



IFRC'S DISASTER RESPONSE EMERGENCY FUND (DREF)



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Today, the impacts of climate change and various non-weather related hazards are giving rise to an increasing number of small and medium sized disasters affecting vulnerable communities disproportionately. Without media attention or international visibility, these disasters can struggle to attract funding, leaving those affected at risk of being completely neglected.

WHAT IS DREF?

Within this context, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' (IFRC) Disaster Response Emergency Fund - DREF - has proved to be the simplest, fastest and most transparent way for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (National Societies) to access reliable international, short-term emergency funding for community action in all kinds of disasters, when needs exceed the resources available at national level.

HOW DOES DREF WORK?

Established in 1985, the DREF has built over 35 years of experience in providing loans and grants to National Societies. Since its inception more than 200 million people in crisis worldwide have benefited from DREF support. Through the Fund, IFRC provides National Societies with:

- Direct funding to finance their local responses to small-to-medium scale disasters when no Emergency Appeal will be launched or when support from other donors is not foreseen.
- Start-up funding for wider responses where IFRC and National Societies work together to respond to complex medium and large-scale emergencies, which is later reimbursed by donor contributions via Emergency Appeals.
- Direct funding to finance early actions in advance of predicted hazards, based around an Early Action Protocol or an imminent crisis emergency plan of action designed to save lives before a disaster happens.

DREF is a demand-driven and locally owned fund. It receives unearmarked donor contributions and is centrally managed by the IFRC to ensure global coherence and accountability on its usage. DREF is highly cost-efficient, operating costs amount to a maximum of five percent of annual allocations with funds going directly to implementing National Societies with no intermediary. DREF is open to all 192 National Societies who submit funding applications and plans of action reflecting locally identified priorities and needs.

In 2021 the DREF and the Forecast-based Action (FbA) by the DREF, allocated almost 42 million Swiss Francs in support of 136 operations through 31 loans to Emergency Appeals and 105 grants that collectively supported National Societies to reach 12.6 million people in 88 countries.



WHY SUPPORT DREF?

DREF delivers fast and predictable funding to first responders

DREF enables National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to rapidly scale up their efforts to help communities manage a broad range of emerging hazards, threats and disasters. DREF requests can be approved within 24 hours and disbursed in less than 72 hours. Most operations supported through the DREF are small and medium-scale emergencies, with an average allocations below 500,000 Swiss francs, but it also provides essential support to kickstart large-scale responses. In 2021 alone, 11 million Swiss francs were allocated to 31 large-scale emergency responses, including Super Typhoon Ray in the Philippines, the Haiti Earthquake and the Mt Nyiragongo Volcanic Eruption in Rwanda and DRC.

On average, 70% of DREF allocations are made for climate and weather-related events - usually of a recurring nature such as floods or droughts. But DREF is widely used in other contexts, targeting disasters arising from exceptional, rather than seasonal events including; wildfires, mass transport accidents, population movements, situations of civil unrest and disease outbreaks. From 2012 to 2022, the DREF allocated 32 million Swiss francs for 170 operations in response to epidemics, including over 1.8 million Swiss francs in 2021 to support seven African National Societies response to outbreaks of Ebola.



Syria - Drought and water scarcity add new challenges to a decade-long humanitarian crisis

In 2021, the 10th anniversary of the ongoing conflict in Syria was marked by the worst drought to hit the country in 70 years, which contributed to a widespread deterioration of living standards. With rising prices of food, water, and basic goods - the situation became particularly challenging for an estimated 289,000 internally displaced people (IDPs), in northern and north-eastern Syria. *Studies have highlighted* that only 20% of people have enough drinking water, while an assessment from the Syrian Red Crescent has shown that in the same region, over three million people have access to only 1-2 hours of electricity daily. Responding to this emergency, the DREF allocated 748,415 Swiss francs for the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to support 15,000 people (3,000 households) with a response strategy focused on food security, hygiene promotion and health awareness-raising.



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Protecting livelihoods in Mongolia

In 2021, ahead of the worst of the winter season the activation of an Early Action Protocol enabled the Mongolian Red Cross Society to give unrestricted cash grants and animal care kits to 2,000 nomadic herder households in the most at-risk areas, helping to sustain communities and prevent livestock losses from starvation.

DREF enables anticipatory action

Acting before a disaster happens saves lives and protects livelihoods. An increasingly large part of the DREF is committed to anticipatory action, where financial resources are agreed in advance and released automatically once a trigger is reached, providing National Societies with the resources and capacities to mitigate the impact of a disaster or crisis on communities at risk. The DREF also provides funding for National Societies to conduct readiness activities which complement overall preparedness efforts and anticipatory actions, allowing more lives to be saved when faced with an imminent crisis, from any likely hazard with an above average forecasted impact. In 2021, 10 new Early Action Protocols (EAP) were approved for funding by DREF Forecast-based Action for different hazards, together with 13 DREF allocations for imminent crises.

DREF supports local action

DREF delivers on commitments made under the Grand Bargain - to invest more in local humanitarian action. DREF allows donors to move beyond traditional top-down humanitarian support models to directly support the work of Red Cross Red Crescent volunteers who serve as frontline community-based actors. National Societies directly receive DREF allocations enabling them to save more lives and tailor urgent assistance to people's needs. DREF also supports the building of National Society competencies and capacities and through them, those of local communities.



How local action turned a disaster into a new chapter

In April 2020, the DREF allocated 498,960 Swiss francs to Tanzania Red Cross, to support the communities affected by the heavy rains and floods that displaced 1,702 families from the Lindi region. The villages of Kipindimbi and Njinjo were completely flooded, forcing its inhabitants to relocate to new land allocated by the government. The DREF enabled them to start again and build new shelters. One year later, in 2021, the community spontaneously came together to create a new Kipindimbi branch of the Red Cross.

OUR AMBITION



Sajid Hasan

Enhancing DREF partnerships

In line with the rising humanitarian needs and increasing pressure on National Societies to anticipate and respond to disasters and crises, the IFRC is actively working with donors to grow and develop the DREF. Following the success of the first ever DREF Pledging Conference in 2021, which saw the participation of 19 governments and private sector partners, a second Pledging Conference will be held on 4th November 2022. IFRC's pledging conference seeks to grow the fund every year in order to reach CHF 100 million in 2025 to address this alarming rise in small and medium scale emergencies. The target contributions to be raised in 2022 is CHF 60 million.



Susana Arroyo Barrantes

Innovative financing

Together with external partners Aon and the Centre for Disaster Protection (CDP), the IFRC is exploring an innovative insurance mechanism for DREF that can enhance and expand the fund's capacity. The insurance mechanism is an efficient way to leverage donor capital to transfer the risk of funding shortfalls to external providers. It will serve to diversify DREF funding sources, ensuring additional capacity and liquidity in years of unforeseen allocation requests.



Scaling up anticipatory action

Shifting more funding, expertise and energy from disaster response towards anticipatory action makes economic sense. DREF allocations requested by National Societies in anticipation of imminent events doubled through 2019-2021, totalling three million Swiss francs. It is intended that around 25 percent of future DREF funding will be dedicated to scaling up anticipatory action with increased allocations for imminent events and improvements to the performance of Forecast-based Action (FbA) through a series of changes that increase its efficiency, relevance, agility and coverage.

For more information please contact

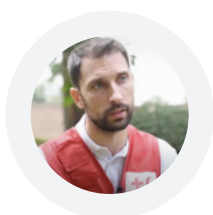


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THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Humanity

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality

It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality

In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence

The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

Voluntary service

It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity

There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.