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# Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Lesotho: food insecurity

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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## DREF operation n° MDRLS002 9 February 2012

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**CHF 196,831 has been allocated from IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the National Society in delivering immediate assistance to some 800 families (4,000 beneficiaries). Unearmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

**Summary:** The weather in Lesotho has recently been characterized by prolonged periods of drought followed by excessive rains. During the 2011 cropping season, prolonged drought from the beginning of the summer cropping season until December, when incessant rains began. The Lesotho Meteorological Services categorized the rains as above normal and many stations recorded the highest rainfall in the past ten years.



Communities preparing their fields./ Lesotho RC

In an effort to assess the impact of the heavy rains, the Disaster Management Authority, United Nations and the Red Cross conducted a rapid assessment, revising the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC) report.<sup>1</sup> A Post Disaster Needs Assessment<sup>2</sup> was also conducted at the same time to establish the general damage and the estimated costs of the damage incurred. The resulting 2011 LVAC report anticipated that 514,000 people will need humanitarian assistance during the 2011/2012 consumption year (July 2011 to June 2012) due to failed crop production prospects from the 2010/2011 agricultural season. The Lesotho Bureau of Statistics (BoS) estimates that production of main cereal crops has been reduced by between 60 and 80 percent.

More recently, Lesotho Red Cross Society completed its own independent assessment November - December 2011 to ascertain the extent of food insecurity and the performance of the 2011/12 crops. Based on this assessment, the Lesotho Red Cross Society identified nine districts that have been hardest hit: Quthing, Mohale's Hoek, Mafeteng, Maseru, Berea, Leribe, Botha Bothe, Mokhotlong, and Thaba – Tseka. The assessment results show a significant decline in food availability with more than 50% of the households visited unable to meet their daily food requirements. Most critical are the People Living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA), the elderly, OVCs and pregnant and lactating mothers.

Through the DREF, the Lesotho Red Cross will support to 800 Families (4,000 people) most at risk in the nine targeted districts.

This operation is expected to be implemented over a period of 4 months, and will therefore be completed by 8 June, 2012. However, the period may be extended depending on the evolving situation. One month will be dedicated to a thorough beneficiary identification and verification. The final report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by September, 2012).

[<click here for the DREF budget; here for contact details>](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Lesotho Food Security and Vulnerability Monitoring Report June 2011, Disaster Management Authority

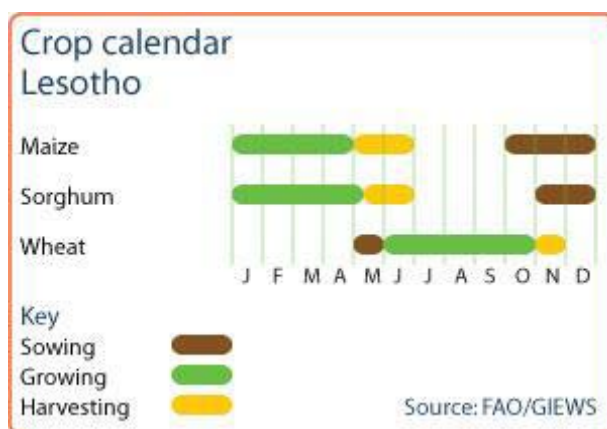
<sup>2</sup> [http://www.gfdr.org/gfdr/sites/gfdr.org/files/Lesotho\\_PDNAataGlance.pdf](http://www.gfdr.org/gfdr/sites/gfdr.org/files/Lesotho_PDNAataGlance.pdf)

## The Situation

The recent assessment conducted in mid November and December 2011 confirmed a further deterioration of the food crisis in districts most at risk, particularly Quthing, Mofale's Hoek, Mafeteng, Maseru, Berea, Leribe, Botha Bothe, Mokhotlong, and Thaba –Tseka. Even the 2011/12 crop is not looking promising, due to poor rainfall generally across the country. In response to this slow onset disaster in one of the poorest countries in the world, urgent action needs to be taken by all humanitarian actors due to the following reasons:

- There were insufficient rains during the agricultural season.
- As a result, there was a poor cereal harvest.
- Following average rains at the very start of the 2011/12 agricultural season (October-June), a prolonged dry spell set in from mid-October
- Planting season started in January, and actions should be taken now
- Prices of maize meal increased rapidly, by almost 60 percent, in September mirroring high prices in South Africa. Prices however, dropped by the same proportion in November
- There are a large number of food insecure people due to low cereal production
- Reduced cereal production in 2011 negatively impacted food security conditions, through both a reduction in households' food supplies and resulting loss of income from the limited seasonal/causal farm employment. Approximately one quarter of the national population derive their income from the agriculture sector.
- Up to 40 percent of annual income derives from casual labour, mainly from land preparation, weeding, and harvesting. Up to 30 percent of annual food consumption is in-kind in exchange for agricultural labour. With substantial destruction of crops and farmland, many of these poor households will not have employment opportunities during the lean season (November 2011-April 2012).

According with the Lesotho Vulnerability Assessment Committee (LVAC), around 514,000 people are in need of humanitarian assistance.



## Coordination and partnerships

The Government of Lesotho has appealed to the UN for food assistance. WFP and FAO had already submitted projects to the UN CERF<sup>3</sup> Secretariat for support to 40,000 people. A total of USD 1,136,413 has been allocated to WFP from the CERF.

At national level, the National Society is working with institutions such as Disaster Management Authority and other relevant stakeholders and has participated in vulnerability assessments and is regularly updating the Disaster Management Authority on the situation as it evolves. The National Society is also part of Disaster Management Committees in the country.

The Lesotho Red Cross has an operational relationship with WFP, implementing different kind of programs: Care and Treatment, Agricultural/crop production promotion, Mitigation/Safety nets, etc.).

<sup>3</sup> Central Emergency Response Fund

IFRC at regional level is coordinating with regional bodies, such as UN OCHA, which publishes regional updates on the drought and food insecurity situation. The IFRC Regional Disaster Management Coordinator is also attending meetings and updating IFRC support structures about the situation on the ground as reported by National Society Disaster Management teams.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Lesotho Red Cross Society participated in the VAC assessments that were conducted nationally. Additionally, the National Society carried out its own in-depth assessment to identify critical needs and people at risk.

The Lesotho Red Cross Society is currently engaged in the food security project funded by British Red Cross, the European Union and the German Red Cross. The overall objective of the project is to improve the adequacy and stability of access to food and utilization of food at the household level. The project is specifically aimed at increasing food security for households affected by HIV/AIDS in the foothills and highlands of the Quthing, Mafeteng, Maseru (Kena), Berea, Leribe and Mokhotlong districts. The main intervention areas for the project are as follows:

- Improvement of access to quality agricultural inputs and marketing facilities for vulnerable households.
- Improvement of production of field and garden crops, crop diversification, seed multiplication, as well as simple storage and post harvest technologies.
- Strengthening and enabling communities and their support groups to take effective measures to overcome the food insecurity of the target groups.
- Capacitating Lesotho Red Cross Society in planning and implementing sustainable food security interventions.

Many of the same districts are also targeted by this DREF operation. The interventions will be complementary in that the DREF will focus on food distribution and vegetable seeds for the current planting season, while the food security project will address more long term issues over a longer duration. The Lesotho RC is very well positioned in these districts and vulnerable groups have been identified (households affected by HIV/AIDS and TB, orphans and vulnerable children).

The national society is intending to meet the immediate food needs of 4,000 people and to initiate an awareness and publicity campaign to sensitise the public and media about the current crisis.

## The needs

The affected population of 4,000 people are in need of food items such as maize meal, pulses, cooking oil, sugar and salt and livelihoods activities through provision of emergency seed packs. The Lesotho RC is also planning to conduct a more detailed assessment under this DREF operation in order to identify specific beneficiary households among the vulnerable groups already known. The food ration follows the Government of Lesotho standards and is the same ration distributed by all other humanitarian agencies in country. This operation aims to provide a full ration to targeted families for three months, which will support the most vulnerable families up to the harvest season.

## The proposed operation

Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods
<b>Outcome:</b> Immediate food needs of the 4,000 disaster affected population are met in Quthing, Mafeteng, Mohale's Hoek, Maseru, Berea, Leribe, Botha-Bothe, Mokhotlong and Thaba-Tseka Districts
<b>Output 1:</b> Appropriate food rations are distributed for three months to vulnerable households.
<b>Planned Activities:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct needs and capacity assessments in target districts.</li> <li>• Develop beneficiary targeting strategy and registration system to deliver intended assistance in target districts.</li> <li>• Distribute food items to 4,000 affected people, equivalent to 800 households in target districts.</li> </ul>
<b>Output 2:</b> Essential inputs which support the production of food are distributed to vulnerable households.
<b>Planned Activities:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of beneficiaries.</li> <li>• Carry out detailed needs assessment</li> </ul>

- Community mobilization and training on community projects and selection process.
- Distribute vegetable seeds to 800 affected families comprising 4,000 beneficiaries.
- Monitor and report on the relief distributions

These efforts will be coordinated with those of WFP and FAO to avoid duplication of efforts and to provide complementary inputs.

## Communications – Advocacy and Public information

The Lesotho Red Cross Society, with technical support from the regional office will conduct awareness and publicity activities including field trips to sensitise the public and media on the situation on the ground and the humanitarian response. They will also work with programme teams to develop beneficiary communications that support programme objectives in decreasing the vulnerability of the affected populations. Volunteers will also disseminate the principles and values of the Movement during their response operation.

<b>Outcome: Regular credible and reliable information to the public is provided</b>
<b>Output:</b> A steady flow of timely and accurate information between field and other stakeholders is maintained.
<b>Activities planned</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct awareness campaigns through print and electronic media</li> <li>• Support field staff in producing regular field updates for sharing with stakeholders</li> <li>• Ensure the visibility of the Red Cross in response operations</li> <li>• Collaborate and support other NS programmes to produce IEC material and develop social mobilisation campaigns</li> <li>• Collect visual materials of the operation and case studies.</li> <li>• Organize at least one media tour to the operation area</li> <li>• Advocate for development of risk reduction policies and legal framework to ensure community resilience.</li> </ul>

## Contact information

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

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- **IFRC Zone:** Daniel Bolanos, Disaster Management Coordinator, Africa; phone: +254 (0)731 067 489; email: [daniel.bolanos@ifrc.org](mailto:daniel.bolanos@ifrc.org)

### For Performance and Accountability (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting):

- **IFRC Zone:** Robert Ondrusek, PMER/QA Delegate, Africa phone: +254 731 067277; email: [robert.ondrusek@ifrc.org](mailto:robert.ondrusek@ifrc.org)

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1. DREF budget [below](#)
  2. Click [here](#) to return to the title page
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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

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.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
  2. Enable healthy and safe living.
  3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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## **DREF BUDGET SUMMARY**

### Lesotho Food Insecurity (MDRLS002)

<b><u>RELIEF NEEDS</u></b>	<b>DREF Grant Budget CHF</b>
Shelter	0
Construction Materials	0
Clothing & Textiles	0
Food	116,850
Seeds & Plants	5,000
Water & Sanitation	0
Medical & First Aid	0
Teaching Materials	0
Utensils & Tools	0
Other Supplies & Services	0
<b>Total Relief Needs</b>	<b>121,850</b>
<b><u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u></b>	
Land & Buildings	0
Vehicles Purchase	0
Computers & Telecom Equipment	0
Office/Household Furniture & Equip.	0
Medical Equipment	0
Other Machinery & Equipment	0
<b><u>TRANSPORT, STORAGE &amp; VEHICLES</u></b>	
Storage - Warehouse	7,250
Distribution & Monitoring	0
Transport & Vehicles Costs	15,500
<b><u>PERSONNEL</u></b>	
International Staff	0
Regionally Deployed Staff	6,750
National Staff	0
National Society Staff	17,048
Volunteers	8,770
Consultants	0
<b><u>WORKSHOPS &amp; TRAINING</u></b>	
Workshops & Training	
<b><u>GENERAL EXPENSES</u></b>	
Travel	700
Information & Public Relations	500
Office running costs	4,650
Communication Costs	1,575
Professional Fees	0
Financial Charges	225
Other General Expenses	0
<b><u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u></b>	
Programme and Supplementary Services Recovery	12,013
<b>Total Operational Needs</b>	<b>74,981</b>
<b>Total Appeal Budget (Cash &amp; Kind)</b>	<b>196,831</b>
<b>Available Resources</b>	
<b>Net Request in CHEF</b>	<b>196,831</b>