



OPERATION UPDATE #2

Lesotho | Drought Emergency Appeal

Emergency appeal No: MDRLS008 Emergency appeal launched: 06/09/2024 Operational Strategy published: 30/10/2024	Glide No: DR-2024-000071-LSO
Operation update: #2 Date of issue: 20/02/2025	Timeframe covered by this update: 06/09/2024 - 16/10/2024
Operation timeframe: 06/00/2024 - 31/08/2025	Number of people being assisted: 87,381
Funding requirements (CHF): CHF 5 million for the IFRC Secretariat Ask CHF 7 million Federation-wide EA	DREF amount initially allocated: CHF 750,000



District Secretary, Mabulara handing over fruit trees in Maseru District

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Description of the crisis

Lesotho is experiencing severe food insecurity due to consecutive La Niña and El Niño phenomena from 2021 through 2023. The 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 rainfall seasons, marked by mild to moderate La Niña events, led to excessive rainfall and below-average crop production. The 2023/2024 El Niño further exacerbated the situation with dry conditions and heatwaves, significantly impacting crop yields. Despite increased planting efforts in 2023/2024, harvests were still below normal, causing maize prices to rise and increasing market reliance. The national crop performance for maize decreased by about 52% from the previous year, with current yields expected to last only three months in most regions. This decline led to increased food prices, and worsened food access for vulnerable households. Additionally, substitute food commodities like sorghum production also declined by over 86% in the 2023/24 period, further intensifying food insecurity and making it harder for households to find an alternative.

According to the LVAC report, 2024,¹ as of June 2024, half of Lesotho's ten districts were in crisis (IPC Phase 3) for food security, while the other five were classified as stressed (IPC Phase 2). The entire country is expected to reach crisis level (IPC Phase 3) by October 2024, highlighting the urgent need for action to save lives and protect livelihoods. According to the latest reports, an estimated 699,049 individuals in both urban and rural areas are facing food insecurity, highlighting the widespread food needs across Lesotho. An estimated 699,049 people facing food insecurity and requiring 59,549 tons of food, valued at M1,149,302,744. Furthermore, the food insecurity negatively impacted the already fragile household with chronic malnutrition, with a stunting rate of 33.2% among children under five and widespread micronutrient deficiencies, including high anemia rates.² The situation led to an outbreak of livestock diseases, crop failures, significant increases in the prices of staple foods and further worsened the country's food insecurity situation. The southern districts of Mafeteng and Mohale's Hoek recorded cases of blue tongue disease outbreak which resulted in death of over 300 sheep and approximately 1,810 livestock.

The Government of Lesotho took action by declaring a state of emergency and appealed to local and international development partners for immediate assistance. In response, a National Drought Response Plan was issued in July 2024, which identified both short-term and long-term humanitarian requirements to alleviate the effects of the drought. The Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS) has been on the front lines, working to ensure effective aid distribution and strengthen community resilience. The ongoing food insecurity crisis forced many families to resort to negative coping mechanisms for their survival. According to recent reports, at least 51% of households managed to keep their food consumption patterns stable, while 49% engaged negative coping strategies in response to food shortages. This negative coping mechanism were mostly adopted in rural households where many households reduced the frequency of their meals per day, opted for less expensive brands and decreased the portion sizes of their meals in order to meet their family's nutritional needs.

Furthermore, in terms of livelihood coping mechanisms, the data reveals that 42% resorted to stress coping strategies, while 7% found themselves in crisis situations, and 4% took emergency measures. Among the most prevalent stress coping strategies were borrowing money to purchase food or acquiring food on credit, while other families withdrew their children from school, prioritizing immediate food needs over education and certain households consumed their seed stocks, which jeopardizes their future agricultural productivity. Still other households reported selling their last female livestock, a critical resource that poses a significant threat to the sustainability of their livelihoods.

¹ Government of Lesotho, Nation warned of recent animal disease, March 2024, [Link](#)

² UNICEF, Lesotho: The Cost of Hunger in Africa, 2020, [Link](#)

Weather Forecast and its impact for the next three months

According to the [Lesotho Meteorological Services](#) Rainfall and Temperature Outlook for October 2024 to March 2025, Lesotho is likely to receive below normal rainfall for the season October to December 2024 except for the southwestern and extreme northern parts where normal to above normal rains are expected during the same period. The forecast for the period November 2024 to January 2025 will be dominated by above normal rainfall conditions and few areas are expected to receive normal to above normal rainfall. The January to March 2025 outlook showed a likelihood of normal to above normal rainfall except for the eastern parts which are likely to receive normal to below normal rainfall. Temperature outlook for the entire 2024/25 rainfall season is expected to be mostly above long term averages. This means that some areas especially on the Eastern are going to experience challenges insufficient rains which may not be enough for rain-fed agriculture and reduced capacity of the available water sources.

Summary of response

To date, the Lesotho Red Cross Society (LRCS), with the support of IFRC and other partners contributed to the drought response as follows:

- During the rain-fed cropping season of 2024/25, 500 households out of 2,500 (20%) were reached with maize and beans seeds. More beneficiaries will be targeted under winter cropping if extra funding is acquired.
- A total of 2,500 households (50%) out of 5,000 were reached with vegetable seeds, shed nets and fruit trees.
- 398 lead farmers out of target of 40 were trained on agricultural practices and homestead gardening. More were trained so that they help to support farmers who are scattered across the 5 districts.
- On cash assistance, first cash collection by beneficiaries moved from initially 67% to 94.8% within that first payment and this increase was because there was switching to C-PAY from ECONET who experienced challenges in delivering cash to households in some remote locations.

Table 1 - Summary of cash payments and collection by beneficiaries

Cash payments	Beneficiaries targeted	Actual Beneficiaries Reached	Variance	Percent (%)
First payment	2,494	2,365	129	94.8
Second payment	2,494	2,363	131	94.7

- On second cash transfer, 2,363 households (94.7%) were reached translating to 11,825 people out of 2,494 HHs registered households across 5 districts at the end November 2024. Monitoring continues to reach all targeted beneficiaries.
- The first PDM exercise was conducted and revealed some of the following:
 - **84%** of respondents expressed high levels of satisfaction with cash assistance.
 - On cash utilization, **91%** spent on food; **48%** spent on farm inputs, mostly fertilisers; **42%** used for household items and **37%** directed towards school fees and uniforms for their children. This is good feedback to the operation because respondents prioritised household basic needs such as food and farm inputs which are key in addressing the impacts of the drought.
 - On reporting problems or seeking help on Red Cross assistance, **39%** of respondents indicated that they were aware while **61%** were not. This finding means that the project team should strengthen information dissemination regarding programme.
- 11,592 people were reached with health prevention, WASH campaigns and PGI messages integrated during farm input distributions and lead farmers training. More message dissemination will be

promoted as the operation scale up.

- 21,592 people were reached with CEA activities using common channels used are LRCS Toll free number, District Secretaries, volunteers, local leaders and government officers where beneficiaries reported their grievances, and any issues related to drought operation.
- 1,592 people were reached with climate-smart agriculture techniques and food preservation as a measure to address climate change impacts.

Overview of the host National Society and ongoing response

In May 2024, the IFRC released CHF 711,203 from the Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) as to support 12,500 people with emergency relief through multi-purpose cash grants, livelihood support through smart agriculture initiatives, promotion of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and health. This was later scaled-up to an Emergency Appeal with a funding ask (Secretariat) of CHF 5 million.

LRCS has total of 62 staff members across various departments, including Finance and Administration, Disaster Management, First Aid, Communications, Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting (PMER), Health and Social Services and Senior Management to support implementation and provide technical assistance. Furthermore, each district has one branch manager with over 200 volunteers with extensive experience in managing disaster management. LRCS is well represented at national and district level as part of disaster management teams responsible for overseeing and implementing DRR interventions.

To date, the LRCS, with the support of IFRC Emergency Appeal has been contributing to the government's response operations as follows:

- The LRCS conducted the identification, validation and registration of 2,500 beneficiaries in Quthing, Maseru, Mafeteng, Qacha's Nek, and Mohale's Hoek districts using the government enumerated list of people affected by the drought. The LRCS District Secretaries continued to facilitate dissemination of information about the drought response activities such as provision of cash assistance, farm inputs, WASH rehabilitation/ construction, health promotion and integration of PGI and CEA.
- LRCS initiated the sim card registration for beneficiaries to receive mobile money using the pre-qualified Finance Service Providers (FSP) namely VODACOM and ECONET. LRCS will continue to work with the FSP to deliver cash to beneficiaries and engage regularly to iron out challenges that may arise while distributing cash. LRCS officially launched the drought operation in June where key stakeholders were represented like IFRC delegates, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, DMA executive and representatives of key stakeholders (District Administrator, Local government, Forestry, Agriculture, Social Development, DMA and Media houses) from the five districts. As part of technical support, LRCS conducted 10 internal meetings within the 5 districts to support project roll out, supervision and planning. This also formed part of providing information and their roles about the project to the District Disaster Management teams. The LRCS SG and the Disaster Manager participate in Humanitarian Coordination Team (HCTs) meetings both strategic and technical respectively.
- LRCS with technical support from the IFRC, continues to undertake resource mobilization targeting both internal and external donors. For instance, in July, LRCS hosted the USAID Delegate who visited Quthing to appreciate the drought situation. In addition, the UN Secretariat also visited Qacha's Nek to monitor LRCS activities. As part of the Federation-wide EA approach, LRCS also submitted concept notes to USAID, Japanese Embassy, WFP (Lesotho) and Turkish Embassy.

NEEDS ANALYSIS

The country faces one of the worst droughts in decades, exacerbated by El Niño weather conditions during the 2023/2024 rainy season. The situation has come at a time when 2.04 million people across the country are already facing food insecurity as revealed by the IPC Report 2023. Some of the drivers of food insecurity include poor agricultural practices in the face of climate change, floods, high food prices, fall armyworms, and cassava brown streak disease. For the 2023/2024 season, the prolonged dry spells have been heavily impacting the food security situation in the country. The drought has not only affected the availability of food for humans but also livestock, and this calls for immediate support.

Food Security and Livelihoods:

Cumulative effect of drought weakened the agricultural capacity and worsened the access for staple foods for the already food insecure people. The agricultural production decreased over the years due to drought effect on agricultural land. This situation worsened for the harvest of early 2024.

The 2023/24, Summer cropping season was characterized by erratic rainfall and recurrent heat waves. Lesotho experienced delayed rainfalls which did not only negatively impact livelihoods and water sector but also household economic stability. The situation was exacerbated by the above normal temperature and recurrent heat waves that caused prolonged dryness of crops hence reducing the expected green harvest in March. The staple food prices increased putting most vulnerable households at risk. In addition, the anticipated weather condition also threatens the upcoming Winter cropping as above normal temperatures are expected. The Lesotho Meteorological Service reported that the situation worsened due to persistent heat waves and dry weather, causing premature drying of crops. Many households will likely continue relying heavily on food purchases at local markets to access food and other household needs. Despite sufficiently stocked markets, the communities are struggling due to low/ lack of income hence weak purchasing power.

In addition, livestock farmers faced challenges due to an El Niño-induced outbreak of animal diseases in mid-March. The Government of Lesotho issued an alert about the occurrence of Bluetongue disease in Maseru and Mafeteng, where at least 1,880 sheep were affected, resulting in 300 deaths. This situation significantly impacted families reliant on livestock production as a primary source of income, compelling them to adopt negative coping strategies to survive. The food security and livelihood situation led to food insecure and limited access to income hence need for humanitarian assistance to help the affected families with their immediate household needs by saving lives and protecting their livelihoods.

Health:

Lesotho struggle with persistent malnutrition issues, especially prevalent among children aged 2-3, with stunting affecting nearly 34.5 percent. Based on World Health Organization (WHO) criteria, approximately 40% of children under five years old in Lesotho experience chronic malnutrition or stunting. These concerning rates are particularly pronounced in the mountainous regions of Thaba Tseka, Mokhotlong and Qacha's Nek. The ramifications of malnutrition are multifaceted, encompassing hindered mental and physical development, weakened immune systems and perpetuating a cycle of intergenerational malnutrition. There is need for urgent and targeted interventions to break this cycle and safeguard the health and well-being of Lesotho's youngest citizens.

Additionally, deficiencies in essential micronutrients such as iron and vitamin A pose significant challenges impacting over half of children under the age of 5. This underscores the need for targeted interventions to address malnutrition comprehensively and improve the health outcomes of Lesotho's young population. Food preparation and handling is usually a problem especially in families that have children below age of 5.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene:

The drought situation had significant impact hence disrupted water sources capacity and limiting access to clean water, both in rural and urban areas. However, the repercussions were particularly acute in rural regions, where communities heavily rely on unprotected water sources like springs and wells. Many water sources in targeted districts require rehabilitation, while in other areas need a pressing need of construction of water infrastructure to facilitate other services like homestead gardening.

Moreover, the water scarcity experienced from January to March was linked to the El Niño phenomenon, and these events not only hindered households' access to clean water but also had detrimental effects on both rain-fed and irrigated agriculture. Hence, there's a critical need to rehabilitate existing water sources and construct new ones to enhance preparedness for similar future shocks. In rural areas of Lesotho, diarrheal cases pose significant public health concerns and are a leading cause of morbidity and mortality among infants and young children. These illnesses often coincide with periods of water scarcity like droughts. Therefore, disseminating information on sanitation and hygiene practices will be crucial in preventing diseases that could affect these vulnerable communities.

Protection, Gender, and Inclusion:

Farmers predominantly rely on rain-fed agriculture and small livestock, leaving them particularly susceptible to the impacts of climate-induced shocks. In times of crises and emergencies, vulnerable demographics, including women, girls, children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities, face heightened risks and endure severe hardships. Women and girls confront significant obstacles such as sexual exploitation and gender-based violence, exacerbating their vulnerability. Meanwhile, individuals living with disabilities and the elderly often encounter challenges accessing timely information, compounding their difficulties during emergencies. The interventions will incorporate marginalized populations, such as children, women, vulnerable adults, and people living with disabilities, who are more likely to experience adverse outcomes during drought emergencies.

Relative to other segments of society, vulnerable groups often lack adequate resources, leaving them exposed to various forms of abuse and exploitation. Addressing this vulnerability requires prioritizing the needs of these marginalized populations and bolstering community awareness to mitigate the situation. By elevating awareness and prioritizing support for vulnerable groups, we can reduce the burden of vulnerability and foster more inclusive and resilient communities. It is imperative to prioritize addressing the escalating safeguarding issues that are emerging due to drought. These encompass not only traditional concerns but also newer, pressing issues like child safeguarding and gender-based violence. These issues demand urgent attention and comprehensive strategies to ensure the safety and well-being of vulnerable individuals.

Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery:

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

The anticipated winter conditions (May, June, July) suggest that the country may experience below-normal

precipitation (including snow), leading to potential adversely effects on winter crops and subsequently income derived from crop sales. This could impede farmers' ability to procure seeds for the upcoming summer planting season. Consequently, a pre-seasonal cropping assessment is necessary to evaluate ground conditions and assess farmers' readiness for the summer season. It's crucial to consider both seasons when providing support to affected communities, given that 80% of rural communities depend on rain-fed agriculture as their primary livelihood activity. The lack of climate-smart agriculture practices and food preservation skills further inhibits communities' productivity. Unlike commercial farmers, most subsistence farmers heavily rely on rain-fed agriculture, often utilizing low-quality seeds and limited access to other to farm inputs, resulting in reduced harvest yields.

Moreover, limited understanding and access to early warning messages hinder communities' ability to prepare and respond to disasters proactively. Disseminating early warning information is particularly critical for farmers, schools, and the wider community, yet vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people living with disabilities, herders, and farmers are often marginalized in this process. Efforts to bridge this gap in information dissemination are essential for enhancing community resilience with effective disaster preparedness initiatives.

Community Engagement and Accountability:

The operation will ensure that community engagement and accountability is at the centre of the operation. In order to uphold these, LRCS will employ Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) tools to identify needs and guide the targeting process. Public gatherings overseen by local authorities, will be convened to pinpoint vulnerable individuals based on pre-established selection and targeting criteria. Moreover, the operation will facilitate two-way communication approach and gather community feedback through use of suggestion boxes and help desks during all forms of interactions with the communities. This approach aims to ensure transparency, inclusivity, and responsiveness in the delivery of assistance and services.

Operational risk assessment

This operation has aligned itself with the IFRC Risk Management Framework where risks are identified, analyzed, monitored and managed to mitigate their associated impacts. The LRCS and IFRC Surge teams will be conducting monthly meetings to review and monitor the identified risks and discuss mitigation measures. The National Society has the Finance Director as Risk Management Focal person who coordinates issues related to risk management. However, the rollout of risk mitigation measures is under the responsibility of the Secretary General in liaison with the Head of Cluster Delegation in Pretoria.

The LRCS already developed a risk management register in line the IFRC Risk Management Framework which will be reviewed and regularly updated. The table below provides a summary on some of the risks identified and their mitigation measures:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Security Risk	Low	High	LRCS will use the mobile FSPs for cash transfers.
Inadequate Targeting and duplication of effort	Medium	High	The intense verification exercise will be conducted working closely with relevant stakeholders.
Inflation and Market	Low	Medium	Conduct market assessment to monitor the situation.

Fraud and Corruption:	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LRCS will put measures in place to allow transparency in all its procurement process. - LRCS will continuously review the suppliers register and conduct background checks to suppliers and service contractors.
Limited funding	High	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the available resource mobilization strategy and plans - Hire a resource mobilization person to focus on fund raising - Prioritize activity implementation

B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

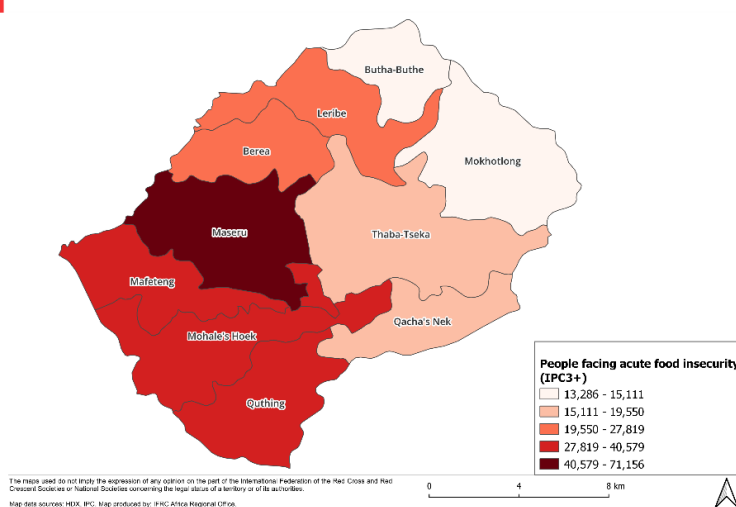
Update on the strategy

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

- Inclusion of new seed varieties wheat, beans and peas to support 1,500 beneficiaries under winter season. This will translate into reaching a total of 2,000 households (500 households already supported under rain-fed and 1,500 households will be new target under winter cropping season)
- Under rain-fed, only 500 beneficiaries were reached due to limited funds and therefore the LRCS will prioritize support for winter cropping targeting crop seeds such as wheat, peas and beans. These seed varieties are best suited for winter cropping as shown in table below.

Procurement and distribution of winter crops (wheat, peas, and beans)	Quantity
Wheat (4kgs) for 1500 HHHs	1,500
Peas (4kgs) 1500 HHHs	1,500
Beans (4kgs) for 1500HHs	1,500

Lesotho - Acute food insecurity




Above: The map above shows the affected districts

C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL REPORT

LRCS led implementation of key interventions and an analysis of performance in the targeted communities has been highlighted in different sectors aimed at mitigating the drought impacts. The operation integrated CEA approach to ensure community involvement, ownership and accountability. The detailed operational plan and key achievements made in the operation on intervention includes livelihood with multi-purpose cash, climate smart agriculture, WASH, Health and cross cutting sectors such as PGI, CEA including Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery.

STRATEGIC SECTORS OF INTERVENTION


 Food Security and Livelihoods	Female > 18: 11,700	Female < 18: 15,600
	Male > 18: 8,400	Male < 18: 14,300 Total target: 50,000 (10,000 HHs)
Objective:	Affected communities restore and improve their livelihoods	
Key Indicators:	Targets	Actual
# of beneficiaries identified to received farm inputs	10,000	2,500 (50%)
# of families who received seeds (maize and beans)	10,000	500 (10%)
# of households who receive trainings on agricultural practices and homestead gardening	10,000	398
# of households who received homestead gardening seeds (vegetables)	10,000	2500 (50%)
# of households who received fruit trees seedlings (apples and peaches)	10,000	2500 (50%)
# of post distribution conducted and reported	3	0
# of lead farmers trained to facilitate agricultural training sessions	40	398
Priority Actions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LRCS worked closely with Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Forestry, District Disaster Management Teams to distribute farm inputs (maize, beans, vegetable seeds and fruit trees). Total of 2,500 (50%) households out of 5,000 were reached with vegetable seeds, shed nets and fruit trees. 500 households out of 5,000 were reached with maize and beans under rain-fed cropping season due to limited funds. More beneficiaries will be targeted under winter cropping once funds are confirmed. 398 lead farmers out of 40 were trained on agricultural practices and homestead gardening. More were trained to help cover up for more farmers who are scattered across the 5 districts. Additionally, 11, 592 farmers were reached with Health prevention initiatives, and this number has been captured under Health and Care. PDM for distributed seeds will be integrated with the cash PDM which is planned to take place first week of February. 		



Seeds distribution in Qhoasing, Senqu river valley, Lesotho




Lead farmers training in Mohale's Hoek


 Multi-purpose cash assistance	Female > 18: 83	Female < 18: 7,800
	Male > 18: 42	Male < 18: 3900 Total target: 25,500 (5,000 HHs)
Objective:	To improve household food security and provision of immediate relief to affected families	
Key Indicators:	Targets	Actual
# of households of beneficiaries to receive cash assistance	5,000	2,500
# of households who received cash	5,000	2,365 (47.3%)
# of post distribution monitoring (PDM) conducted and reported	3	1
# of monitoring visits and engagement of communities that are documented on the use of cash	3	1
Priority Actions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,365 households (94%) out of 5,000 were reached with cash assistance in 5 targeted districts as at end of November 2024 with second payment reaching 11, 825 people. Monitoring of cash collection continues to be done to ensure all households receive the cash entitlements. • First cash payment collection was initially at 67% of the targeted 2494 HH but it rose to 94% after the NS switched from ECONET (The FSP had difficulties in delivering cash to very remote areas) to C-PAY which was the most preferred FSP by most beneficiaries. • On assessments, one (1) post distribution monitoring was conducted after cash distributions • The PDM exercise was conducted, and findings overall revealed the following; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Majority of respondents (84%) expressed high levels of satisfaction with the cash assistance, stating that they were very satisfied with the support received ○ Regarding the utilization of the cash received, majority (88%) reported having spent more than 75% of their cash primarily used on four key items: 91% of households allocated to food; 48% spent on farm inputs, mostly fertilisers; 42% used for household items and 37% directed towards school fees and uniforms for their children. This is good feedback to the operation because respondents prioritised household basic needs such as food and farm inputs which are key areas of addressing the impacts of the drought. ○ Regarding participants' information about how to report problems or seek help on Red Cross assistance, 39% were informed while 61% were not aware. This finding means that the project team should strengthen information dissemination regarding programme. • The second PDM has been planned to take place in February and a detailed report will be shared. • The District Secretaries and volunteers are continuing with follow up visits to ensure all that targeted households receive their cash. 		
<p>Case study of Lefu Rabele:</p> <p><i>Mr Lefu aged 49 years is one of the beneficiaries residing in Ha Sekhonyane at Makoabating council. His household size is 5 and has since been jobless for 5 years after his lower hand was cut off by a machine in Capetown. He expressed his delightfulness to have received cash amounting to 1,500 LSL owing to LRCS and IFRC supported drought emergency appeal.</i></p>		





Lefu Rabele showing his maize meal, rice and canned fish


 Health and Care	Female > 18: 898	Female < 18: 5, 345
	Male > 18: 450	Male < 18: 4, 899 Total target: 87,381 (17,473 HHs)
Objective:	To improve household dietary diversity while also improving behavioral WASH practices.	
Key Indicators:	Targets	Actual
# of nutrition campaigns conducted (2 per district)	10	4
# of people reached with health prevention activities	87,381	11,592
# of groups engaged on the health discussion, training or consultations (4 per district)	20	0
Priority Actions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four (4) nutrition campaigns were conducted in conjunction with the government-led nutrition, food security and breast-feeding campaigns in two districts namely Qacha's Nek and Quthing reaching 11 592 people. Other districts are yet to conduct their campaigns. Total of 11,592 farmers were reached 		

with health prevention integrated during the lead farmers training. More health prevention messages will be disseminated while supporting fellow framers in the communities.

 Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene	Female > 18: 898	Female < 18: 5,345	
	Male > 18: 450	Male < 18: 4,899	Total target: 87,381 (17,473 HHs)
Objective:	Promote community managed WASH services for the targeted populations to reduce health risks.		
Key Indicators:		Targets	Actual
# of rehabilitated and constructed water sources		6	0
# of people reached through WASH campaigns		87,381	11,592
Priority Activities:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five (5) water sources were recommended for rehabilitation across the districts with technical support from the Rural Water Supply in the districts. The recommended materials for rehabilitation will be procured once the NS receives Assessment reports from the Rural Water Supply. Total of 11,592 people were reached with WASH campaigns which was integrated into lead farmers training and farm input distributions. 			


 Protection, Gender and Inclusion	Female > 18: 898	Female < 18: 5,345	
	Male > 18: 450	Male < 18: 4,899	Total target: 87,381 (17,473 HHs)
Objective:	Promote equitable access by all to quality basic services by considering basic needs based on gender and other diversity factors		
Key Indicators:		Targets	Actual
# of households identified and registered beneficiaries representing vulnerable groups		5,000	0
# of community members reached through gender-based violence and child protection awareness campaigns, disaggregated by gender and age.		87,381	11,592
Priority Actions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted community validation meetings to ensure transparency and address grievances regarding the identified beneficiaries. This was key in ensuring that indeed the vulnerable groups, including chronically ill, physically challenged, orphan-headed households, elderly and large households are considered. Over 11,592 people were reached with PGI messages during cash & farm input distributions however more people will be reached as the operation scale up the activities. PGI initiatives were done during the verification, registration and CEA activities. A total of 398 lead farmers were trained on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and they will champion message dissemination as they support farmers in their respective locations. 			

 Community Engagement and Accountability	Female > 18: 4,009	Female < 18: 5,345
	Male > 18: 3,221	Male < 18: 4,899 Total target: 87,381 (17,473 HHs)
Objective:	Promote a community-centered approach and meaningful participation to address the diverse needs, priorities, and preferences of the affected population.	
Key Indicators:	Targets	Actual
# of people engaged and reached with CEA activities	87,381	11,592
# of established CEA Feedback approaches (using toll free line)	1	1
# of group discussions conducted (6 per district)	60	10
% of feedback collected that are successfully treated or responded to	100	80
Priority Actions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11,592 people were reached with CEA activities like awareness raising, community meetings and community feedback as part of enhancing active engagement and accountability on the LRCS drought operation. CEA was disseminated to beneficiaries and communities using LRCS Toll free number as a channel of reporting grievances and any issues related to drought operation but also through the District Secretaries, volunteers, local leaders and government officers, as much as most people utilized the LRCS Toll free number, in the community feedback sessions, the beneficiaries preferred volunteers as a better feedback channel. . 10 group discussions were conducted, and main areas of engagement was related to climate smart agriculture, food preservation, Psychosocial support (PSS), red cross movement, WASH and nutrition Nearly 80% of beneficiaries seeking feedback regarding LRCS activities were successfully treated or responded to. Most of the feedback was related to cash as beneficiaries expressed not receiving their cash or that it has delayed. Some of the feedback needed the NS could not give a solution like 'someone lost their phone and ID' however the team continued to provide feedback to the beneficiaries requesting for information. 		

 Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	Female > 18: 898	Female < 18: 5,345
	Male > 18: 450	Male < 18: 4,899 Total target: 87,370 (17,474 HHs)
Objective:	Capacitating communities to prepare for future shocks.	
Key Indicators:	Targets	Actual
# of participants trained on climate-smart agriculture techniques and food preservation methods, disaggregated by gender and age.	7,000	1,592


# of targeted communities receiving early warning messages based on the upcoming seasonal outlook.	20,000	10,000
# of Community-Based Response Teams (CBRTs) revived and trained, disaggregated by geographic area (7 groups with 20 members each).	140	0
Priority Actions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11,592 people were reached with climate-smart agriculture techniques and food preservation methods through trainings that were conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture. Through our volunteers and awareness raising campaigns 11,592 people were reached with early warning messages as part of preparedness for the upcoming season and this will continue to be scaled up to more communities. Training on CBRTs is yet to be conducted in February 2025. 		

Enabling approaches

	National Society Strengthening	
Objective:	Strengthen the National Society's capacity to deliver humanitarian Objective:	
Key Indicators:	Targets	Actual
# of technical volunteers recruited (Communications and DM)	2	2
# of volunteers insured	80	80
# of Branding and Visibility materials procured - banners (3), T-shirts (40) and Caps (40)	Banners (3) T-shirts (40) Cap (40)	6 Gazebos; 6 pieces of Red Table-cloth
Lessons learnt Workshop	1	0
Priority Actions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LRCS District Secretaries identified and recruited 80 volunteers to support the drought activities, additionally 2 technical volunteers were recruited to support the DM and Communications operations Visibility materials were procured; 6 Gazebos measuring 3*4.5m with carry bags and 6 pieces of Red Table-cloth to support LRCS and IFRC profiling. 		

	Coordination and Partnerships	
Objective:	Enhance coordination and partnerships among Movement and non-Movement partners to support stronger and more localized implementation approaches and effective response delivery	
Key Indicators:	Targets	Actual
# of project launch and introductory meeting targeting key stakeholders conducted	1	1

# of regular internal coordination meetings conducted involving partners (weekly, monthly)	28	15
# of external coordination meetings with DMA and other national actors (HCT, Inter-agency and cluster meetings)	12	4
# of market assessments conducted	1	0
# of assessment reports submitted	1	1 PDM
# of monitoring visits	28	15
Priority Actions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of technical support, LRCS conducted 15 internal coordination meetings targeting 5 districts to plan and monitor the implementation of activities. In addition, routine coordination and planning meetings have been conducted on weekly basis to update on progress, plan and monitor the drought situation. LRCS Disaster Manager and IFRC Ops Manager participates in clusters coordination meetings led by DMA and other various humanitarian agencies to share plans and updates. The LRCS SG and the Disaster Manager participate in Humanitarian Coordination Team (HCTs) meetings both strategic and technical respectively. 15 monitoring field visits were done involving LRCS and government officers to provide technical support on the drought operations. More monitoring visits will continue to be done to track the progress of implementation. 		
<p>Membership Coordination: The LRCS is currently cooperating and working with IFRC in the drought response to provide resources and technical support in programme operation and financial management through the Surge Ops Manager and Surge Finance respectively.</p>		
<p>Engagement with External Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LRCS in coordination with the IFRC continues to participate in DMA led drought coordination meetings (Cash, Health, WASH, Food Security and Livelihoods) in order to share updates and progress in the operation. The LRCS continues to engage with government line departments such as DMA, Rural Water Supply (WASH), Ministry of Health-on-health care promotion, Ministry of Agriculture on food security and livelihoods, Department of Social Development and coordinate with Meteorological department on weather forecast 		

	IFRC Secretariat Services	
Objective:	Provide leadership and policy guidance to the National Society, donors, and partners on programme operations.	
Key Indicators:	Targets	Actual
# of regional surge deployed (Ops Manager and Finance)	2	2

Risk registers are set up, mitigation measures identified and monitored once per month.	12	5
IFRC Monitoring and supervision	20	15
Priority Actions:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the IFRC surge system, Surge Operations Manager and Finance were deployed to provide technical support beginning October 2024. • IFRC Surge Operations and Finance continues to provide technical support to LRCS team in implementation of the operation. • 15 field monitoring were undertaken to the fields to deliver training support, deliver farm inputs and monitoring quality of activities being implemented. • In accordance with the IFRC Risk Management Framework, the operation is committed to identifying and analyzing risks associated with activities and operations on a monthly basis through a risk register. Risks will continue to be monitored and the register updates on regular basis for informed decision-making. • There are no security concerns in the country, but the situation is continuously being monitored. 		

D. FUNDING

To date, LRCS has received 13% of the total funding requested for the Federation Wide Appeal. This funding will significantly contribute to meeting the needs of the drought affected population. However, mobilization of more funds is underway. The following table shows an overview of the Federation Wide response:

Donor	Modality/ Area of Intervention	Districts	Pledge (CHF)	Remarks
Bi lateral and Domestic – ask				
-	-	-	-	-
IFRC Secretariat – ask CHF				
DREF loan	CVA, Climate smart trainings, Food Security and Livelihood (agricultural inputs), tree planting	Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek, Quthing, Qacha's Nek, and Thaba Tseka	CHF 750,000	
ECHO DG	CVA	Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek, Quthing, Qacha's Nek, and Thaba Tseka	CHF200 000	
Japanese Red Cross Society	CVA	Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek, Quthing, Qacha's Nek, and Thaba	CHF30,149.68	

		Tseka		
Monaco Red Cross	CVA	Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek, Quthing, Qacha's Nek, and Thaba Tseka	CHF10 000	
Netherlands Red Cross Society		Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek, Quthing, Qacha's Nek, and Thaba Tseka	CHF346,148	
		Sub total	1,336,297.68	
Total Federation Wide - ask				
		Total	1,336,297.68	

Contact Information

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

Lesotho Red Cross Society:

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

At the IFRC:

- **IFRC Country Cluster Delegation:** Mr Kopano Masilo, Head of the Delegation; email: kopano.masilo@ifrc.org, phone: +27 66 3203886
- **IFRC Regional Office for Africa:** Rui Alberto Oliveira, Regional Operations Lead; email: rui.oliveira@ifrc.org, phone: +254 780 422276
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For IFRC Resource Mobilization and Pledges support:

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

For In-Kind donations and Mobilization table support:

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

For Performance and Accountability support:

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

How we work

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