabilities must also be enhanced by upgrading the field fleet's ability to navigate mountainous rural areas and improving the technical mechanisms used to rehabilitate damaged rural water systems during a crisis.

Challenges

• WASH teams faced a logistically intense implementation, forced to execute massive water-trucking operations across rugged terrain over distances reaching up to 15 kilometers between functioning supply stations and active fire sites. Operations became highly dangerous and stressful as teams worked near unexploded ordnance with poor cellular coverage and a lack of proper safety gear. The physical infrastructure suffered massive damage, with burning electrical cables knocking out local pumping stations and fires destroying 52 water projects, which cut off water supply to more than 50 villages. This forced SARC to operationally intervene by supplying fuel directly to the local water authority just to restart the stations. Teams also faced the complex implementation challenge of balancing water deliveries for domestic drinking needs with supplying water tankers to cross-boundary firefighting operations.

Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

Budget: CHF 154,512
Targeted Persons: 20,000
Assisted Persons: 44,534
Targeted Male: -
Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of sessions on best practices in case of fires conducted	2	5
# of people reached with DRR messaging through different platforms	20,000	44,534

Narrative description of achievements

• In close partnership with the Civil Defense, SARC Disaster Management Unit successfully conducted five wildfire awareness-raising sessions across multiple rural communities. Exceeding the initial target of at least two sessions, this campaign effectively reached 653 community members with vital preparedness and safety education. The intervention achieved strong community engagement, with residents actively sharing past experiences and requesting continuous training sessions to enhance local risk reduction.
• The Media team maintained a continuous presence in the field throughout the response, which enabled them to accompany the response teams during implementation. As a result, the team was able to create and publish various media content, including videos, reels, and social media posts, highlighting the implementation process and raising awareness of the resulting impact. and the team engaged in designing the key awareness messages for the Health and WASH units to be disseminated during the sessions, focusing on promoting healthy hygiene behaviors, preventing waterborne and foodborne diseases, and raising awareness about drought and water conservation.
•Through dedicated DRR and awareness messaging, the teams successfully reached 43,881 individuals across social media platforms, including Facebook and Instagram, providing vital information regarding the emergency response, field interventions, and the overall impact of the wildfires. As this metric is based on overall platform reach, it represents cumulative views and may include duplicated audiences across different posts and networks.

Lessons Learnt

• Pre-Season Planning: Future implementations require an annual, specialized wildfire response plan built and updated well ahead of the fire season to ensure previous operational weaknesses are not repeated.
• Standardized Evaluation Tools: To eliminate time wasted designing tools during the opening hours of an emergency, standardized assessment forms, uniform indicators, and ready-to-use evaluation models must be institutionalized across all branches.
• Incident Expansion Protocols: A clear protocol must be established to handle sudden expansions of a fire zone, allowing teams to scale up field interventions smoothly while parallel assessments are being deployed.
• Procurement Standardization: To protect the supply chain from future delays, the organization needs to pre-define standardized technical specifications for common emergency items to cut down procurement loops and ensure rapid market sourcing.
• Dynamic Risk Monitoring: The corporate risk register must be updated regularly to actively incorporate the distinct operational, financial, and safety threats experienced during this response. Furthermore, building a dedicated risk management dashboard is essential to monitor emerging threats and departmental data updates in real time.

Challenges

• Personnel Fatigue: Teams faced extreme physical and mental exhaustion due to a series of overlapping emergency operations running across multiple regions simultaneously.
• Access Constraints: During the critical first days of the response, field teams hit immediate bottlenecks, with movements delayed by rugged mountainous terrain and the hazardous presence of unexploded ordnance in active fire zones.
• Lack of Preparedness Frameworks: Because there were no ready-made response plan or pre-existing guidelines designed specifically for wildfires, personnel had to spend valuable time dynamically creating assessment tools and models in the middle of a crisis instead of

executing a pre-arranged strategy.
• Supply Chain Bottlenecks: This lack of standardized technical specifications directly impacted the supply chain, as logistics teams had to repeatedly return material orders to technical departments for revision, causing project timelines within the logical framework to be missed due to delayed or fragmented supplier deliveries.
• Administrative & Data Delays: Administrative processes slowed down field momentum due to slow government clearances and protracted internal approval layers from the International Federation, while real-time risk monitoring was structurally obstructed because other implementing departments regularly neglected to share and update active data files.



Secretariat Services

Budget: CHF 27,789
Targeted Persons: 0
Assisted Persons: 0
Targeted Male: -
Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of PMER Surge deployed	1	1
# of field visits conducted	5	4

Narrative description of achievements

The implementation timeframe of this DREF overlapped with three others in Syria, and together they enabled the IFRC to strengthen its presence and support to SARC through surge deployments. To facilitate SARC's implementation of all four DREFs, the IFRC deployed a Surge Operations Manager, PMER, and Supply Chain.
The IFRC also conducted four field visits, involving representatives from its country office, regional office, and headquarters.
Furthermore, the IFRC participated in lessons-learned sessions with four attendees, including IFRC Regional representatives.

Lessons Learnt

• Surge deployments played a vital role in supporting SARC, especially when they were deployed either from neighboring countries, regional offices, or through the secondment of an in-country person. The surge members become part of the SARC team and are thus able to provide the maximum possible support.

Challenges

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National Society Strengthening

Budget: CHF 16,260
Targeted Persons: 130
Assisted Persons: 0
Targeted Male: -
Targeted Female: -

Indicators

Title	Target	Actual
# of lessons learned workshops conducted	1	1

Narrative description of achievements

The Lessons Learned Workshop, held over two days (January 21–22, 2026) at the Caesar Hotel, brought together 46 key participants—including 42 representatives from the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) headquarters and field branches alongside 4 representatives from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). The session successfully crossed operational and support unit lines, gathering technical expertise from the Disaster Management, Risk Management, Health, WASH, Cash Assistance, CEA, Logistics, Finance, Media, and IM departments.
The DREF also allowed to purchase protective and visibility items to be used during different phases of the response.

Lessons Learnt

• Reflecting on the workshop itself, participants highly praised the interactive format for moving beyond the limitations of concise written reports and capturing real field pressures, while the IFRC team provided critical feedback emphasizing that future reporting must pivot away from generic "success stories" to explicitly detail operational gaps, hard decisions, and financial bottlenecks to secure sustainable international donor funding.

Challenges

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Financial Report

DREF Operation
Final Report (CHF)

Date from: 6 Jan 2024 to 30 Apr 2026

MDRSY015 - Syria - Wildfires

Operating timeframe: *Start date: 08-Jul-2025 End date: 31-Jan-2026*

Appeal launch date: *11-Jul-2025*

I. Summary

	Actual (CHF)
Opening Balance	**0**
Funds & Other Income	**999,998**
DREF Response Pillar	999,998
Expenditure	-914,432
Closing Balance	**85,566**

II. Expenditure by planned operations / enabling approaches

Description	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
EA01 - Coordination and Partnerships			
EA02 - Secretariat Services	26,093	20,020	6,073
EA03 - National Society Strengthening	15,268	9,904	5,364
PO01 - Shelter and Basic Household Items			
PO02 - Livelihoods			
PO03 - Multi-purpose Cash	662,275	671,674	-9,399
PO04 - Health	0	576	-576
PO05 - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	78,345	62,547	15,798
PO06 - Protection, Gender and Inclusion			
PO07 - Education			
PO08 - Migration			
PO09 - Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	218,018	149,713	68,305
PO10 - Community Engagement and Accountability			
PO11 - Environmental Sustainability			
Total	**999,998**	**914,432**	**85,565**

III. Expenditure by budget category & group

Prepared on 09-Jun-2026

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Please explain variances (if any)

The variance on the project is primarily attributed to external banking and regulatory challenges in Syria, compounded by compliance requirements. Severe liquidity issues within the Syrian banking system delayed fund transfers from central accounts to branch levels. Secondly, the Government of Syria authorized payments in USD to suppliers, including the Financial Service Provider, which required SARC to amend its existing agreement with the FSP for cash disbursements. This amendment process required different approvals and affected the expenditure during the implementation period. Furthermore, while nine beneficiaries received assistance in the first week of

February 2026, the delegation deemed these costs ineligible and prudently covered them from other funding sources, just as PDM activities were also financed elsewhere.

Additional financial pressure came from the significant devaluation of the USD, which reduced the project's reported spending in dollar terms despite stable or increased local currency outlays. The combination of delayed fund transfers, the USD payment authorization requiring contractual amendments, reallocation of ineligible costs to other sources, and currency devaluation fully accounts for the reduced expenditure. This variance reflects external constraints and compliance obligations, not operational failure or unmet objectives.

Contact Information

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

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