



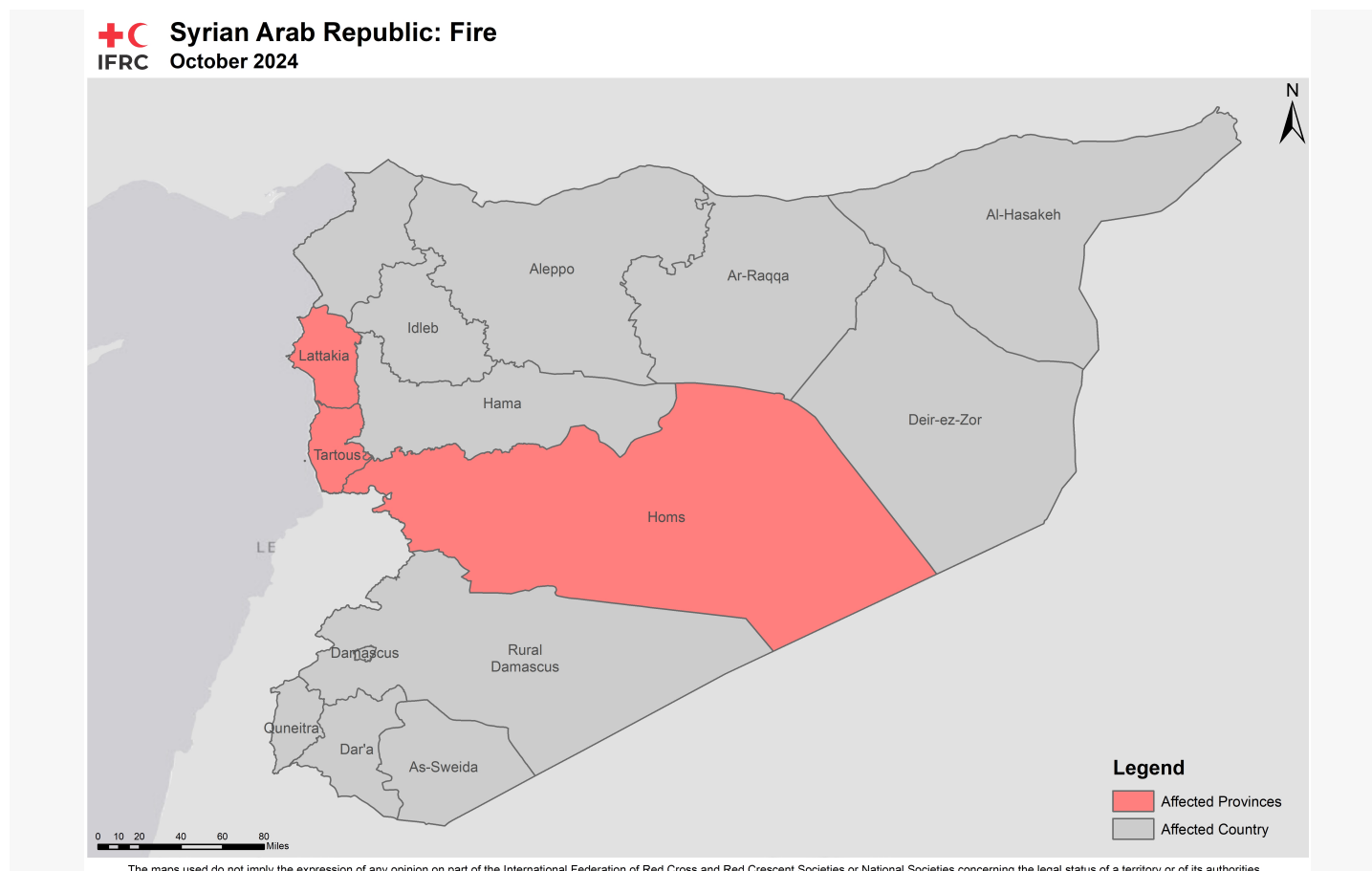
SARC Volunteers responding to the areas affected by the wildfires.

Appeal: MDRSY013	Country: Syrian Arab Republic	Hazard: Fire	Type of DREF: Response
Crisis Category: Yellow	Event Onset: Sudden	DREF Allocation: CHF 499,885	
Glide Number: FR-2024-000210-SYR	People Affected: 15,000 people	People Targeted: 15,000 people	
Operation Start Date: 21-11-2024	Operation Timeframe: 6 months	Operation End Date: 31-05-2025	DREF Published: 23-11-2024
Targeted Areas: Homs, Lattakia			

Description of the Event

Date of event

29-10-2024



What happened, where and when?

Multiple fires have recently occurred in the coastal and central regions of Syria. The potential causes of these fires are diverse, including the warm eastern winds commonly observed during this time of year. Additionally, an abundance of dry vegetation that burns rapidly, coupled with reduced moisture content in trees, contributes to the fire risk. There is also a possibility that some fires have been ignited due to human activities.

Since October 29, 2024, there has been a marked increase in fire intensity, particularly in the Homs and Latakia governorates. The majority of the fires have been reported in rugged mountainous and remote areas. The size and severity of certain bushfires have produced localized weather phenomena, that trap heat and generate strong winds, further exacerbating the fire situation. High wind conditions have facilitated the rapid spread of the flames, with some fires crossing highways and roads. The lack of capacity for the firemen such as vehicles and fuel are some of many other factors affecting the capacities of public services due to the continuities of Syrian crisis including the impact of different inputs (the Middle East crisis, the sanctions, climate change, etc.).

Separate fires also occurred in Tartous governorate however the scale of those fires was contained with minimal impact on the local population, while the fires in Homs and Latakia could not be contained in the same manner. Until 03 November, the scale of the wildfires was limited to mountains in both the regions which grew in the following 2-3 days affecting the local population and its livelihoods.



Scope and Scale

The communities affected by the recent fires are facing immense challenges, exacerbated by many factors. To date, the fires have severely impacted several villages in the regions of Lattakia, Homs and Tartous. with over 12,198,000 square meters of land consumed by the flames, further threatening the livelihoods and well-being of these communities.

These fires have affected approximately 15,000 people in Latalika and Homs, with more than 10,000 people affected in Latakia while in Homs, the number of people affected is estimated 5,000.

There are 30 people reported as injured in Lattakia and 13 people suffered injuries in Homs governorate. Additionally, 1 person could not sustain injuries and died as of result of these fires. 4 houses were reported destroyed with 2 each in Latakia and Homs.

These fires have further increased the challenges for the affected population which are already suffering from other disasters and crises. All of these have led to prolonged instability, the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events, and the devastation caused by the earthquake. Families in the affected regions struggle to maintain their resilience and protect their livelihoods amidst a growing lack of essential resources. They face shortages of funding, humanitarian aid, clean water, electricity, and adequate infrastructure, which are critical for their daily survival.

The severe economic crises prevalent in the region compel these families to rely on a variety of coping strategies. However, these strategies often introduce new challenges, making it even harder for humanitarian efforts to provide the necessary support. As a result, the demographics of vulnerability are becoming increasingly broad. While traditionally considered the most at-risk, the vulnerable now include not only the elderly and people with disabilities but also children and families who never before required assistance.

The fires in Tartous had limited scale and were contained by the Govt. actions. No impact on the livelihoods or well-being of the local population in Tartous was reported hence SARC only prioritized two other governorates.

Previous Operations

Has a similar event affected the same area(s) in the last 3 years?	Yes
Did it affect the same population group?	Yes
Did the National Society respond?	Yes
Did the National Society request funding form DREF for that event(s)	Yes
If yes, please specify which operation	MDRSY010, 2023

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:

Syria has been affected by multiple crisis for last many years including economic, earthquake and other natural disasters. The wildfires spread during October 2024 similar to the wildfires last year, affected people living and livelihoods increasing their existing vulnerabilities caused by economic situation in the country. These multiple crises have severely impacted the purchasing power of general population living in the affected areas therefore the people are forced to seek assistance from actors such as SARC to meet their most urgent and basic needs.



In addition, the hazards heighten concerns regarding the potential for additional fires in the forthcoming days. The indirect consequences of these incidents will pose greater challenges in addressing the suffering of families in the affected areas and in preserving the remaining resilience of these communities. There is need to reinforce and increase awareness raising among general population on how to contain such events in future.

Lessons learned:

The impact of such fires resulted in considerable material and environmental damage, including the loss of crops critical for the livelihoods of affected residents. Significant portions of vegetation, forests, and natural reserves were also devastated. In such situation, the communities appreciated the lifesaving and immediate support provided by SARC.

The wildfires last year occurred in same geographical areas however, the number of people affected by recent wildfires is far less. This displays the impact of risk awareness interventions carried out by SARC in the form of campaigns through group discussions and dissemination of information through social media and distribution of IEC material.

As the results of PDM carried out during last wildfires DREF, the results suggest that active engagement with the community through feedback mechanisms and complaint channels not only improves accountability but also enhances the quality and relevance of assistance programs.

The results also revealed that clear and direct communication channels, particularly through SARC staff and volunteers, were highly effective in disseminating information about the cash distributions. This contributed to high awareness and satisfaction among the people affected.

Current National Society Actions

Start date of National Society actions

29-10-2024

Livelihoods And Basic Needs	Essential provisions, including food and non-food items, were promptly distributed to the families affected by the situation, as well as to the host communities. Furthermore, first responders received support in the form of drinking water, snacks, and ready-to-eat meals to facilitate their critical response efforts.
Multi Purpose Cash	SARC has strong capacities in CVA. The NS has trained pool of staff and volunteers, have CVA working SOPs in place and has a framework agreement with one of the leading remittance companies in place. The trained field teams of SARC are carrying out rapid markets check to see if the fires have affected the markets and access of local population to the markets and commodities. The assistance will be provided by adopting standard MEB developed for Syria. The transfer value has been decided to cover basic needs for a period of two months. A contingency of 10% is kept to cover the inflation and other factors.
Health	Emergency Medical Services (EMS) teams have actively responded to more than 43 reported cases in the affected regions, demonstrating their commitment to providing immediate assistance. These teams will remain on standby to offer further support as needed, ensuring a rapid response to any evolving situations. In addition to EMS efforts, health teams are focusing on a wide array of rural areas. They are currently in the process of developing a comprehensive outreach plan aimed at extending medical services to newly affected regions. To achieve this, the health teams will deploy mobile health units equipped to deliver necessary healthcare services directly to communities in need. These units will facilitate access to essential medical treatments. Moreover, the health teams will include specialized medical personnel who can provide referrals to more advanced care when necessary. They will also offer psychosocial support to address the mental and emotional well-being of individuals affected by the crisis, ensuring that comprehensive health needs are met in these vulnerable populations.



Water, Sanitation And Hygiene	SARC's teams were actively deployed to the field, making every effort to support the affected communities as they faced numerous challenges. Their primary aim was to deliver essential relief and assistance to those in need. Specifically, the WASH teams played a crucial role in the response efforts by providing access to clean drinking water, which is vital for the health and well-being of the affected population. This initiative not only alleviates immediate water shortages but also helps to prevent waterborne diseases, ensuring that families have safe and reliable access to this critical resource during such a challenging time.
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery	SARC's Teams conduct comprehensive awareness sessions with various communities, utilizing targeted media messaging to enhance outreach. These sessions focus on educating residents about fire hazards, emphasizing the importance of understanding and mitigating risks associated with wildfires. Since the devastating wildfires of 2020, there has been a noticeable increase in the community's recognition of fire safety measures, highlighting the effectiveness of our ongoing awareness campaigns. By regularly engaging with community members and providing vital information, we aim to empower individuals to take proactive steps in reducing the impact of fire incidents on their lives and environments.
Community Engagement And Accountability	To ensure the assistance is provided to most vulnerable and the meaningful participation of affected communities, CEA plays a central role in maintaining the connection between SARC and the communities. SARC is committed to address the needs of the affected population through priority actions suggested by the communities. As such, CEA is mainstreamed across all of the interventions implemented by SARC.
National Society Readiness	The personnel and volunteers at SARC are thoroughly equipped to address both protracted and natural disasters, drawing on substantial experience gained from previous wildfire operations conducted in 2020 and 2023. Wildfires represent a significant hazard scenario in Syria and have become a recurring annual occurrence, primarily as a result of climate change.
Assessment	SARC activated its field teams to carry out rapid needs assessments to assess the situation on the ground and to get the initial information about the wildfires. SARC performed this rapid assessment in Lattakia and Homs. The information obtained revealed the impact of these fires on the population. The initial data suggest that there are 15,000 people who are affected by these fires, and among them, more than 5,500 people do not have any means to meet their daily life needs. SARC deployed assessment teams to collect data on the damages and the impact on the local population in order to assess DREF eligibility. Based on the assessment data, SARC asked to apply for the DREF on 8 November as it was deemed that the required assistance to the affected population was beyond the resources available. Further assessments are planned to collect detailed data for humanitarian aid provision to affected households.
Resource Mobilization	SARC is actively mobilizing available stock from its warehouses to address the essential and immediate needs of families affected by the recent crisis. Our teams are carefully prioritizing these urgent requirements while utilizing existing resources effectively.

IFRC Network Actions Related To The Current Event

Secretariat	In addition to the regular support provided by the IFRC, they are now collaborating with SARC to assess their needs, offering technical assistance to SARC's team, and planning for upcoming phases to address future requirements.
Participating National Societies	RCRC actors already provide ongoing support to SARC and the response units, enabling the team to act as the first responders. German Red Cross has activated its crisis modifier for these wildfires. Through this crisis modifier, SARC will distribute 600 canned food parcels to severely affected families. For long term support to the affected population, some Partners are willing to

compliment DREF assistance and to extend their support once more information is available and once SARC develops its long term strategy to address the needs beyond emergency phase.

ICRC Actions Related To The Current Event

ICRC is present in Syria however there is no action planned for these wildfires.

Other Actors Actions Related To The Current Event

Government has requested international assistance	No
National authorities	All government institutions and public authorities in the affected areas have been alerted and are actively responding. This effort is supported by the resources, personnel, and equipment of neighboring governorates, and involves coordination with all stakeholders. In collaboration with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) and various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), a strategic and coordinated approach has been established to address the needs of the community. This includes the provision of relief support while also emphasizing resilience and recovery initiatives.
UN or other actors	The High Relief Committee activated All governmental institutions and public authorities in the affected regions and is currently responding to the situation. They are receiving assistance from the resources, personnel, and equipment of other governorates. Additionally, coordination is being conducted with all stakeholders.

Are there major coordination mechanism in place?

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) is a member of the High Relief Committee (HRC), with each branch also participating in the Sub-Relief Committee within their respective governorates. Established coordination mechanisms facilitate collaboration with various partners. SARC assumes a central role in coordinating efforts among movement partners, the HRC, and United Nations agencies at both headquarters and local levels, including the UN's sub-offices in the governorates. SARC is responsible for leading all emergency response initiatives under its mandate while carefully considering the interests of its partners, which include movement organizations, UN agencies, and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs).

Needs (Gaps) Identified



Multi purpose cash grants

The rapid assessment carried out by the NS revealed that the wildfires have directly affected the livelihoods of the population. The people have lost their livelihoods and are in dire need of immediate lifesaving support. These needs are related to food, hygiene and other daily life. To address the immediate and pressing needs of families affected by the wildfires, the provision of multipurpose cash assistance is identified as a critical priority for the ongoing relief efforts.



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

With repeated wildfires in the areas, there is a need identified to reinforce efforts to further increase community awareness on such emergencies. The growing trend of such fires in recent years requires more awareness about the risks of wildfires, mitigating those risks from happening and taking necessary actions to contain wildfires. In addition, there is a need to promote awareness about health hazards such events bring.

Operational Strategy

Overall objective of the operation

Through this four-month DREF operation, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) intends to assist 15,000 most vulnerable people affected by the recent wildfires impacting Latakia and Homs governorates.

Operation strategy rationale

The Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) has mobilized its teams in response to the recent wildfires affecting communities in Latakia and Homs. With approximately 15,000 individuals impacted, including over 5,500 facing severe shortages of daily necessities, SARC's operations are critical in addressing immediate humanitarian needs while also laying the groundwork for long-term recovery and resilience. The national society's response focuses on:

1. Immediate Relief: The primary aim is to provide essential relief and assistance to affected communities, ensuring access to basic needs including food and non-food items.
2. Health and Well-being: Emergency Medical Services (EMS) teams have actively responded to more than 43 reported cases in the affected regions. SARC will deploy mobile health units equipped to deliver necessary healthcare services directly to communities in need. The health teams will include specialized medical personnel who can provide referrals to more advanced care when necessary. They will also offer psychosocial support to address the mental and emotional well-being of individuals affected by the disaster, ensuring that comprehensive health needs are met in these vulnerable populations.
3. Comprehensive Needs Assessment: Conducting rapid needs assessments to gather data on the impact of the wildfires will guide targeted interventions and resource allocation. In addition, SARC continues to monitor the situation, if the spread of fires continues, follow-up needs assessments will take place. SARC also plans to conduct a comprehensive multi-sectoral damage assessment.
4. Community Engagement and Awareness: Through awareness sessions, SARC seeks to educate communities about fire hazards and safety measures, empowering residents to mitigate risks associated with future wildfires.

The DREF operation will complement SARC's response and will be implemented through multipurpose cash assistance, providing families with dignified immediate relief meet their basic needs. The assistance will be complimented with risk awareness to increase the resilience and fire risk mitigation. The detailed actions are:

- Multipurpose cash: A one-time cash distribution will be implemented to help families cover basic needs such as food, hygiene and replacement of damaged household items. A total of 1,116 families will be assisted. The transfer value amounting CHF 360 per family is intended to cover the Minimum Expenditure Basket for Syria for a duration of two months. This assistance will be provided as one off. Furthermore, the SARC will ensure effective harmonization and regular coordination with the Cash Working Group in Syria. SARC is currently exploring complementing actions to provide long-term assistance to the families who lost their livelihoods.
- Fire Risk Awareness: SARC will increase community awareness of risks of fires and appropriate actions through dissemination of the Public Awareness and Public Education DRR key messages. The information sharing will be carried out through different channels, such as social media campaigns on regular basis, distribution of IEC material and through community meetings.

Targeting Strategy

Who will be targeted through this operation?

This operation aims to reach 15,000 in the 2 governorates, Latakia, and Homs directly affected by the recent fires.

5,580 people receive direct assistance through multipurpose cash. The families with multiple vulnerabilities and marginalized groups will be prioritized for this assistance.

Approximately 15,000 people residing in the affected areas will receive fire risk awareness through different social media and other CEA channels and forums.

The staff and volunteers of SARC will also benefit from this response through a lesson learnt workshop. The workshop aims to enhance the capacities of the NS in similar emergencies.

Explain the selection criteria for the targeted population

The severe economic crises prevalent in the region compel the population to rely on a variety of coping strategies. However, these strategies often introduce new challenges, making it even harder for humanitarian efforts to provide the necessary support. As a result,

the demographics of vulnerability are becoming increasingly broad. While traditionally considered the most at-risk, the vulnerable now include not only the elderly and people with disabilities but also children and families who never before required assistance.

SARC has developed a comprehensive targeting criteria specially for financial support to the affected population. The criteria will be agreed with Govt. and local communities through community engagement before initiating the targeting process to ensure the assistance is provided to most vulnerable. The preliminary selection criteria is a combination of multiple factors such as impact of the fires, needs arose from these wildfires and the existing vulnerabilities of the affected population.

The targeting will be carried out as under

An eligibility criteria will be applied to target only those who are directly affected by the wildfires as below.

- Families whose livelihoods are destroyed due to the fires.
- Families whose living spaces were damaged by the fires.

The vulnerability criteria will be applied to prioritize most vulnerable among affected population.

- 1- Female headed household
- 2- Families with members with special needs
- 3- Families with elderly or children
- 4- Families with pregnant women.

The families with multiple vulnerabilities will get higher prioritization.

For risk awareness, SARC will extend its support to all affected including wider population.

Total Targeted Population

Women	3,301	Rural	-
Girls (under 18)	4,379	Urban	-
Men	3,121	People with disabilities (estimated)	10%
Boys (under 18)	4,199		
Total targeted population	15,000		

Risk and Security Considerations

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

Risk	Mitigation action
The current safety and security situation in Syria may reduce access to the operational areas and may have an impact on operational implementation.	The SARC security framework is and will be respected throughout the duration of this response. Regular monitoring will be carried out and the plans will be adjusted accordingly. All the stakeholders and communities will be kept information and regular coordination will be maintained.
Safety of staff and volunteers	The staff and volunteers are orientated on the health related impact of such fires. The orientation to be continued. Risk averse approach will be followed to ensure staff and volunteers well-being. Ensure that the volunteers deployed are covered under an insurance scheme and equipped with the necessary PPEs.
There is an anticipated risk of a resurgence of wildfires in the surrounding regions due to various contributing factors.	Continuous monitoring and coordination with local authorities regarding alerts for weather-related hazards is essential. It is imperative to activate appropriate mitigating measures and

allocate resources to the ongoing response efforts, tailored to the specific locations of the emerging fires.

Please indicate any security and safety concerns for this operation

Risks associated with weapon contamination in certain areas due to the spread of fires and exposure to unexploded remnants.

Planned Intervention



Multi Purpose Cash

Budget: CHF 431,725

Targeted Persons: 5,580

Indicators

Title	Target
# of people reached with multipurpose cash assistance	5,580
# of post distribution monitoring conducted	1
% of HHs reporting that the cash assistance was timely and responded to their immediate needs	80

Priority Actions

- Targeting, registration and selection within first month of response
- Disbursement of cash to selected household during second month of response and covering 2 months through one off transfer.
- Process and disbursement monitoring



Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation And Recovery

Budget: CHF 57,510

Targeted Persons: 15,000

Indicators

Title	Target
# of people reached with information sessions	15,000

Priority Actions

- Mobilisation of volunteers
- Transportation of volunteers
- Needs assessments and household surveys
- Visibility of SARC's operations
- Support in maintaining the communication with communities
- Risk awareness sessions through in person and social media platforms



Budget: CHF 10,650

Targeted Persons: 0

Indicators

Title	Target
# of events organized	1

Priority Actions

- Lesson learnt workshop

About Support Services

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

Approximately 300 volunteers and 50 staff members are engaged in the SARC response operation. Their efforts are distributed across the affected branches and headquarters, encompassing various activities such as assessments, registrations, PDM, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), risk awareness, logistics, EMS, WASH, as well as IM. This operation is coordinated and led by the disaster management sector.

The volunteers of the NS deployed in this response are covered by IFRC global insurance.

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

The multipurpose cash will be disbursed by SARC through Al-Fouad. SARC has an active agreement with Al-Fouad in place, which is being reviewed by IFRC LPSCM.

How will this operation be monitored?

The SARC standard operating procedures for monitoring are utilized across all SARC operations and programs. This includes post distribution monitoring, process monitoring and community feedback mechanisms, as well as coordinated assessments conducted with implementing partners, including IFRC.

A monitoring plan will be created and put into action during this response in direct conjunction with the PMER and Quality assurance team at IFRC MENA RO. PMER, IM, and CEA capabilities are included in the PMER and Quality Assurance unit and will work directly with SARC.

Please briefly explain the National Societies communication strategy for this operation

The SARC communication teams are actively engaged in disseminating information across various media platforms to ensure the visibility of SARC's efforts and humanitarian initiatives. They also provide substantial support in reporting to partners, thereby reinforcing the organization's commitment to addressing risks and hazards.



Budget Overview



DREF OPERATION

MDRSY016 - Syrian Arab Red Crescent SARC
Syria Wildfires 2024

Operating Budget

Planned Operations	489,235
Shelter and Basic Household Items	0
Livelihoods	0
Multi-purpose Cash	431,725
Health	0
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	0
Protection, Gender and Inclusion	0
Education	0
Migration	0
Risk Reduction, Climate Adaptation and Recovery	57,510
Community Engagement and Accountability	0
Environmental Sustainability	0
Enabling Approaches	10,650
Coordination and Partnerships	0
Secretariat Services	0
National Society Strengthening	10,650
TOTAL BUDGET	499,885

all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)



Contact Information

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

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