



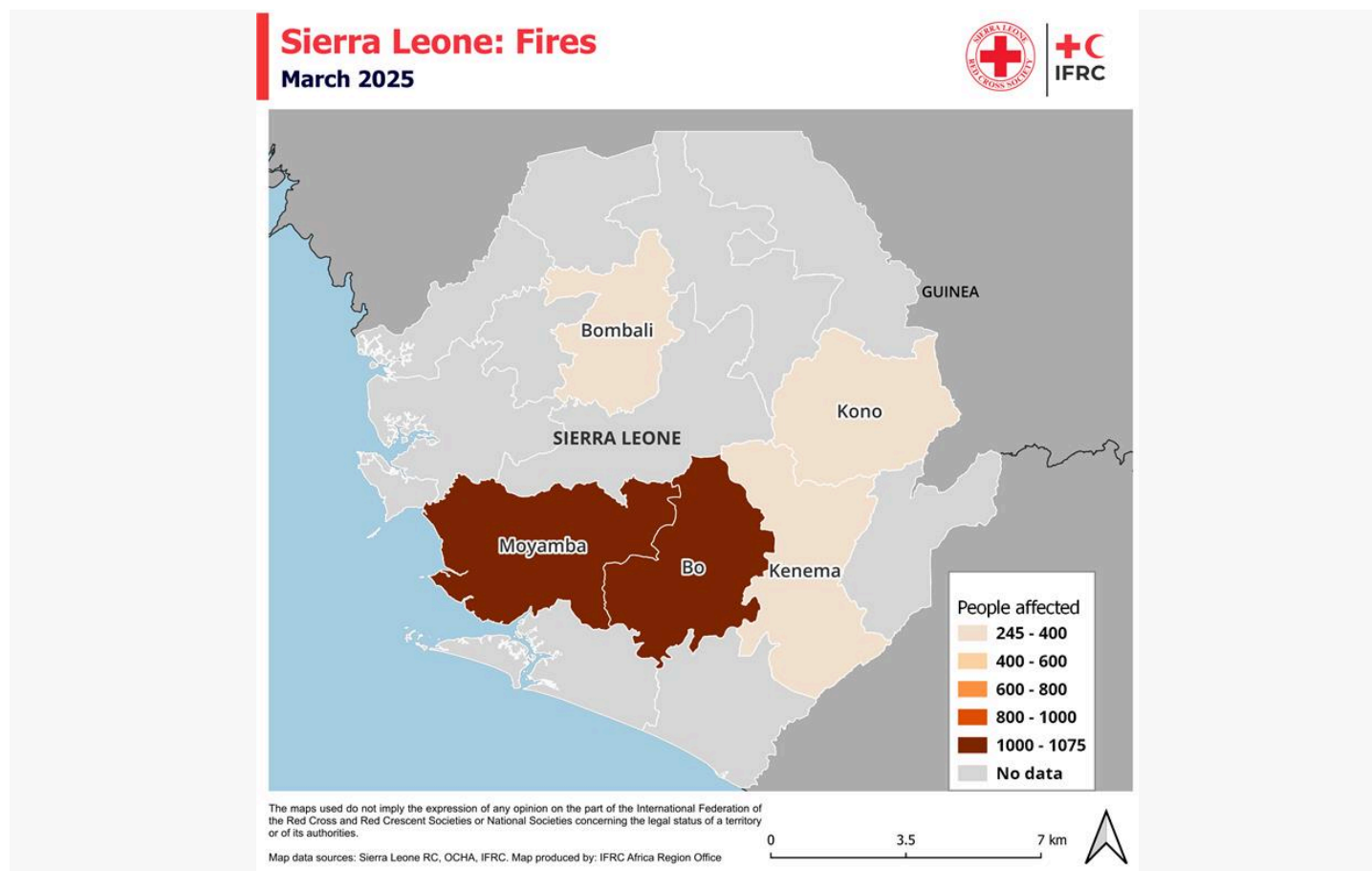
Volunteers during initial assessment

Appeal: <b>MDRSL018</b>	Country: <b>Sierra Leone</b>	Hazard: <b>Fire</b>	Type of DREF: <b>Response</b>
Crisis Category: <b>Yellow</b>	Event Onset: <b>Sudden</b>	DREF Allocation: <b>CHF 270,354</b>	
Glide Number: <b>-</b>	People Affected: <b>4,180 people</b>	People Targeted: <b>2,980 people</b>	
Operation Start Date: <b>28-03-2025</b>	Operation Timeframe: <b>5 months</b>	Operation End Date: <b>31-08-2025</b>	DREF Published: <b>02-04-2025</b>
Targeted Areas: <b>Eastern, Northern, Southern</b>			

# Description of the Event

## Date of event

19-03-2025



## What happened, where and when?

Sierra Leone is highly vulnerable to disasters such as fires, floods, landslides, and windstorms, with fire outbreaks being particularly prevalent during the dry season. The Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency had previously warned of an increased risk of fire hazards due to the effects of climate change, underscoring the urgent need for enhanced preparedness and mitigation efforts.

Since the beginning of 2025, the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) has recorded 55 fire incidents across the country, with 16 occurring in the Western Area alone. These fires have caused widespread destruction, severely impacting homes, businesses, and public institutions. The increasing frequency and scale of these incidents highlight the urgent need for stronger fire prevention measures, community awareness, and a more robust disaster response system.

Between 13 and 21 March 2025, a series of devastating fires swept through multiple locations, leaving a trail of destruction and displacement. In Freetown, a fire at Race Course Road, Up Gun, engulfed 26 spare parts shops and four vehicles, resulting in an estimated financial loss of NLe 6,480,000. While no fatalities were recorded, the economic toll was severe, particularly for a motor spare parts dealership that lost goods valued at NLe 6,105,000, along with cash stored in safes. On 13 March, a fire in Makintay Village destroyed 21 houses, displacing 245 people. The following day, another fire in Kenema District razed 19 houses, leaving 360 people homeless, while a wildfire in Kpetema Village, Bo District, consumed 45 houses and 13 rice barns, displacing 1,075 people. On 16 March, Ngiya Village in Moyamba District suffered the loss of 36 houses, affecting 1,035 people. In Faada Village, Kono District, a wildfire originating from farmlands spread to homes on 19 March, destroying 22 houses, displacing 265 people, and tragically claiming the lives of two children while leaving two others with severe injuries.

Following this tragic incident, NDMA urgently appealed to partners for support in responding to fire emergencies across the country. On 21 March, an explosion in Freetown's Mountain Cut area triggered a fire that destroyed three houses, affecting eight households and 26 families.

The primary cause of these widespread fires has been linked to the burning of farmlands, a common agricultural practice that, when

uncontrolled, quickly spreads to residential areas. Additionally, structural vulnerabilities in urban settlements and sudden explosions have exacerbated the damage. The recurring nature of these fires highlights the critical need for community-led fire prevention initiatives, improved urban planning policies, and comprehensive disaster risk reduction strategies.

In response to these emergencies, NDMA, in collaboration with the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society (SLRCS) and other humanitarian partners, is conducting assessments to determine the full extent of the damage and to prioritize urgent assistance. Emergency response teams have been deployed to provide life-saving aid, including emergency shelter, food, and essential household items, while also supporting long-term recovery efforts. NDMA continues to appeal to partners and donors for support in restoring livelihoods, rebuilding homes, and strengthening community resilience. Strengthening collaboration between government agencies, humanitarian actors, and affected communities will be crucial in preventing future fire disasters and enhancing the country’s overall disaster preparedness and response capacity.

While initial fire incidents were reported since 9 March it was at small scale and within NDMA response capacity. The date of 19 March is considered the trigger date based on an official assessment confirming significant impact, and a request from NDMA on the said date for Red Cross and other partners to provide timely assistance



Kpetema Village - Bo District



Ngiya Village-Moyamba



Houses on fire



SLRCS community based volunteers conducting search and rescue



Fire incident in Freetown

## Scope and Scale

Between 13 and 21 March 2025, a series of catastrophic fire outbreaks wreaked havoc across multiple districts in Sierra Leone, causing unprecedented destruction, tragic loss of life, and widespread displacement. The most severely affected localities include Freetown, Kpetema, Makaintay, Menima Koya, Ngiya, and Faada, with approximately 4,180 people (836 households) displaced. A total of 146 houses were completely destroyed, while many others were partially damaged, leaving countless families without homes, belongings, and livelihoods. These individuals now face extreme vulnerability as they struggle to survive in the aftermath of the fires.

The displaced population heavily depends on the goodwill of host families and other community members, who themselves are coping with limited resources. This dependence has further intensified the crisis, as host families are increasingly unable to support the



displaced, putting additional strain on an already fragile situation.

The fires have caused widespread destruction across several locations:

- Bombali District (Makaintay Village) (13 March): 21 houses destroyed, displacing 245 people.
- Kenema District (14 March): 19 houses destroyed, leaving 360 people homeless.
- Bo District, Kpetema Village, (14 March): 45 houses and 13 rice barns destroyed, displacing 1,075 people.
- Moyamba District, Ngiya Village (16 March): 36 houses destroyed, displacing 1,035 people.
- Kono District, Faada Village (19 March): A wildfire originating from farmlands destroyed 22 houses, displacing 265 people. The fire also resulted in two major injuries and two tragic deaths.

Urban areas have also experienced severe damage:

- Freetown – Race Course Road, Up Gun (19 March): A fire destroyed 26 spare parts shops and four vehicles, causing estimated financial losses of NLe 6,480,000. Although no fatalities were reported, the fire severely impacted hundreds of livelihoods, including a motor spare parts dealership that lost goods worth NLe 6,105,000. The densely populated area may have affected close to 1,200 people.
- Freetown – Mountain Cut (21 March): A sudden explosion triggered a fire that destroyed three houses, directly affecting eight households, comprising 26 families.

The primary cause of these fires has been traced to uncontrolled farmland burning, which spread rapidly to residential areas, intensifying the destruction. Homes, food supplies, essential belongings, and livelihoods have been obliterated, leaving affected individuals and families in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

Moreover, the strain on host families providing temporary shelter has become increasingly unsustainable. Their already limited resources are depleting quickly, resulting in significant livelihood losses, including dwindling food stocks, household items, and other critical resources. This escalating vulnerability is further compromising their ability to support the displaced, worsening the overall humanitarian crisis.

The scale and severity of these fire incidents demand immediate, coordinated, and well-resourced humanitarian intervention. Addressing the critical needs of affected communities such as shelter, food, healthcare, livelihood restoration, and psychosocial support is essential to prevent further suffering, restore dignity, and rebuild the lives of those affected by this unprecedented disaster.

## Previous Operations

Has a similar event affected the same area(s) in the last 3 years?	Yes
Did it affect the same population group?	No
Did the National Society respond?	-
Did the National Society request funding form DREF for that event(s)	-
If yes, please specify which operation	-

**If you have answered yes to all questions above, justify why the use of DREF for a recurrent event, or how this event should not be considered recurrent:**

-

### Lessons learned:

Lessons Learned from the 2022 Funkia Fire Incident

- Awareness-raising efforts involving technical experts and community volunteers significantly enhanced community knowledge of fire prevention. Technical experts from the power distribution agency conducted sessions on the dangers of illegal connections and their role in causing fire incidents, resulting in improved community understanding of preventive measures. Community-based volunteers effectively reinforced these messages at the local level.
- Regular market assessments and adapting interventions to changing market conditions were essential for maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of cash assistance. Timely adjustments to cash transfer amounts based on market fluctuations ensured beneficiaries could meet their needs effectively.
- Clear communication of roles, responsibilities, and processes is critical for building trust and minimizing misunderstandings. Providing accessible information about Red Cross support mechanisms enhanced community understanding and cooperation during



response efforts.

- Meaningful engagement with communities enhances ownership, accountability, and sustainability. Supporting local committees promoted inclusive decision-making and better governance, fostering resilience within the community.
- Digital systems improve efficiency, accuracy, and transparency in beneficiary management. Implementing digital registration and verification systems streamlined processes, minimized errors, and accelerated validation. Engaging community committees in these processes further improved accuracy and acceptance.
- Clearly communicating distribution processes, eligibility criteria, and selection procedures builds trust and promotes accountability. Transparency in how beneficiaries were selected and supported contributed to community acceptance and reduced disputes.
- Providing cash support for purchasing essential items and rebuilding homes was more empowering and dignified than pre-procured item distribution. Beneficiaries valued the flexibility and autonomy cash assistance provided, allowing them to address their specific needs effectively.
- Community committees are valuable resources for outreach and awareness-raising. Utilizing local committees to disseminate information increased participation and improved community awareness of response efforts.
- Robust feedback systems enhance accountability and responsiveness to community needs. Establishing diverse communication channels empowered communities to contribute actively to shaping the response.

## Current National Society Actions

### Start date of National Society actions

19-03-2025

Health	Sierra Leone Red Cross Society (SLRCS) volunteers are actively providing psychosocial support and first-aid services to fire victims, ensuring immediate care and comfort during this critical period. To date, 24 fire victims have received first-aid assistance, demonstrating the National Society's commitment to addressing urgent health needs and offering compassionate support to those affected.
Coordination	<p>Since the onset of the disaster, the NS has been actively coordinating with relevant authorities, including the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) and local leaders, to assess the situation, plan effective responses, and mobilize resources for immediate assistance.</p> <p>At the national level, the SLRCS Headquarters Team has been participating in coordination meetings with the NDMA to align response strategies and ensure a unified approach. At the branch level, Branch Managers and Disaster Management focal points are working closely with local leaders and other partners to assess the full extent of the damage and address urgent needs.</p> <p>These coordinated efforts are focused on addressing immediate concerns such as providing first Aid, securing emergency shelter, distributing food, and ensuring basic needs are met for displaced families. Additionally, coordination efforts are aimed at enhancing information sharing, planning effective interventions, and mobilizing resources to support the ongoing response.</p> <p>The collaboration between SLRCS, NDMA, local leaders, and other partners has been instrumental in developing this response plan, ensuring immediate relief efforts while also laying a solid foundation for building long-term resilience within the affected communities.</p>
National Society Readiness	<p>SLRCS maintains a strong physical presence across all five affected locations, with a network of active volunteers, qualified staff, branch disaster teams, and Community-Branch Disaster Management Committees (BDMCs). The branches are also equipped with Branch Disaster Response Teams (BDRTs) and Rapid Response Teams, all of which have been actively engaged in the initial response efforts, including evacuation operations and immediate relief assistance.</p> <p>To ensure a well-coordinated and effective response, ongoing internal meetings and</p>



	briefings are being held with various support departments and units within the National Society (NS). This collaborative approach is essential for optimizing resource mobilization and enhancing operational efficiency.
<b>Assessment</b>	<p>Following the recent fire incidents, the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society (SLRCS), through its Branch Managers, has been actively conducting assessments to determine the extent of the damage and the immediate needs of affected communities. Preliminary findings from SLRCS volunteers and staff indicate the following priority needs:</p> <p>Immediate Humanitarian Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food and Non-Food Items: Provision of essential food supplies such as rice, onion, salt, sugar, and cooking oil, along with non-food items including foam mattresses, clothing, cooking utensils, and other household essentials.</li> <li>• Cash Assistance: Distribution of both conditional and unconditional cash transfers to support vulnerable fire victims in addressing their urgent needs.</li> <li>• Psychosocial Support and Emergency First Aid: Providing essential mental health support and first aid services to affected individuals to alleviate trauma and physical injuries.</li> <li>• Fire Management Awareness: Conducting awareness-raising activities to educate communities about fire prevention, safety measures, and effective response practices.</li> <li>• Shelter Support: Providing temporary shelter solutions for families displaced by the fires.</li> </ul> <p>Intermediate Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Livelihood Support: Offering cash transfers to both fire victims and host families to aid recovery, restore livelihoods, and promote economic resilience.</li> </ul> <p>Long-Term Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity Building: Strengthening the skills of volunteers and community members through continuous training on fire prevention, preparedness, and response, focusing on stakeholders across all five affected districts.</li> </ul>
<b>Resource Mobilization</b>	<p>SLRCS, in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), conducted a rapid assessment to evaluate the impact of the fire incidents across the country. Based on the findings, the SLRCS has developed a comprehensive response plan aimed at addressing the urgent needs of affected communities.</p> <p>This response plan has been instrumental in preparing this DREF application and has been shared with Partner National Societies (PNSs) to facilitate resource mobilization efforts. However, as of the preparation of this DREF application, no funding has been secured.</p>
<b>Activation Of Contingency Plans</b>	<p>Since the initial small-scale fire incidents in Freetown, SLRCS has developed a contingency plan for fire emergencies, which has now been activated in response to the widespread fire outbreaks occurring across the country. The SLRCS emergency response team, comprising dedicated staff and volunteers, is working closely with the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) to provide essential support to affected communities.</p> <p>SLRCS is actively providing psychosocial support, conducting community engagement, and carrying out risk communication activities to raise awareness and promote safety measures. These efforts are part of an ongoing process to closely monitor the evolving situation and ensure a well-coordinated response.</p> <p>The NDMA officially requested the involvement of SLRCS, emphasizing the critical role of the Red Cross in supporting both victims and host communities during this crisis. SLRCS remains committed to collaborating with national authorities and humanitarian partners to deliver effective and timely assistance to those in need.</p>

# IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	<p>The IFRC Country Cluster Delegation in Freetown has been actively providing technical expertise to SLRCS to strengthen its capacity for humanitarian assistance, particularly in hard-to-reach areas. This support includes coordinating assistance from IFRC membership, aiding organizational development, and representing SLRCS in international forums.</p> <p>Since the onset of the recent fire incidents affecting five districts, the IFRC has maintained close communication with the SLRCS, offering technical guidance and ensuring effective coordination. The IFRC has been instrumental in supporting the SLRCS to update the GO-Platform for accurate data reporting and coordination. Additionally, it is facilitating the development of a DREF application to secure critical humanitarian aid.</p> <p>Although no formal funding commitments have been made yet, the IFRC continues to actively facilitate communication between SLRCS and potential partners. The IFRC Country Office in Freetown remains dedicated to assisting SLRCS in addressing immediate humanitarian needs while focusing on long-term recovery and resilience-building efforts.</p>
Participating National Societies	<p>The NS used to host to PNS, including Finnish and British Red Cross Societies. However, British Red Cross has closed its operations in the country, leaving Finish Red Cross as the only Partner National Society (PNS).</p> <p>The NS has shared a comprehensive situational report and response plan with PNS to ensure a well-coordinated response. The SLRCS is actively engaging with these partners to explore potential support and collaboration. While discussions are ongoing, no formal funding commitments have been made at this time.</p>

## ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) does not have a physical presence in Sierra Leone but provides remote support through its delegation in Abidjan. While it is currently offering communications and capacity-building support to SLRCS, no formal commitment has been made by the ICRC to support the ongoing Fire Response as of the time the DREF was submitted.

## Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	Yes
National authorities	<p>The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) leads disaster preparedness and response efforts in Sierra Leone. Following the authorities' call for assistance, emergency meetings have been convened to mobilize support from humanitarian organizations to address the urgent needs of fire affected populations.</p> <p>SLRCS has been actively providing first aid, while the NDMA has concentrated on assessing the situation, coordinating search and rescue operations, and engaging partners to secure resources for the response.</p> <p>Despite the severity of the situation, particularly in the capital, Freetown, no formal funding commitments have been made as the NDMA continues its resource mobilization efforts. Additionally, the NDMA has reached out to the SLRCS for support in responding to fire incidents in the southern and eastern regions of the country, where the situation is critical, and the presence of other humanitarian partners is limited.</p>
UN or other actors	No commitment had been made by any actor in country

### Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

Since the onset of the disaster, the NS has been actively coordinating its response with both internal and external partners within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. As an auxiliary to public authorities, the SLRCS maintains robust collaboration with government entities at both district and national levels.

The SLRCS actively participates in coordination meetings and working group forums organized in partnership with public authorities. These platforms are essential for information sharing, planning, analysis, and strategic coordination. Response teams are dedicated to ensuring effective engagement, coordination, and collaboration with government agencies and other stakeholders at all levels, enhancing the overall efficiency and impact of the response efforts.

## Needs (Gaps) Identified



### Shelter Housing And Settlements

The recent fire incidents have caused extensive damage within the affected communities, leaving a significant number of families without shelter and essential household items. A rapid assessment conducted following the disasters revealed that 143 buildings were completely destroyed, resulting in 596 households becoming homeless. While some families have sought temporary accommodation with host families and community members, a substantial number are still struggling to find shelter.

The destruction of essential belongings, such as furniture, cooking utensils, bedding, and other household items, has further exacerbated the situation, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive shelter reconstruction and essential household item replacement.

The assessment findings emphasize that the primary focus of the response should be on:

- Rebuilding destroyed houses to provide permanent and safe shelter for affected families.
- Replacing essential household items and Non-Food Items (NFIs), including blankets, mats, kitchen kits, and cooking utensils, to restore basic living standards.
- Supporting food security and livelihoods by providing food assistance and agricultural inputs to affected families.

Immediate action is needed to provide shelter, essential household items, and support for rebuilding homes and market infrastructure. Coordinated efforts will help affected communities recover and regain stability.



### Livelihoods And Basic Needs

The recent fire incidents have devastated the livelihoods of affected communities, compounding the ongoing challenges posed by climate change and frequent climatic shocks. Many households have lost their primary means of income, essential resources, and livelihood assets, plunging them into severe economic distress. Addressing the urgent needs of these families is critical to stabilizing their living conditions and supporting their path to recovery.

#### Food Assistance:

The destruction caused by the fires has severely limited access to food for affected households. With many families having lost their income sources, their ability to purchase food has been compromised. Host families providing temporary shelter to displaced individuals are also struggling to support them due to their own limited food reserves. Emergency food aid is urgently needed to assist both directly affected households and host families during this critical recovery period. Ensuring adequate food supply will be essential to prevent further deterioration of their already fragile conditions.

#### Support for Host Families:

The crisis has placed a significant burden on host families who, despite living in poverty and with limited resources, are providing food, shelter, and basic necessities to displaced individuals. The average size of these households ranges from 5 to 7 members, making it increasingly difficult to accommodate additional individuals without adequate support.

Many host families rely on agriculture and small businesses, both of which have been adversely affected by the fire. The indirect impact on host families is severe, with their economic activities disrupted and their resilience further weakened. Providing targeted support to these families is essential to prevent additional strain on their livelihoods and ensure they can continue offering refuge to those in need.

#### Cash Assistance and Livelihood Restoration:



Immediate cash assistance is crucial for both directly affected households and host families to meet their basic needs and rebuild their livelihoods. Providing cash grants will empower families to purchase food, replace lost assets, and restore their economic activities. Additionally, livelihood support initiatives, such as agricultural inputs and small business recovery assistance, will be vital in enabling affected communities to regain stability and enhance their resilience against future shocks.

A coordinated and comprehensive response aimed at providing food assistance, supporting host families, and promoting livelihood restoration will be essential in helping these communities rebuild their lives and achieve long-term recovery.



## Health

The health situation among fire-affected populations is rapidly deteriorating due to heightened vulnerability and inadequate living conditions. Displaced individuals, particularly women and children, are staying in open spaces or makeshift shelters without adequate protection from disease-carrying vectors, especially mosquitoes. This increased exposure significantly raises the risk of malaria infections and other preventable diseases.

The destruction of homes and farmlands has exacerbated health and sanitation vulnerabilities. Many families and farmers, forced to seek shelter in neighboring homes or temporary accommodations, face poor sanitation conditions that heighten the risk of water- and vector-borne diseases, including malaria and acute watery diarrhea. Additionally, the potential spread of cholera poses a severe threat that could further worsen the situation.

The NS has been actively responding to the crisis, deploying 40 volunteers to provide initial rescue operations, first aid, and psychosocial support. However, continued efforts are required to address the broader health concerns. Immediate intervention is essential to prevent a potential public health crisis by distributing mosquito nets, enhancing sanitation facilities, and implementing comprehensive awareness-raising and training programs to reduce the risk of disease transmission.

Beyond physical health risks, the emotional and psychological impact of the disaster has been profound. Many traders and their dependents are experiencing severe emotional distress due to the loss of livelihoods, homes, and personal belongings. The emotional toll of the disaster has led to widespread stress, anxiety, and grief. While the NS has already initiated mental health support, continued interventions are necessary to address the long-term psychological needs of the affected communities.

Addressing these urgent health and psychosocial needs is critical to safeguarding the well-being of the affected populations. Collaboration with local health authorities, community volunteers, and humanitarian partners is essential to deliver inclusive and effective health services, restore dignity, and promote early recovery and resilience. Providing comprehensive care that addresses both physical and mental health needs will help prevent further complications and support the overall recovery of the affected communities.



## Community Engagement And Accountability

A structured and inclusive approach to Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) is essential to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the response to the fire incidents across all affected districts. Active participation of the affected communities is critical for both the immediate response and long-term recovery. Without proper engagement, recovery efforts may fall short of adequately addressing community needs, thereby compromising their effectiveness.

The fire incidents have highlighted the urgent need to promote community-led decision-making, build trust, and empower individuals to actively participate in the recovery process. SLRCS recognizes the importance of involving affected communities in all stages of the response, including assessment, planning, implementation, and monitoring.

One of the critical areas requiring attention is fire prevention education and promoting safe electrical practices. Given the widespread reliance on solar panels and batteries for electricity in affected areas, raising awareness about proper handling and maintenance of batteries and solar systems is essential. Community members, particularly those responsible for maintaining solar systems, must be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to reduce the risk of future fires.

Additionally, the engagement of communities in disaster risk reduction planning is crucial. Participatory planning processes should focus on developing community-driven strategies that address specific risks and vulnerabilities. This includes establishing evacuation routes, identifying fire-prone areas, and promoting fire safety measures that reflect the realities and concerns of the communities directly affected by the fires.

A robust complaints and feedback mechanism must be established to ensure that the affected population has a reliable platform to voice



their concerns, provide input, and offer feedback throughout the response and recovery phases. Without such mechanisms, the response may fail to adapt to the evolving needs of the community, potentially delaying necessary adjustments to the strategy.

## Any identified gaps/limitations in the assessment

- **Inadequate data on vulnerable groups:** While the assessment identified the direct impact on households and farmers, more detailed information on vulnerable subgroups like elderly, people with disabilities, women-headed households, and children was limited. Their specific needs, such as specialized medical care or child protection services, have not been fully captured in the initial assessment.
- **Insufficient livelihoods impact analysis:** Although the destruction of businesses and homes was acknowledged, a deeper analysis into the long-term impact on livelihoods, including the wider economic repercussions for the region and the exact number of people who rely on the affected market for their survival, is lacking. This includes understanding the broader ripple effects on other sectors like agriculture and small-scale trade, which may be indirectly impacted.
- **Lack of detailed infrastructure assessment:** While the destruction of market infrastructure in the affected areas was noted, the specifics of what is required for rebuilding, such as the scale of repairs or new construction materials needed, have not been done. Similarly, the exact needs of farmers and traders whose equipment and resources were lost in the fire need a more detailed evaluation.

# Operational Strategy

## Overall objective of the operation

The overall objective of this operation is to deliver timely and effective assistance to 2,980 individuals (596 households) impacted by recent fire incidents across five districts: Bo, Bombali, Kenema, Kono, and Moyamba. This intervention seeks to address their immediate basic needs and facilitate the restoration of their livelihoods. Key areas of support include shelter assistance, multipurpose cash transfers, hygiene promotion, and Disaster Risk Reduction (fire prevention awareness). Additionally, psychosocial support and psychological first aid will be provided to affected individuals and families.

## Operation strategy rationale

This DREF operation will provide emergency shelter support and multipurpose cash assistance to help affected households reconstruct their houses, access food and essential non-food items while implementing disaster mitigation activities. Although fire incidents have been reported in seven areas, including Bo, Bombali, Kenema, Kono, Moyamba, Western Area Urban, and Western Area Rural, this operation will focus on the provincial areas of Bo, Bombali, Kenema, Kono, and Moyamba.

Based on feedback from post-distribution monitoring for the Funkia Fire incident (MDRSL014), cash transfers have proven effective in supporting affected individuals in their recovery by allowing them to address their specific needs, restoring their dignity, and facilitating market recovery. SLRCS has an existing contract with both Orange and Africell, currently in use for the ongoing flood response. This contract will also be utilized to support the current operation. Continuous assessments and monitoring will ensure that the response remains aligned with evolving conditions, considering potential adjustments by partners that could impact the intervention.

This five-month intervention aims to provide comprehensive and targeted support to 596 households (2,980 people) across five districts, focusing on those affected by recent fires: Bombali: 49 households, Kenema: 72 households, Bo: 215 households, Moyamba: 207 households, Kono: 53 households.

The strategy will address immediate needs and promote recovery through three key components: Cash support for shelter reconstruction, Multipurpose cash assistance, and Health and risk reduction activities

### 1. Shelter: Target- 715 people (143 Households)

The shelter intervention will provide conditional cash assistance to 143 households whose homes were completely destroyed. The identified beneficiaries will receive NLE 6,450 (CHF 258) per household, based on NDMA minimum shelter standards.

The breakdown of affected households by district is as follows: Bombali: 21 houses, Kenema: 19 houses, Bo: 45 houses, Moyamba: 36 houses, Kono: 22 houses. This cash support will cover essential reconstruction materials: Roofing zinc (NLE 4,500), 4-inch wire nails (NLE 250), 3-inch wire nails (NLE 250), Roofing nails (NLE 750), Sticks (NLE 700). This assistance will enable families to rebuild their homes, replacing structures that were completely destroyed by fire.

### 2. Multipurpose Cash: Target: 2,980 people (596 Households)

Each of the 596 affected households will receive a one-time multipurpose cash grant of NLE 4,700 (CHF 188) to help meet their basic needs and food security while recovering from the fire. The funds will be distributed through the existing Financial Service Provider (FSP) and aim to promote dignity and flexibility in expenditure, reducing negative coping mechanisms. The value provided is composed of: 2,500



(CHF 100) to cover food/nutritional support to each household identified as most vulnerable, aimed at covering their nutritional needs for 02 months calculated based on the local expenditure basket that include cereals (NLE1,835), pulses (NLE435), vegetable oil (NLE221), salt (NLE9); NLE 1,200 to cover household items including bedsheets, drinking buckets, laundry bowls, cooking utensils, cups, sleeping mats, and three blankets to ensure families can quickly regain their standard of living; NLE 1,000 to cover WASH kits including buckets with lids, jerry cans, soap, chlorine, and hygiene kits to address basic sanitation needs

In summary, beneficiaries will receive two cash transfers, namely conditional cash support of NLE 6,450 (CHF 158) for 143 households to rebuild their homes and multipurpose cash assistance of NLE 6,450 (CHF 188) for 596 households to cover food, household essentials, and hygiene needs.

To ensure effectiveness, a market assessment will be conducted before cash distribution to assess price trends and feasibility. Additionally, post-distribution monitoring will evaluate the impact and inform necessary adjustments. IFRC will provide technical support for market monitoring to track local price fluctuations.

A two-day training session will be conducted for NS cash focal points, Disaster Management focal points, and key staff involved in the DREF operation. The training will focus on Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) principles, cash transfer mechanisms, and emergency response best practices. Awareness activities will be conducted before and after the cash disbursement to guide beneficiaries on appropriate fund utilization.

### 3. Awareness Messages on fire prevention. Hygiene and health risk prevention

volunteers and the branch NDRT members will conduct awareness campaigns, targeting the affected locations, markets and beneficiary families. These efforts will target 2,980 people across 138 affected households and the surrounding villages. The messages will be focusing on health and hygiene prevention, risk and prevention associated with fire incidents, developing fire belts around farmlands closer to town to prevent fire outbreak

Health-related messages are critical in the aftermath of such disasters, where health risks are heightened. Sensitization efforts will emphasize fire prevention, management, and associated health risks, coordinated with civil protection.

### 4. Engaging the community and ensuring inclusion and protection

An important use of Community engagement will be necessary to meet the above output. NS plans encompass the inclusion of community-led processes, and rigorous monitoring. Using CEA approach, these efforts aim to increase the acceptance and ownership of the messages by local representatives, village authorities, and the affected communities. This approach aligns with best practices in humanitarian response and enhances the credibility and accountability of the operation. Among the main actions, NS will ensure that:

- A robust community feedback mechanism will be established to further enhance accountability and responsiveness. The mechanism will employ two primary communication channels: first, by setting up community-based committees that monitor the progress of activities and manage grievance and second, by mobilizing a team of trained volunteers for direct complaint management through visits and focus groups. The visits and meetings with groups with the facilitation of the community committees was learnt to facilitate the collection and resolution of complaints and claims from beneficiaries.
- The messages are tailored to the local audience and delivered in the required languages.
- Local representatives' inclusion to the planning and decision making. As they were engaged during assessment, the local committees continue to oversee the beneficiary selection and fund utilization processes, ensuring transparency and community ownership.
- Integrating community feedback and actively involving stakeholders

A comprehensive gender and diversity analysis will be conducted across all sectors, including WASH and shelter, to understand the impact on various groups and to tailor the response accordingly. All sectors will adhere to the IFRC's minimum standards for protection, gender, and inclusion in emergencies.

## Targeting Strategy

### Who will be targeted through this operation?

At the time of submitting this DREF request, fire incidents have been reported in seven locations: Bo, Bombali, Kono, Kenema, Moyamba, Western Area Urban, and Western Area Rural affecting a total of 4,180 people (836 households). However, this operation will prioritize the provincial districts of Bo, Bombali, Kono, Kenema, and Moyamba, where the impact has been most severe and the presence of humanitarian actors remains limited. A total of 2,980 people (596 households) will receive assistance.

The beneficiary selection and verification process will focus on households directly affected by the fire incidents. Priority will be given to those who have lost their homes and livelihoods, as well as vulnerable host families who have taken in displaced individuals despite their own limited resources.

SLRCS will ensure a transparent and inclusive selection process by engaging affected communities and key stakeholders through meetings. These discussions will clarify the selection criteria, outline response options, and provide an opportunity for community members to share their concerns and preferences. This participatory approach will allow for continuous feedback, ensuring the response remains adaptable to emerging needs. Additionally, coordination with local authorities will be maintained to enhance alignment and collaboration throughout the intervention.

## Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The selection criteria will be co-developed with community stakeholders, ensuring active participation from beneficiary representatives and NDMA officials at the district level. Leveraging its extensive experience from previous DREF operations, the NS has proposed the following criteria for identifying eligible households:

- Households directly affected by the fire
- Households whose homes were completely destroyed by the fire
- Individuals or households with visible signs of fire impact (damaged homes, loss of property, destruction of farmlands/crops, partial or full displacement, etc.)
- Female-headed households with children
- Child-headed households
- Widows
- Persons identified by stakeholders as residents of affected communities

To ensure inclusivity, transparency, and accountability, the proposed criteria will be reviewed and validated through consultations with affected communities. Continuous engagement with local authorities and stakeholders will further enhance coordination and acceptance of the selection process.

## Total Targeted Population

Women	909	Rural	-
Girls (under 18)	603	Urban	-
Men	881	People with disabilities (estimated)	5%
Boys (under 18)	587		
Total targeted population	2,980		

## Risk and Security Considerations

Please indicate about potential operation risk for this operations and mitigation actions

Risk	Mitigation action
Inadequate communication with the target population. Not communicating beneficiary selection criteria and the date of transfer to beneficiaries can lead to high levels of community frustration and undermine the operations	To mitigate the risk of inadequate communication, ensure clear and timely dissemination of beneficiary selection criteria and transfer dates to the target population. Regular updates through various channels will reduce confusion and frustration. Engaging with community leaders and local stakeholders will also help in spreading key information effectively and ensure the community remains informed throughout the process
The recurrence of similar fire incidents in the exact locations poses a significant risk. This ongoing threat can lead to repeated displacement and loss of property, further straining resources and undermining recovery efforts	As part of the ongoing sensitization efforts, the SLRCS will actively engage communities in fire prevention education, including promoting the establishment of fire belts. This approach will be integrated into all sensitization sessions and community meetings to enhance awareness and reduce the risk of future fire incidents.
The unstable nature of the economy of the country has the potential to cause inflation and frequent changes in prices that	To address inflation risk, regular market monitoring will be conducted by branches. This will allow real-time updates to keep





would affect planned activities.

assistance adequate and know if further engagement are needed with traders, and market stakeholders. If inflation is detected through market analysis, the NS will promptly communicate with IFRC for potential budget adjustments to align cash transfers with economic changes. Collaboration with local authorities and financial institutions ensures timely tracking of economic trends for necessary adjustments.

### Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

The affected community members could be exposed to some security risk as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), looting, theft of assets, and armed robbery, among other criminal activities, which could affect this operation in several ways. Likewise, Red Cross teams are equally exposed to these crimes, in addition to potentially having the affected community attack them if they deem the support provided is not sufficient.

To mitigate such incidents during the operation, all security measures of both the Movement and the Government will be strictly adhered to by all volunteers and staff involved in the operation to reduce risks. The security management as part of this operation will be based on the RCRC's Fundamental Principles and humanitarian values.

The following actions related to security will be implemented:

- These measures include the respect of visibility through the wearing of jackets and regular communication on all movements.
- Ensure community engagement to provide clear explanations of the role of the Red Cross, the support being provided and beneficiary selection criteria to be clearly communicated. This also follow the learnings from previous operations.
- Regular briefings will be organized to remind volunteers on personal security and safety. All concerned staff and the 50 volunteers will be engaged on the response to complete the Stay Safe 2.0 Global Edition-level 2, so they are briefed on the framework of safer access.
- Security assessment and monitoring of security risk will be ensured by operation coordinator with the support of IFRC.

Has the child safeguarding risk analysis assessment been completed?

Yes

## Planned Intervention



### Shelter Housing And Settlements

**Budget:** CHF 43,515

**Targeted Persons:** 2,980

### Indicators

Title	Target
# of House owners supported with conditional cash transfer for reconstruction.	143
% of households using cash for the purpose it was provided.	90

### Priority Actions

- Carry out an assessment and monitoring of market and prices.
- Registration and verification of beneficiaries.
- Training of volunteers in cash to support community engagement.
- Cash transfer to 143 house owners to procure necessary building materials for reconstruction.
- Monitoring by volunteers in the communities to follow-up on the use of the cash by beneficiaries.
- Discussions and active sensitization on the assistance through community group discussions, meeting with community stakeholders.
- Post distribution monitoring (PDM).



## Multi Purpose Cash

**Budget:** CHF 134,192

**Targeted Persons:** 2,980

### Indicators

Title	Target
# of HHs supported with multi-purpose cash to cover food and WASH items transfer to support basic needs and food.	596
% of HHs confirming to have received and using multipurpose cash support	90
% of HHs using cash for the intended purpose	80

### Priority Actions

- Registration and Verification of beneficiaries
- Train 50 volunteers on cash transfer and household registration through the Kobo collect platform
- Conduct market assessment
- Set up targeting committees and briefing of beneficiary households
- Conduct two-day training session on CVA processes for 20 staff and 50 volunteers to be engaged in cash distribution
- Distribute multipurpose cash to 596 households
- Deploy volunteers to monitor cash transfer activities for 3 days
- Conduct Post distribution monitoring (PDM) for 3 days
- Deploy 50 volunteers to sensitize targeted beneficiaries on the details of Mobile money transactions
- Conduct post-distribution monitoring (PDM)



## Health

**Budget:** CHF 20,776

**Targeted Persons:** 2,980

### Indicators

Title	Target
# of HHs reached with mosquito nets	596
% of targeted households, which receive support in terms of health promotion and hygiene awareness	80

### Priority Actions

- Train 55 volunteers on water, hygiene, and sanitation promotion activities waterborne disease prevention (including menstrual hygiene, Epidemic Control for Volunteers, and the use of Mosquito nets).
- Transfer of funds to 596 households for support for the purchase of WASH items included in MPC.
- Procure and distribute mosquito nets to affected HHs.
- Training of 55 staff and volunteers in first aid, PSS, EPIC and health promotion CEA, and safeguarding.
- Provide psychosocial support to affected families by volunteers to affected persons for the first month of the operation.
- Deploy volunteers to carry out First Aid and PSS.
- Mobilize 50 volunteers to conduct health prevention awareness with a message on the prevention of water-borne diseases and malaria.



## Community Engagement And Accountability

**Budget:** CHF 5,611

**Targeted Persons:** 2,980

### Indicators

Title	Target
# of volunteers trained In CEA and PGI	55
% of feedback treated	80
# of people reached with fire prevention messages	2,980

### Priority Actions

- Train volunteers on CEA and PGI to support operations' activities. Involvement can enhance accountability and ensure that actions are aligned with community needs and priorities.
- Organize community meeting to validate the targeting criteria and the lists of beneficiaries.
- Engage a broad spectrum of community members, including marginalized and vulnerable groups, to ensure diverse perspectives and needs are addressed.
- Incorporate local knowledge and practices related to prevention of wildfire management and response
- Establish clear and continuous two-way communication channels between authorities and the community
- Use multiple platforms (e.g., community meetings, social media, radio, etc.) to disseminate information and updates
- Setting up Community Feedback Mechanisms for receiving and addressing community feedback, complaints, and suggestions, which should be used to amend early actions to be more effective
- Conduct regular awareness campaigns and educational programmes about fire hazards, early warning signs, and appropriate response actions. This would empower communities to act quickly and effectively during Fire
- Ensure transparency in decision-making processes and the allocation of resources. Keep the community informed about how decisions are made and how resources are distributed
- Undertake communication work to ensure media coverage of the volunteers' activities



## Secretariat Services

**Budget:** CHF 21,309

**Targeted Persons:** 130

### Indicators

Title	Target
# of technical support missions conducted by IFRC	4
# of coordination meetings attended	15
# of NS staff with increased knowledge on DREF, Emergency Needs Assessment and planning, CVA, and Reporting	35

### Priority Actions

- IFRC technical support mission and monitoring visits
- Participation in coordination meetings
- Volunteers insurance



- Training of NS HQ, branch managers and field officers on DREF, Emergency Needs Assessment and planning, CVA, and Reporting (2 per branch and HQ staff)



## National Society Strengthening

**Budget:** CHF 44,951

**Targeted Persons:** 70

### Indicators

Title	Target
# of monitoring visits conducted by NS	8
# of documentary produced	1
# of lesson learned workshop conducted	1

### Priority Actions

- Ensure coordination and public relations
- Programme Monitoring conducted by NS team
- Documentary production on fire response activities
- Organize a lessons learned workshop
- Ensure compliance with reporting and accompany the process
- Coordination and public relations.
- Volunteer Insurance.
- Program Monitoring by NS team

## About Support Services

### How many staff and volunteers will be involved in this operation. Briefly describe their role.

The total number of volunteers involved will include 50 from the five districts of operation. The volunteers will be involved in community engagement and awareness raising, assessment, distribution, and post-monitoring distribution exercises. They will also support during data collection verification and validation of the target communities. A total number of 20 staff members will also be involved in full implementation of the DREF and coordination with stakeholders including the local and national, as well as other non-governmental partners

### If there is procurement, will it be done by National Society or IFRC?

The operation will involve a limited procurement process for essential items, including mosquito, and IEC materials. The procurement activities will be managed by the SLRCS National Head Office in Freetown, with the IFRC Freetown Office providing oversight and monitoring to ensure compliance with procurement standards procedures.

### How will this operation be monitored?

The monitoring framework for this operation is thoughtfully designed to provide robust oversight and ensure high-quality implementation, thereby attracting potential donors. It encompasses three distinct levels of monitoring, each tailored to address specific operational components.

**First Level of Monitoring:** The leadership from SLRCS branches will actively oversee the implementation of the operation within their communities. This local involvement is essential for delivering a well-coordinated response that meets the specific needs of the community. Their presence enables immediate adjustments to effectively respond to any challenges that may arise.



Second Level of Monitoring: The SLRCS head office in Freetown will play a pivotal role in delivering technical support and maintaining quality throughout the implementation process. This national-level oversight ensures adherence to established standards and best practices, reinforcing the effectiveness of the intervention and its alignment with national guidelines.

Third Level of Monitoring: The IFRC Freetown Office will conduct a series of four technical support missions throughout the operation timeframe. The initial mission, led by an operations officer, will concentrate on the early stages of response, specifically focusing on the selection criteria and the finalization of the beneficiary list. This step is vital for accurately identifying and prioritizing the most vulnerable populations. The second mission will occur during the cash transfer process to supervise the multipurpose cash transfer, ensuring that fund disbursement is managed efficiently and transparently, adhering to the highest standards of financial accountability. The third mission, led by the PMER team, will focus on post-distribution monitoring three weeks after cash disbursement. The final visit will coincide with a lessons-learned workshop that involves all technical team members who contributed to the operation. This phase is crucial for assessing the intervention's effectiveness, gathering valuable insights, and ensuring that the final report accurately reflects the outcomes and impacts of the operation.

## **Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation**

The communication strategy for this operation is crafted to enhance visibility and engagement at every phase, effectively showcasing the actions and impact of the NS and its partners. To accomplish this, a comprehensive array of communication materials will be produced, including press releases to announce significant milestones, detailed progress reports to document the outcomes of various activities, and high-quality photos and videos that visually capture the operation's progress. Additionally, a compelling documentary film will provide an in-depth exploration of the intervention's reach and effectiveness, further illustrating its importance. Social media platforms will be pivotal in amplifying the operation's visibility, utilizing regular updates, engaging content and real-time sharing of success stories to connect with a broader audience. This multi-channel approach not only fosters transparency but also builds a robust narrative around the operation, drawing in support and engagement from stakeholders and donors. By leveraging a diverse range of communication tools and platforms, this strategy ensures that the achievements of the SLRCS and its partners are widely recognized, reinforcing the necessity for ongoing support and investment in the intervention.

# Budget Overview



## DREF OPERATION

### MDRSL018 - Sierra Leone Red Cross Multiple Fire Incident

#### Operating Budget

Planned Operations	204 094
Shelter and Basic Household Items	43 515
Livelihoods	0
Multi-purpose Cash	134 192
Health	20 776
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	0
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	0
Education	0
Migration	0
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	0
Community Engagement and Accountability	5 611
Environmental Sustainability	0
Enabling Approaches	66 260
Coordination and Partnerships	0
Secretariat Services	21 309
National Society Strengthening	44 951
TOTAL BUDGET	270 354

*all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)*

Internal

31/03/2025

#V2022.01

[Click here to download the budget file](#)



# Contact Information

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

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[Click here for the reference](#)

