



HỘI CHỮ THẬP ĐỎ VIỆT NAM
Đổi mới vì sự phát triển bền vững



Typhoon Yagi Emergency Appeal – Viet Nam Lessons Learned from the Operation

Reflecting on operational experience to strengthen future preparedness and response.

📅 Lào Cai Province | 26–27 March 2026



THE OPERATION AT A GLANCE

Typhoon Yagi affected 26 northern provinces and caused significant damage to housing, livelihoods and infrastructure. VNRC, with support from IFRC, implemented multi-sectoral assistance across six provinces.



26

northern
provinces
affected



6

operational
provinces



72,354

people
reached



18

months
operation



CHF 2.42M

mobilized

Operational provinces: Bắc Ninh • Cao Bằng • Lạng Sơn • Lào Cai • Phú Thọ • Thái Nguyên

WHAT WORKED WELL

Key strengths identified during the workshop.

01



CVA, Livelihoods & WASH

- Cash enabled households to prioritize needs.
- Transparent and community-based targeting.

02



NSD, Capacity Building, CEA & PGI

- Strong participation and local preparedness.
- Training and simulations strengthened capacity.

03



Management & Coordination

- Clear Red Cross structures.
- Strong leadership and commitment across all levels.

04



Analysis & Planning

- Structured assessment and targeting.
- Local authorities supported validation.

05



Operations Support

- Finance, reporting, logistics and procurement systems functioning.
- Technical support available from VNRC headquarters and IFRC.

WHAT WE LEARNED

Key learning points to inform future preparedness and response.

01



CVA, Livelihoods & WASH

Better align assistance with household needs and market conditions.

02



NSD, Capacity Building, CEA & PGI

Strengthen continuity, follow-up and inclusive participation.

03



Management & Coordination

Better align approvals, resources and operational timelines.

04



Analysis & Planning

Strengthen verification, communication and systematic assessment.

05



Operations Support

Simplify procedures and strengthen practical guidance to branches.

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS



40

participants



Participants:

VNRC headquarters, DM director and department, branch staff from 6 provincial chapters, IFRC staff.



VIP participants:

Secretary General of the VNRC, Lao Cai Provincial People's Committee, Vietnam Fatherland Front Committee, provincial departments, Post Office, and commune representatives.

From Learning to Action

Six prioritized recommendations for future preparedness and response.



01 PLANNING

Develop clear implementation plans across headquarters and branches with defined timelines and roles and responsibilities.



Key actions

- Assess needs and consult early with stakeholders.
- Define roles, responsibilities and timelines.
- Prepare for predictable events through contingency planning.

02 COORDINATION

Strengthen coordination between the Red Cross and government ministries, committees and sectors.



Key actions

- Maintain regular engagement at all levels.
- Strengthen headquarters-government coordination.
- Use relevant coordination platforms.

03 CASH ASSISTANCE

Increase financial support per household to better reflect current cost of living and livelihoods.



Key actions

- Review market prices and livelihood costs.
- Use community feedback and PDM findings.
- Recommend revised assistance levels.

04 HUMAN RESOURCES

Improve human resource management, capacity and professional development for grassroots Red Cross staff and volunteers.



Key actions

- Assess training needs.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities.
- Improve workforce and workload planning.

05 VOLUNTEERS

Develop and maintain a stable and long-term volunteer base.



Key actions

- Develop a long-term management system.
- Recruit, train and engage volunteers.
- Mobilize resources for volunteer support.

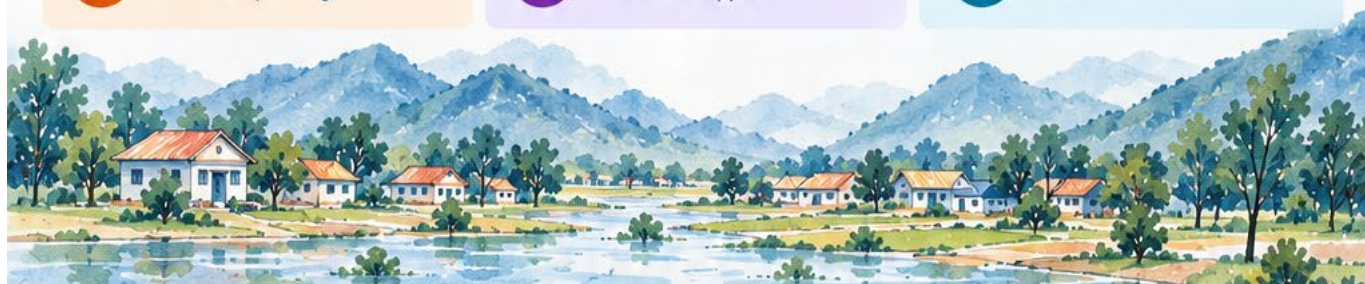
06 FINANCE & PROCUREMENT

Strengthen financial and procurement procedures and provide practical guidance to branches.



Key actions

- Update and streamline SOPs.
- Improve supplier documentation.
- Disseminate practical guidance to branches.



LESSONS LEARNED WORKSHOP

VIET NAM (MDR024) TYPHOON YAGI EMERGENCY APPEAL

CONTENTS

Introduction	4
operation background.....	4
workshop information	4
Workshop purpose and objectives.....	5
Methodology.....	5
outputs of workshop	6
Timeline of the Operation.....	6
Successes and Challenges.....	8
Operational Capacity: Cash and voucher assistance (CVA), Livelihoods and WASH	8
Operational Capacity: NSD, Capacity Building, CEA and PGI.....	9
Management and Coordination	10
Analysis and Planning.....	11
Operations Support	11
Recommendations and action plan	13
Prioritized Recommendations and Actions	13
Annex 1: Terms of reference	18
Annex 2: Field visit observations.....	22

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings from the Viet Nam Typhoon Yagi Lessons Learned Workshop. The workshop brought together staff and volunteers from the Viet Nam Red Cross Society (VNRC), alongside IFRC secretariat colleagues present in-country, to reflect on the emergency operation and identify practical learning to inform future preparedness and response. Leadership from VNRC headquarters and provinces, as well as representatives from provincial government and agencies were also present, lending significance to the workshop.

The findings, outputs and recommendations presented in this report are drawn directly from workshop discussions, activities and group work. They reflect the collective perspectives of Viet Nam Red Cross headquarters and provincial participants who were directly involved in the operation.

OPERATION BACKGROUND

In September 2024, Typhoon Yagi made landfall in Viet Nam, affecting 26 northern provinces and causing significant damage to housing, livelihoods and infrastructure. The scale of the impact required a coordinated humanitarian response to address both immediate needs and early recovery.

In response, the Viet Nam Red Cross Society, with support from the IFRC, launched an Emergency Appeal (MDRVN024). The operation delivered multi-sectoral assistance across six provinces: Bắc Ninh, Cao Bằng, Lạng Sơn, Lào Cai, Phú Thọ and Thái Nguyên. As the operation moved towards completion, the workshop provided an opportunity to consolidate learning from across the response and reflect on how future operations can be strengthened. Operational details are [available on IFRC GO](#), and the operational documents, including the final report is [available here](#).

WORKSHOP INFORMATION

The lessons learned process was held in Lào Cai Province, one of the areas most affected by Typhoon Yagi. It was conducted over three days, consisting of a one-day field visit by a small technical team, followed by a two-day workshop carried out 26-27 March 2026. The workshop brought together approximately 40 participants from different levels of the Viet Nam Red Cross Society (VNRC), including National Headquarters and provincial branches from affected areas. All six provinces involved in the operation were represented in the workshop: Bắc Ninh, Cao Bằng, Lạng Sơn, Lào Cai, Phú Thọ and Thái Nguyên.

The first day of the workshop brought together senior leadership of the Viet Nam Red Cross Society, including the Secretary General, alongside representatives from provincial authorities and relevant agencies, including the Provincial People's Committee, the Viet Nam Fatherland Front, and relevant government departments such as foreign affairs, agriculture and environment, and the provincial postal service. This created space to review the operation and share implementation results with key stakeholders.

The second day focused on internal learning and reflection, allowing VNRC and in-country IFRC secretariat participants to discuss operational experience, challenges and learning across different levels of implementation in a more focused way. This process was supported by facilitation from the IFRC Secretariat Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO). A full participant list is provided in the annex.

Workshop purpose and objectives

The purpose of the workshop was to reflect on the Typhoon Yagi emergency operation and generate practical, actionable learning to strengthen VNRC preparedness and improve future response.

The workshop aimed to:

- Reflect on the operation across planning, response and recovery phases, and establish a shared understanding of key events and milestones.
- Identify what worked well, what did not, and the key factors influencing implementation.
- Capture learning to inform both future emergency responses and ongoing operations.
- Develop a set of prioritised recommendations and translate these into a realistic action plan.

The full workshop terms of reference and agenda is available in the annex.

Methodology

The workshop was conducted over three days and combined a field visit with a facilitated internal reflection process. The one-day internal field visit by a small team of VNRC and IFRC staff provided an opportunity to observe recovery progress on a small scale at community level and gather indicative feedback from affected households interviewed. Details and field visit are available as an annex.

The operational workshop itself used a structured, participatory approach to capture operational experience across key areas. This included:

- A branch sharing session conducted in a talk show format, organized by the VNRC.
- A timeline exercise to map key milestones and build a shared understanding of the operation.
- Group-based reflection sessions to identify what worked well, what did not, and the underlying drivers.
- Thematic discussions covering operational capacity, coordination, planning and support functions.



Photos from the workshop proceedings and field visit. Full collection of [media are available here on IFRC Sharing](#) (source: VNRC & IFRC)

- Synthesis of reflections into prioritised recommendations.
- Development of an action plan, including necessary operational steps and responsible units.

The process was designed to be interactive, drawing on the direct experience of participants while building consensus across different levels of the Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC). The full agenda and outline of activities is available in the annex.

OUTPUTS OF WORKSHOP

Findings from the field trip are attached as an annex.

Timeline of the Operation



The participatory timeline allowed participants to build consensus and a collective memory of the operation that spanned 2024 – 2026.

This timeline was developed through a participatory process involving staff of VNRC and IFRC engaged in the Typhoon Yagi operation. It reflects the collective experiences, recollections, and perspectives of participants, rather than a verified chronological record of events.

As such, the sequencing, emphasis, and details captured may not be fully factually accurate. Instead, the timeline is intended to illustrate how the operation was experienced in practice, highlighting key moments, challenges, and milestones as remembered by those involved. It should therefore be interpreted as a learning and reflection tool, complementing, rather than replacing, formal reporting and documentation.

The coloured dots included in the timeline represent participant voting during the exercise. Green dots indicate activities considered as key highlights or milestones, while red dots indicate bottlenecks or challenges encountered during the operation. The number of dots reflects the relative weight or frequency of these perceptions among participants.

Typhoon Yagi Operation Timeline (Sept 2024 – Mar 2026)

- : Highlights and milestones
- : Bottlenecks

September 2024

- ☹️ Typhoon Yagi made landfall and its aftermath affected communities ● ●
- ⚠️ Severe damages and impacts were reported
- 💰 Early resources were allocated, including funding in Bắc Ninh

September–October 2024

- 🇻🇳 VNRC conducted damage assessment and survey of damages ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

October 2024

- 📄 IFRC appeal was issued ●
- 🚚 Relief activities from other funds started
- 🔧 Remediation and recovery of damages started

November 2024

- 🚚 Relief activities from other funds continued
- 🔧 Remediation and recovery of damages continued
- 📍 Site selection was conducted

December 2024

- 🎓 Kick-off training for the project was conducted ●
- 🚀 The project and operational activities started ● ●
- 🇻🇳 The Tet period led to reduced resources available for operations ●

January 2025

- 👥 Training for beneficiary selection and village meetings were conducted ● ● ● ● ●
- 📋 Beneficiary selection was carried out
- ✅ Beneficiary lists were approved

February 2025

- 💰 Cash distribution was conducted ● ● ● ●
- 🇻🇳 Post-distribution monitoring (PDM) was conducted ●

March 2025

- 🏠 PASSA training was conducted ●
- 💧 WASH communication activities were conducted in Lào Cai ● ●
- ⛔ Fund disbursement was stopped due to the merging of associations into the Red Cross in Lạng Sơn ●

April 2025

- (No activities recorded)

May 2025

- ☀️ A prolonged heatwave affected implementation progress and staff health ● ●
- 📅 Phase 1 was completed and Phase 2 started

June 2025

- 🇻🇳 Survey for needs assessment for Phase 2 was conducted ● ● ●

September 2024 – August 2025

- 🏢 Administrative restructuring at local level was carried out, affecting implementation ● ● ● ● ●

August 2025

- 💰 Bắc Ninh chapter received 2 billion VND from VNRC

September 2025

- 👥 Village meeting for second cash distribution was conducted ●
- 🌪️ Storms affected some areas ● ● ●
- 👤 Second director of Lạng Sơn retired

October 2025

- 🌪️ Storm affected some areas
- 🎓 Training on beneficiary selection for second distribution was conducted ● ● ● ● ●

November 2025

- 💧 Hygiene communication in emergency situations (WASH communication) was conducted ● ●
- 👤 Livelihood training was conducted ●
- 📋 Beneficiary selection was carried out

December 2025

- 🏠 PASSA training and safe housing activities were conducted
- 💰 Livelihood support (cash for livelihoods) was distributed ● ● ● ● ●
- 👥 Village meetings were conducted ●
- 🇻🇳 Post-distribution monitoring (PDM) was conducted ●

January 2026

- 💧 WASH and 🧑‍🚒 first aid training for volunteers were conducted ●
- 🎓 eVCA ToT training was conducted in Lạc Sơn
- 👤 Livelihood restoration training was conducted

February 2026

- 🇹🇹 Resources were redirected for Tet national assistance
- 💧 WASH communication activities were conducted ● ●
- 🇵🇭 Post-distribution monitoring (PDM), 🚽 sanitation activities (including toilet construction), and
- 👥 Community volunteer activities were carried out

February – March 2026

- 🕒 Operation was closing and activities intensified to complete implementation ● ● ● ●

March 2026

- 🗳️ National elections slowed operation ● ●
- 🚒 Disaster preparedness and response simulation exercises were conducted, including evacuation drills ● ●
- 🚚 DRT training was conducted ●
- 👥 DRM training for youth was conducted ●
- 📄 Lessons Learned Workshop (LLW) was conducted

Successes and Challenges

Operational Capacity: Cash and voucher assistance (CVA), Livelihoods and WASH

What Worked Well	Challenges Encountered
• Multi-purpose cash assistance allowed households flexibility to prioritize their needs. • Conditional cash support linked to livelihoods, water supply, and sanitation helped address recovery needs. • Cash assistance had clear objectives across different sectors (livelihoods, water, sanitation). • People targeted were able to proactively decide how to use the cash assistance. • Communities were involved in selecting beneficiaries, supporting transparency and acceptance. • Cash assistance teams had prior experience and followed standard operating procedures. • Implementation processes were relatively clear and structured. • Psychological first aid (PFA) was recognized as an important need and received attention.	• Human resources were fragmented across multiple activities. • Some community members lacked understanding of the programme or selection criteria. • Limited follow-up and longer-term monitoring of cash use and outcomes. • External factors, including disease and evolving conditions, affected implementation. • Limited training at grassroots level. • Environmental factors affected implementation in some areas. • Gaps between assistance provided and actual needs (e.g. differences in expected vs received support levels).

Cash-based interventions were appropriate to the context and aligned with immediate and early recovery needs. The combination of multi-purpose and conditional cash allowed households to prioritize and select livelihood interventions most appropriate for their family. Implementation also benefited from existing experience of staff and standard procedures.

However, a gap emerged between design and field-level implementation. Inconsistent understanding among community members suggests that communication of intervention objectives and selection criteria could have been clearer or more consistent and subsequently affected both use and perception of the assistance.

This was compounded by limited follow-up and monitoring, which reduced visibility on outcomes beyond distribution. As a result, there was limited evidence on how cash contributed to recovery and longer term social and economic well-being.

Operationally, fragmented human resources and limited training at grassroots level affected consistency in delivery. While systems were in place, their application depended on uneven local capacity across implementing

provinces and communes. For example, there was strong interest in newer interventions such as psychosocial first aid (PFA) but limited trained personnel to deliver services and expand capacity through training.

There were also indications of a mismatch between assistance levels and actual needs in some locations, suggesting that targeting and transfer values were not always fully aligned with context or may even be insufficient to meet household needs. For example, participants highlighted some feedback from community members requesting the full livelihood cash allocation in one tranche instead of two, as the cost of bigger livestock, such as pigs and cows are high. This limited their capacity to choose other livelihood options even though they were available. The value of the conditional cash for livelihoods was also too low for some of the livelihood options, which led to discussions on the need to raise the amount based on the current market value of livelihood products. There was also some discussion on which modality is better, multipurpose cash or conditional cash, with substantial arguments given for both.

Operational Capacity: NSD, Capacity Building, CEA and PGI

What Worked Well	Challenges Encountered
- Psychological first aid training strengthened staff and volunteer capacity to support affected communities. - Health, hygiene and disease prevention training improved community awareness and preparedness. - Community-based disaster risk management activities increased community participation and preparedness. - Training for commune-level emergency response teams strengthened local response capacity. - Emergency response simulation exercises improved preparedness and coordination. - Strong leadership and direction from National Headquarters supported implementation. - Good coordination and support from local authorities at provincial, district and commune levels. - Staff and volunteers were motivated and committed to implementation. - Strong community participation was supported through CEA approaches. - Beneficiary and participant selection criteria were clear and transparent.	- Limited availability of trained staff and experienced trainers/facilitators. - Some staff and local authorities had competing commitments which affected implementation timelines. - Limited number of volunteers available in some areas. - Short implementation timeframe for training and capacity building activities. - Limited participation of persons with disabilities in some activities. - Volunteer support and allowances were not always adequate. - Long travel distances and difficult access to remote areas created logistical challenges. - Weak or no phone/network coverage in remote areas affected communication and coordination.

Capacity building and NSD activities supported local preparedness and response through training, simulation exercises and community-based approaches. Participation was strong, with good turnout at community meetings and events such as disaster preparedness simulations and drills, supported by committed VNRC staff. Coordination with local authorities further facilitated implementation. Overall, the approach was appropriate and aligned with operational needs.

According to participants, community engagement and communication helped ensure that selection criteria were clearly understood by households, with the use of a scoring system reducing disputes between intervention and non-intervention groups. Women and children were prioritized through VNRC criteria, and gender representation was generally balanced. Remote communities were also considered, with VNRC providing direct delivery of water tanks where needed.

However, these efforts did not consistently translate into sustained capacity. In practice, the application of training was affected by limited availability of trained staff and volunteers, including a lack of personnel able to deliver and expand areas such as psychological first aid. Competing priorities at headquarters and branch levels also reduced continuity, including preparations for national and provincial events and adjustments related to administrative restructuring.

Short implementation timeframes further limited opportunities to reinforce learning or embed practices, as teams had to move quickly to the next set of interventions. As a result, capacity strengthening remained largely time bound. Operational constraints, including difficult access to remote areas and limited communication infrastructure, further affected delivery. Limited participation of persons with disabilities in trainings and community activities also suggests that PGI could be better and more consistently integrated.

Overall, while the approach was appropriate, more attention is needed to how capacity is maintained in practice, particularly through follow-up, continuity in staffing and more consistent integration of inclusive approaches.

Management and Coordination

What Worked Well	Challenges Encountered
- Established Red Cross system in Viet Nam with clear organizational structure at all levels. - Strong experience in disaster response and emergency operations. - High level of commitment and engagement across all levels (24/7 mobilization). - National Headquarters provided effective support in coordination, guidance and overall management of the operation.	- Approval processes for activities and funding required multiple levels (central–ministerial–provincial), causing delays. - Coordination with partners and donors (including central-level stakeholders) was sometimes slow or unclear. - Deployment and allocation of staff across levels (province, district, commune) was not always timely or optimal. - Budget adjustments between different phases of the operation were difficult and slow. - Financial procedures and requirements created delays in implementation. - Delays in disbursement of funds, including advance payments.

The coordination structure was clearly established and functioned as intended, with strong engagement across levels. This provided a solid foundation for managing the operation.

However, implementation was shaped by procedural complexity. Decision-making and approvals required multiple layers, which slowed the pace of delivery, particularly where coordination extended beyond the Red Cross system. These delays were not isolated but linked across processes, affecting both operational and financial flows.

The challenges around staffing, coordination with external stakeholders, and financial procedures point to a broader issue of alignment between systems and operational speed. While roles and processes were defined, they were not always sufficiently agile to support timely implementation. Participants further reported severe lack of staffing and resources at all levels hindering operations, as there are multiple projects and operations being managed by a small number of staff.

There was a gap registered as well between Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the operation, as the VNRC and all provincial chapters had to complete financial accounting and delivery of Phase 1 before they could proceed to Phase 2 in accordance to national administrative procedure.

Overall, the discussions suggest that the effectiveness of coordination was less constrained by structure, and more by how processes functioned in practice, particularly in relation to approvals, resource mobilization and cross-level coordination.

Analysis and Planning

What Worked Well	Challenges Encountered
• Clear and detailed guidance provided from national headquarters to local levels. • Staff involved in the operation were trained prior to implementation. • Beneficiary targeting and identification were carried out after the disaster. • Site selection was guided by the damage assessment report. • Coordination with local authorities supported assessment and targeting processes. • There was sufficient technical assistance from VNRC headquarters and IFRC.	• Difficult field conditions (heat, damaged infrastructure, difficult access) affected assessments. • Communication challenges due to poor or no phone/network coverage. • Data collection and information sharing between levels was not always smooth. • Time pressure in conducting assessments. • Some households had limited understanding or awareness during the process. • Risk of overlap or inconsistency in targeting across different actors or levels.

Assessment and targeting were supported by clear guidance and trained staff, which helped provide structure across locations. Coordination with local authorities also facilitated access to communities and supported validation of beneficiary lists.

In practice, the process was shaped by a combination of access, communication and methodological constraints. Reaching households was not always straightforward, due not only to terrain and dispersed populations, but also damaged infrastructure, limited connectivity, and the need for approvals to access certain areas. In many remote locations, staff and volunteers had to borrow Android phones to carry out assessments and surveys. The mountainous and muddy terrain made it difficult to reach remote households, and in some areas, interpreters were needed due to the use of ethnic languages. Together, these factors made it more difficult to verify information and maintain consistency in data across levels.

Time pressure also influenced how assessments were conducted. With a focus on rapid data collection, there was limited opportunity for verification, follow-up, or the use of more representative sampling approaches. As a result, data collection was often more ad hoc, which, combined with differences in understanding and communication at community level, increased the risk of inconsistencies in targeting.

Overall, the challenge was less about the availability of guidance and more about how consistently it could be applied under field conditions. Strengthening verification, communication and the use of more systematic sampling approaches will be important going forward.

Operations Support

What Worked Well	Challenges Encountered
• Budget allocation was clearly defined. • Reporting templates were available and used. • Data was compiled, updated regularly, and presented (e.g. tables, charts). • Use of tools/systems supported reporting. • Basic logistics support was provided (allowances, phone, office supplies). • Local levels actively identified and proposed needed equipment.	• Time required for financial settlement and payment processes. • Procurement documentation and supplier information were not always clear. • Approval processes involved multiple levels (e.g. HQ, donors). • Reporting requirements were lengthy and involved large volumes of data. • Limited or weak phone connectivity affected communication. • Procurement involved multiple types of goods and purchases from different suppliers.

- Allowances of volunteers are low, considering the distances they need to travel with the revised administrative structure.

The discussions suggest that the core systems for finance, reporting, logistics and procurement were established and in use, providing a functional backbone for the operation. However, the way these systems were applied required a high level of administrative effort, capacity and coordination, that may have been challenged when matched with varying staff capacity at the provincial and commune level.

Across functions, the main constraint was not the absence of processes, but the time and complexity involved in working through them. Financial procedures, approvals and reporting requirements placed a consistent demand on staff capacity, particularly at field level where resources were already limited. Based on discussions, there were some disputes on some of the financial procedures and documentation related to suppliers. Some provinces lacked capacity to complete some of the reporting requirements of the operation. This led to some delays in accounting and reimbursements.

At the same time, operational conditions added another layer of difficulty. Communication gaps and the practicalities of sourcing and procuring a wide range of items meant that implementation was not always straightforward, even where needs were clearly identified.

The pattern points to a system that is technically in place but demanding to operate in practice. This affected how quickly and smoothly support functions, especially at provincial level, can respond to operational needs.

- see next page for recommendations -

RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN

Prioritized Recommendations and Actions



Recommendations to be implemented urgently



Recommendations to be implemented in the medium-to-the long term

PRIORITY	RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	KEY STEPS	RESPONSIBLE
1	Develop clear implementation plans across headquarters and branches with defined timelines and roles and responsibilities¹	Develop implementation plans for projects/ operations based on detailed assessment findings and consultation with communities and stakeholders	1. Hold initial planning meeting 2. Conduct needs assessment and consultation with community and stakeholders 3. Review and present assessment findings 4. Develop implementation plan based on findings 5. Define roles, responsibilities and timeline 6. Obtain approval and implement the plan	VNRC project committee, headquarters and branches
2	Strengthen coordination between the Red Cross and government ministries, committees, and sectors²	Provincial branches to coordinate and engage with provincial authorities, departments and sectors	1. Send official documents and project information. 2. Maintain regular communication and coordination. 3. Organize and join networking and social activities. 4. Share project results and attend meetings and workshops.	Provincial Red Cross branches
		Headquarters to coordinate and engage with ministries and government agencies	1. Review coordination and legal mechanisms for working with government agencies. 2. Develop coordination plan for VNRC and ministries/government agencies. 3. Participate in steering committees and coordination platforms.	VNRC headquarters leadership and relevant departments

¹ Recommendation 1: Develop clear implementation plans across headquarters and branches with defined timelines and roles and responsibilities, which will support better coordination, reduce delays, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of response operations.

² Recommendation 2: Strengthen the coordination between the Viet Nam Red Cross Society (VNRC) and government ministries, committees and sectors by establishing proactive engagement to ensure a more integrated and efficient emergency response and recovery for future operations.

			4. Identify opportunities for collaboration and joint activities.	
		Engage with national, regional and ASEAN governments and stakeholders through IFRC	1. Engage in IFRC regional platforms and coordination mechanisms. 2. Use regional platforms to engage national governments, ASEAN and stakeholders. 3. Promote VNRC work and preparedness or anticipatory action. 4. Identify regional collaboration and partnership opportunities.	VNRC headquarters IFRC secretariat country cluster delegation
3	Increase the amount of financial support per household to better reflect current cost of living and livelihoods³	Assess and review cost of living, livelihoods and market conditions, as well as the adequacy and impact of current cash assistance	1. Review current cash assistance and conduct cost of living, livelihood and market assessment. 2. Review effectiveness of current cash assistance (including community feedback & PDM results). 3. Analyze findings and prepare assessment report. 4. Present findings to VNRC, IFRC and relevant stakeholders.	
		Develop and submit recommendations on revised cash assistance levels to VNRC, IFRC and government	1. Develop draft recommendations on revised cash assistance levels based on assessment findings. 2. Consult stakeholders on the proposed revisions. 3. Revise recommendations based on feedback. 4. Submit and present final recommendations in a proposal to VNRC, IFRC and government.	

³ Recommendation 3: increase the amount of financial support provided per household to better reflect current living costs and the actual costs of livelihood recovery. This would enable households to better meet basic needs or invest in livelihood activities, depending on the purpose of the cash allocations, enabling affected households to recover quickly from disasters.

4	Improve human resource management, as well as capacity and professional development for grassroots Red Cross staff and volunteers⁴	Provide training and professional development for project staff and volunteers	1. Assess training needs of staff and volunteers. 2. Develop annual training plan and materials. 3. Organize and conduct training courses. 4. Monitor and assess training effectiveness.	VNRC project committees Human resources department
		Define clear roles and responsibilities for staff and volunteers	1. Review current roles and workload of staff and volunteers. 2. Develop draft job descriptions and task assignments. 3. Consult and collect feedback from staff and leadership. 4. Approve and issue official job descriptions and task assignments. 5. Communicate job descriptions to all staff and volunteers.	VNRC provincial branch leadership Human resources department
		Improve workload distribution and workforce planning for staff and volunteers	1. Review staffing levels, workload and activity requirements. 2. Develop staffing and volunteer mobilization plan. 3. Conduct outreach and recruit volunteers. 4. Assign tasks and distribute workload among staff and volunteers. 5. Monitor workload and adjust staffing or volunteer support as needed.	VNRC provincial branch leadership Human resources and admin department
5	Develop a stable and long-term volunteer base⁵	Develop a long-term volunteer management plan and system	1. Assess current volunteer capacity and management practices. 2. Develop long-term volunteer management plan and policies. 3. Establish volunteer database and management system.	VNRC headquarters Human resource department

⁴ Recommendation 4: Improve human resource management, training and capacity development for Red Cross staff and volunteers to ensure branches can provide quality and consistent service delivery to communities.

⁵ Recommendation 5: Strengthen the recruitment, training, and retention of volunteers to build a stable and sustainable volunteer base over the long term, building community trust in the Red Cross and sustaining capacity for community-based service delivery.

			4. Assign responsible focal points for volunteer management.	
		Recruit, train and engage volunteers	1. Develop and implement volunteer recruitment plan. 2. Provide training and capacity building for volunteers. 3. Strengthen local volunteer groups and engagement. 4. Support and recognize volunteers.	VNRC provincial branches (supported by headquarters) Youth union Volunteering focal point
		Mobilize resources to support volunteer development and management	1. Identify resource needs for volunteer activities and management. 2. Allocate budget for volunteer training and activities. 3. Provide equipment, tools and resources for volunteers. 4. Mobilize local resources and partnerships to support volunteers.	VNRC headquarters and provincial branches
6	Strengthen financial and procurement procedures and provide guidance to branches⁶	Ensure suppliers meet requirements and follow financial SOP of VNRC	5. Identify procurement needs and do market research for suppliers 6. Contact suppliers, collect information and evaluate supplier capacity 7. Select supplier and obtain approval according to SOP 8. Complete procurement documentation and ensure procurement follows SOP⁷	VNRC provincial branches HQ & branch finance department and procurement team
		Update and align VNRC financial and procurement SOP with government and IFRC	1. Review VNRC financial and procurement SOP and relevant government and IFRC procedures 2. Identify gaps and differences and organize consultation meetings with relevant departments & stakeholders	VNRC headquarters, finance department and procurement team IFRC secretariat

⁶ Recommendation 6: Strengthen financial and procurement procedures and provide guidance to branches on supplier selection and documentation to ensure purchases meet requirements and are properly recorded. With stronger financial, logistics and procurement systems and procedures in place across branches, financial efficiency and accountability in the VNRC will improve.

⁷ Including supplier name, project name, and approvals as per financial and procurement SOP

			3. Revise, update and streamline VNRC SOP 4. Obtain approval 5. Disseminate updated SOP and provide guidance or training to headquarters and branches	
--	--	--	---	--

Recommendations parked for future considerations or other departments

Adjust project planning and budgeting for staff and volunteers to reflect increased geographic coverage of branches and travel requirements following the new administrative restructuring	Review and adjust volunteer allowances considering increased travel and workload based on cost-nom	Strengthen proactive management, supervision, and decision-making to improve operational efficiency and reduce delays
Increase or reallocate staff to branches covering larger or priority areas to improve implementation capacity	Strengthen communication and outreach across expanded coverage areas to enhance community engagement	Improve project planning and scheduling to ensure sufficient time for activities considering increased coverage and workload

Recommendations to consider for / from IFRC

Re-engage with the UN Cash Working Group (formal & informal) to share and stay up-to-date on cost-norms, current cash modalities and best practices	Secure resources for training and professional development	Adjust operational timelines to take into account approval processes required by the VNRC
--	---	--

The Typhoon Yagi emergency operation demonstrated the Viet Nam Red Cross Society's ability to deliver a large-scale, multi-sectoral response under a highly complex and evolving operating environment. While the operation successfully transitioned from emergency relief to recovery and resilience-building, implementation was influenced by a range of external and internal factors, including administrative restructuring, extreme weather, staffing constraints, and procedural requirements. The workshop highlighted both the dedication and adaptability of VNRC staff and volunteers, as well as the value of strong community engagement, coordination with local authorities, and flexible humanitarian assistance in supporting affected communities.

The Lessons Learned Workshop provided an opportunity for collective reflection and generated practical recommendations to strengthen future preparedness and emergency response. The prioritized actions on planning, coordination, cash assistance, human resources, volunteer management, and finance and procurement provide a clear foundation for organizational improvement. By incorporating these lessons into policies, systems, and day-to-day practice, VNRC can further strengthen its preparedness, improve operational efficiency, and enhance its capacity to deliver timely, accountable, and people-centred humanitarian assistance in future emergencies.

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

VIET NAM TYPHOON YAGI LESSONS LEARNED WORKSHOP

Terms of Reference

1. SUMMARY

Workshop Title	Viet Nam Typhoon Yagi Lessons Learned Workshop
Implementing Organization(s)	Viet Nam Red Cross Society (VNRC), supported by the IFRC secretariat
Location	Lào Cai province, Viet Nam
Duration	2-day workshop, 1 day field visit, excluding preparation and reporting
Dates	25 – 27 March 2026
Target Participants	30 VNRC headquarters and branch staff and volunteers, VNRC management, IFRC secretariat Bangkok CCD and field team
Workshop Purpose	To reflect on the emergency operation and generate practical, actionable learning and recommendations that will strengthen VNRC preparedness and improve future humanitarian response.

2. Context Analysis

In September 2024, **Typhoon Yagi** made landfall in Viet Nam as the strongest storm to affect the country in three decades. The disaster impacted 26 northern provinces, resulting in loss of life, displacement, and extensive damage to housing, livelihoods, and infrastructure.

In response, the Viet Nam Red Cross (VNRC), supported by the IFRC, launched the Emergency Appeal MDRVN024. This appeal delivered multi-sectoral assistance across six provinces, organized into two main pillars:

- **Integrated Assistance:** Focused on relief and recovery through shelter, livelihoods (including multi-purpose cash), health, WASH, PGI, education, disaster risk reduction, and environmental sustainability and community engagement and accountability (CEA).
- **Enabling Approaches:** Centred on National Society capacity, coordination, and secretariat services.

The operation reached nearly 60,000 people, and VNRC managed to carry out several assessments, reassessments, and PDM to inform the operation.

As the response transitions toward closure, there is an opportunity to consolidate learning and document achievements. This process aims to create a shared understanding on what worked well, what can be improved, and how VNRC and IFRC disaster preparedness and response can be strengthened.

3. purpose, Objectives and Scope

Purpose

The purpose of the Typhoon Yagi Lessons Learned Workshop is to reflect on the emergency operation and generate practical, actionable learning and recommendations that will strengthen VNRC preparedness and improve future humanitarian response.

Objectives

- Reflect on the Typhoon Yagi emergency operation through the planning, response and recovery phases to create a shared consensus on key operational highlights and milestones.
- Discuss, identify and consolidate successes, areas for improvement and learning.
- Capture practical learning to inform and enhance ongoing DREF operations implemented by VNRC.
- Develop a core set of prioritized recommendations to refine and improve emergency response and preparedness, translating these into a realistic action plan that considers the operational context.

Scope

- Viet Nam Red Cross Society headquarters and branch staff and volunteers, and IFRC staff directly involved in the Typhoon Yagi Emergency Appeal.
- Participation for the workshop is limited to those with direct operational involvement.

Reflecting on operational evidence and experience from the Typhoon Yagi response will support more effective and efficient disaster preparedness and response operations in Viet Nam. This will help VNRC strengthen the quality and consistency of its service delivery, enhancing the National Society's reputation as the operating partner of choice for the national government, humanitarian agencies and private/public donors.

4. Methodology

Workshop Design

- **Duration:** 3 days (25 – 27 March)
- **Format:** In-person facilitated workshop, with field visits
- **Participants:** Selected VNRC branch/headquarters staff and volunteers, IFRC secretariat CCD and field staff involved in the operation
- **Estimated number:** 25 – 30 participants
- **Facilitation:**
 - One facilitator from IFRC APRO (one PMER)
 - One facilitator from IFRC CCD Bangkok
- **Language Support:** External interpreters will be engaged to enable full participation of all participants.

Day 1: Field visit

- A small technical team will carry out field visits to two communes.
- Observe the status of recovery efforts in these areas
- Conduct short, semi-structured interviews with households to collect indicative community feedback and perspectives.

Day 2-3: Internal Operational Lessons Learned Workshop

- A timeline exercise to reflect on the entire operation and its emergency and recovery phases
- Workshop to reflect and build consensus on the effectiveness and efficiency of the operation and its management
 - What worked well and what needs to be improved / done differently

- Learnings that emerged from the operation
- Learnings to inform the ongoing DREF operations
- Learning should be translated into clear and actionable recommendations and action plans for preparedness and future response and presented to VNRC management for endorsement

5. Proposed Agenda

(26-27 March 2026)

Day 1 – Internal Operational Lessons Learned Workshop (Part 1)

TIME	SESSION	DURATION	PURPOSE / OUTPUT
08:30 – 09:00	Registration	30 min	Participant arrival and registration
09:00 – 09:30	Opening session	30 min	Opening remarks, workshop purpose, agenda overview
09:30 – 10:30	Branch experience sharing	60 min	VNRC branches present key actions, achievements, and operational challenges
10:45 – 11:00	Break	15 min	
11:00 – 11:30	Timeline exercise	30 min	Participatory timeline to map key operational highlights, milestones and activities
11:30 – 12:30	Lunch	60 min	
12:30 – 13:30	Timeline exercise	60 min	Plenary to build consensus over the operational timeline
13:30 – 15:30	Operational reflection	120 min	Group discussion to identify what worked well, what did not and key drivers
15:30 – 15:45	Break	15 min	
15:45 – 16:30	Learning session	45 min	Group discussion to capture learning derived from previous sessions

Day 2 – Internal Operational Lessons Learned Workshop (Part 2)

TIME	SESSION	DURATION	DESCRIPTION
09:00 – 09:30	Recap	30 min	Activity to recap highlights from previous day
09:30 – 10:30	Learning wall	60 min	Group presentations of learning
10:30 – 10:45	Break	15 min	
10:45 – 12:00	Recommendations matrix	75 min	Consolidate and finalize recommendations. Prioritise recommendations.
12:00 – 13:00	Lunch	60 min	
13:00 – 14:30	Action Planning – What & How	60 min	Convert recommendations into concrete actions (to do differently) and how to operationalize them. Identify which actions also apply to other DREF ops.

14:30 – 15:30	Action Planning – Who & When	45 min	Identify the responsible actors and a roadmap for the action plan
15:30 – 15:45	Break	15 min	
15:45 – 16:30	The News Front Page – our next operation	45 min	Design the headlines and highlights that will define the success of VNRC’s next operation

6. outputs

The primary output will be a concise workshop report that clearly presents:

- Key findings from the workshop
- Learning from the Yagi operation that can also inform ongoing DREF operations
- Actionable recommendations and realistic action plan and timeline.

7. Proposed Timeline

Overall timeframe: January–May 2026, with outputs informing the Emergency Appeal final report due for publication 30 June 2026.

Phase	Estimated Timeline
Approvals, TOR and budget finalisation	January 2026
Preparation and planning	February - March 2026
Lessons Learned workshop (3 days)	25-27 March 2026
Workshop report and recommendations finalised for approval	April-May 2026
EA final report informed by learning and recommendations	June 2026

ANNEX 2: FIELD VISIT OBSERVATIONS

Media taken during the field visit, featuring visits to two communes and a school in Lao Cai province is [available here on IFRC Sharing](#). The photos and videos feature some households that have benefited from the VNRC's conditional cash assistance for livelihoods, which were used for poultry farming in the visited households. They also feature the school preparedness and communication system that has enabled the school to be selected as an evacuation centre for the surrounding community.

The field visit provided an opportunity to hear directly from two affected households and a school supported through the operation. The observations below capture how assistance was experienced at household and institutional level, the extent of recovery, and remaining needs identified by those visited.

1. Summary of Field Visits

Household Visit 1

The first household comprised five people. The respondent was a 66-year-old woman living with her husband, younger son, daughter-in-law and one child. The household combined agriculture and livestock activities with wage employment, including factory work by the son and daughter-in-law. The family also faced significant health-related pressures, including a member in kidney failure requiring dialysis and diabetes within the household.



1: A family member explains the livelihood assistance received and how it was used for her poultry. Consent was received for the photos and videos. [Full video available here](#). Source: IFRC.

The family described a severe experience during the September 2024 disaster. Around midnight, after hearing a loud noise, family members ran out of the house. Landslides and flooding affected the surrounding area, while agricultural land was also damaged. The respondent described remaining highly alert during subsequent periods of heavy rain and being unable to sleep when hearing unusual noises, due to fear of another landslide. With limited options for relocation, the family would stay awake and remain ready to leave the house if conditions worsened.

Housing and livelihoods remained key recovery concerns. The household reported significant damage and loss, while neighbours had helped with repairs and reconstruction. However, the family did not have the financial means to construct a new house and instead reassembled their

old house which had collapsed in the landslide. The respondent also highlighted continued livelihood needs, particularly related to agriculture and livestock.

The household described a structured community-level process for selecting recipients of assistance. Affected households were assessed using a grading and scoring system. According to the VNRC branch officer, around 150 households were affected and six households received support; where households received the same score, selection was reported to have been made randomly. This suggests that the targeting process was visible and understood within the community.

The respondent expressed appreciation for the support received and identified further economic recovery support as the main priority, particularly for restoring agriculture and livestock activities. The household also highlighted the importance of preparedness for future landslides and flooding, given the continuing sense of insecurity during heavy rainfall.



2: The poultry supported by the livelihood assistance provided.

Household Visit 2

The second respondent was an older woman aged 68, living in a nine-person, multi-generational household comprising three family units. The wider household included adult children, in-laws and five grandchildren. The family relied substantially on agriculture, including paddy cultivation and other farming and livestock activities.



3: A family member of the household talks about the small-scale poultry farming supported by VNRC.

The house itself remained standing, but agricultural land and productive assets were heavily affected by flooding and landslides. Paddy fields were submerged, contributing to the loss of an important source of livelihood. The respondent reported that the damage was not communicated immediately and that the household therefore missed the first round of assistance.

The household later received VND 5 million in cash assistance from VNRC. The respondent valued the flexibility of cash and explained that it allowed the family to decide how best to use the assistance according to its priorities. The support contributed to livelihood recovery, including purchasing feed and supporting poultry-related activities. Assistance from other actors included in-kind food and noodles.

The respondent clearly preferred cash to in-kind assistance because it could be used according to household needs. Without the support, the family said recovery would have been more difficult and that they would have needed to rely more heavily on coping strategies, including collecting and selling vegetables to cover costs such as feed for poultry.

Community communication took place mainly through village meetings and the village head. The respondent recalled receiving information about the assistance but did not clearly remember the VNRC hotline or other formal feedback channels. The village head remained the person the household would approach if it had a specific need or concern.

The main remaining priority was livelihood recovery. The respondent highlighted the value of further support for agriculture and livestock and indicated that future assistance should continue to allow households flexibility in deciding how best to recover.

School Visit

The team also visited Tân Hương Primary and Secondary School in Yên Bình Commune and met with the school principal. The school has 31 classes and 53 teachers and staff. The field notes recorded approximately 1,060–1,091 students; this figure should be confirmed before finalization. The school serves a relatively remote area, with some communities located around 18 kilometres away. Approximately 80 per cent of students were reported to be from ethnic minority communities, including Tày, Dao, Cao Lan and Nùng groups, while around 10 per cent were from poor households. The school identified 155 vulnerable students, including students with

disabilities. Some students travel considerable distances, including across the lake, to attend school, while some children affected by family separation live with grandparents.

Typhoon Yagi affected both the school and surrounding communities. Landslides and house collapses were reported in the area, and the school was used as an evacuation centre. The school roof was damaged, while landslides also affected access to some communities. The commune has subsequently identified the school as an official shelter for future typhoon response.

The school received support through the Safe School intervention. Teachers participated in training covering first aid, preparedness and survival skills, combining theoretical and practical learning, with knowledge subsequently shared with students. Risk assessment and mitigation activities were also undertaken, building on existing disaster preparedness arrangements within the school.



4: The school principal explains the communication system that is part of the community disaster preparedness and early warning system. [The full video is available here](#). Source: IFRC

The visit observed communication and monitoring equipment that had recently been installed. The speaker system was considered particularly useful because it can communicate across the school and support emergency messaging. Camera systems were also seen as useful for security and student monitoring, including allowing school management to monitor the premises remotely. The school viewed these investments as contributing both to day-to-day management and to emergency preparedness.

The principal also highlighted the school's role in supporting vulnerable students. Provincial and other support had helped provide food, school supplies and other assistance to students from poor households. The school reported strong academic performance despite the challenges faced by many students, including ethnic minority students learning Vietnamese as an additional language.

A key remaining challenge was power continuity. During power outages, the school cannot operate water pumps or fully use communication equipment. This is particularly important because the school functions as an evacuation centre. A generator was therefore identified as an important additional need to maintain essential services and communications during emergencies.

The school expressed appreciation for the support received and for continued follow-up from VNRC, the Lào Cai chapter and IFRC. It also emphasized that preparedness support would be more sustainable if risk reduction measures continued beyond the project period and if additional partners could complement existing government investments.



5: A view of the school and the communication system supported by VNRC.

2. Cross-cutting Field Observations

Across the two household visits, **livelihood recovery remained a central concern**. Damage to agricultural land, loss of productive assets and reduced income continued to affect households after the immediate emergency phase. The discussions suggest that recovery assistance needs to consider not only immediate consumption but also households' ability to restore agriculture, livestock and other sources of income.

Cash assistance was strongly valued for its flexibility. The household that received VNRC cash assistance emphasized the ability to decide how to use the support according to its own priorities. This was particularly relevant for livelihood recovery, where needs varied between households.

Community structures were important for targeting and communication. Village meetings and local leaders played a significant role in sharing information, identifying needs and supporting beneficiary selection. At the same time, recall of formal feedback mechanisms such as hotlines was limited, suggesting that these channels may need to be communicated repeatedly and alongside existing community-based mechanisms.

The visits also highlighted that **recovery and preparedness are closely connected**. At household level, fear of further landslides remained present during heavy rainfall. At the school, preparedness depended not only on training and infrastructure but also on practical systems such as power, communication equipment and the ability to function as an evacuation centre.

Finally, the visits showed the importance of considering **different forms of vulnerability**. These included older people, people with chronic health conditions, ethnic minority communities, persons with disabilities, children from poor households and people living in remote locations. These factors affected both exposure to the disaster and households' and institutions' capacity to recover.

3. Key Field-Level Learning

The field observations broadly reinforced several issues raised during the workshop:

- Flexible cash assistance can support household recovery when it is aligned with actual livelihood needs and market conditions.
- Livelihood recovery may require continued support beyond the initial emergency phase, particularly where agricultural land and productive assets have been damaged.
- Community-based targeting and village-level communication are important strengths, but formal feedback channels need to remain visible and understood.
- Preparedness investments are most useful when training, infrastructure, equipment and local contingency arrangements reinforce one another.
- Continued attention to inclusion, remote communities and households with multiple vulnerabilities is important throughout recovery and preparedness activities.