

DISASTER RESPONSE EMERGENCY FUND

2023 Annual Plan

© International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva, 2022

Any part of this publication may be cited, copied, translated into other languages or adapted to meet local needs without prior permission from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, provided that the source is clearly stated.

Contact us:

Requests for commercial reproduction should be directed to the IFRC Secretariat:

Address: Chemin des Crêts 17, Petit-Saconnex, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland Postal address: P.O. Box 303, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland

T +41 (0)22 730 42 22 | **F** +41 (0)22 730 42 00 | **E** secretariat@ifrc.org | **W** [ifrc.org](https://www.ifrc.org)

“

200 million:

that is how many people affected by disasters have been supported by National Societies through the Disaster Response Emergency Fund – DREF over the last 35 years.

441 million:

that is how many Swiss francs the DREF has provided to National Societies in need all over the world since its inception.

Established in 1985, the DREF provides fast financial grants and loans to National Societies for emergency services before and immediately after a disaster.

Today, disasters are recurring more frequently with more severe impacts.

Humanitarian needs are growing exponentially. So too is the pressure on our IFRC network to anticipate and respond to bigger and more complex crises.

Our DREF is evolving to meet these needs. After more than one year of innovation, teamwork, consultation, revision, testing, and development, the DREF is evolving into a more agile mechanism.

As one of our IFRC Flagships, the DREF contributes to achieving our Strategy 2030 and making good on the Agenda for Renewal. It ensures our support builds capacities and is locally led and owned by National Societies.

DREF's evolution doesn't stop here. Important efforts are ongoing to secure more funding through innovative mechanisms such as the Insurance project and to help National Societies respond to disasters with more agility and at scale.

”



Jagan Chapagain
IFRC Secretary General

28th September 2022

CONTENTS

Overview	5
<hr/>	
DREF Results in 2022	6
<hr/>	
Case story: Armenia	7
Allocation trends: 2018-2022	8
Looking Foward	10
<hr/>	
Strategic objectives	11
<hr/>	
Case Story: Africa Hunger Crisis	16
Enablers	17
<hr/>	
Case Story: Venezuela	19
Contacts	21
<hr/>	

Overview: To DREF 2.0 and beyond.

The DREF was established in 1985, as an emergency funding mechanism for all National Societies, for response operations and early action. It is focused on the provision of life-saving support and emergency services before and immediately after a disaster. Since its establishment, the DREF supported over 200 million people affected by disasters and humanitarian crises; and allocated almost CHF 500 million to address the needs of the most vulnerable communities. Today, humanitarian needs are growing exponentially and the IFRC is working to anticipate and respond to larger and more complex crises. In 2021, the DREF published its Strategic Ambition, and its commitment to raise CHF 300 million between 2022-2025 reaching at least CHF 100 million per year by 2025.

Now with the merge of the DREF and the FbA by the DREF, establishing the "One Fund, Two Pillars" concept, we are living up to our commitment to scaling up anticipatory action; we are increasing ceilings of allocated amounts and allowing longer operational timeframes, launching new funding modalities, and extending our capacity to anticipate and respond to slow onset and protracted crisis. We are digitalizing our application and reporting process, via the GO Platform and introducing a simultaneous review process to reduce the time between the disaster and the approval of the allocations will contribute to a more efficient fund. To be able to implement these changes, the DREF Team has also grown, with DREF Officer positions opened in each of the IFRC Regional Offices.

Our new way of working means maintaining a high level of quality, transparency, and accountability in our actions and operations.

The DREF is evolving to be an even more agile, fast, transparent, and localized way for National Societies to access reliable international funding for emergency response at the community level and for all kinds of disasters.



Honduras Red Cross responding to floods, with DREF support.

DREF results in 2022:


CHF **59M** allocated


15,3M people targeted


157 operations
91 countries


CHF 6,9M allocated from the anticipatory pillar


CHF 52,1M allocated from the response pillar


20 EAPs and Simplified EAPs ready to be activated


147 operations in response to disasters and crisis


17 DREF operations for imminent events


33 loans to kick-start Emergency Appeals


7 EAPs successfully activated


4 new National Societies using the DREF

92%

of the funds directly channeled to the National Societies (local actor).

80%

of the funds directly channeled to the National Societies (local actor).



live updates on the DREF operations at:

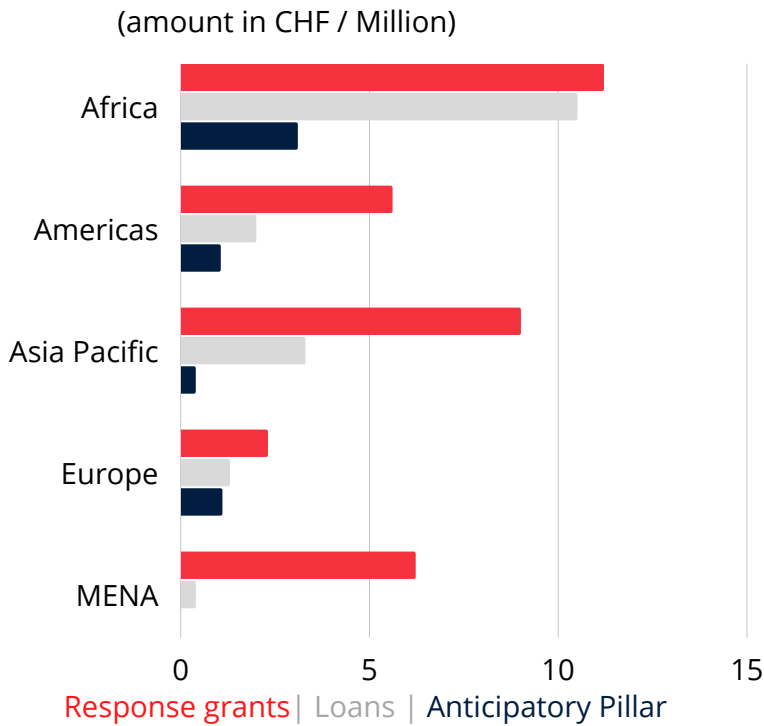
<https://go.ifrc.org/>

<https://www.ifrc.org/dref>

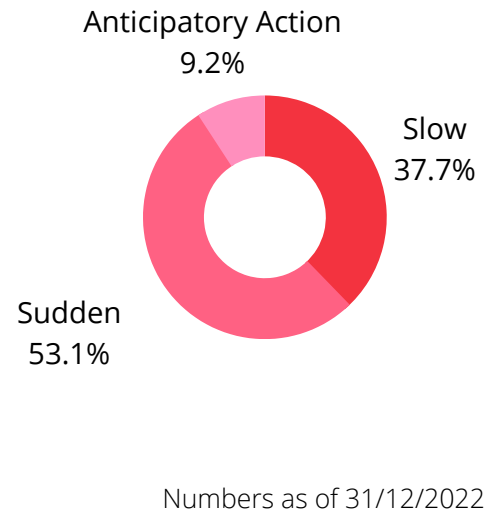
https://twitter.com/IFRC_DREF

Numbers as of 31/12/2022

Allocations by Region 2022 (Modalities)



Allocations by type of onset (%)



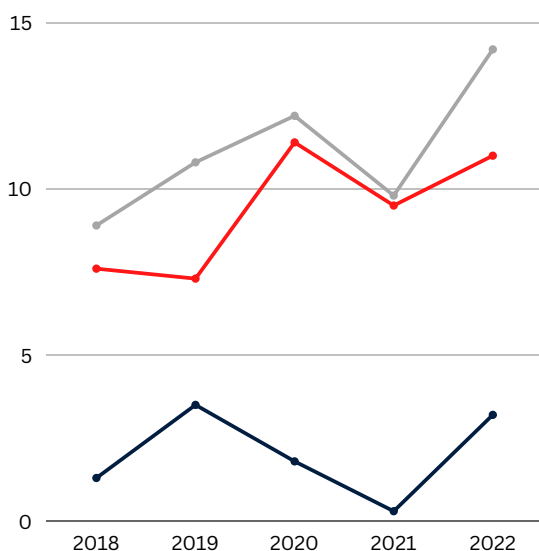
Armenia Population Movement – Pioneering the DREF 2.0

On September 28th, the DREF launched its “Evolution” – a package of changes on modalities, procedures, and applications to make the fund more agile, in line with its 2021-2025 Strategic Ambition. Ever since 33 National Societies have used IFRC’s GO Platform to request a DREF allocation. Armenian Red Cross was the first National Society to request and have a DREF processed via the GO Platform, asking for the fund’s support to respond to a population movement crisis. With the new application, the team could put into practice the new simultaneous review feature – a review process between the regional officers and the Global team. The online DREF application enabled timely, efficient, and consolidated feedback to National Societies and delegations, faster than before the DREF evolution.

Allocation trends 2018-2022:

Floods

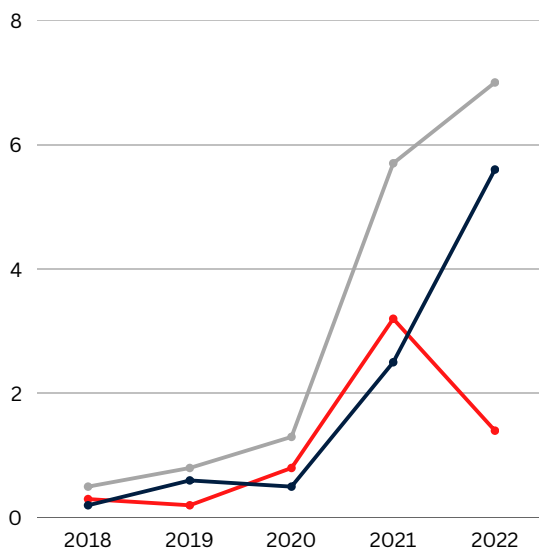
CHF 14.3 Million in 2022



A Global trend: Floods corresponded to almost 30% of the DREF operations in 2022, with allocations in all five regions. Following the trend, the allocations for this hazard in 2023 are expected to continue rising: the last World Disasters Report (WDR) has projected an increase in floods and storm surges in all regions, worsened by climate change symptoms as heightened sea level and increase in urban population. On a positive note, the use of anticipatory action for this hazard has also grown: out of the 7 activated early action protocols in 2022, five targeted the impacts of floods, storm surges and typhoon.

Food Insecurity & Droughts

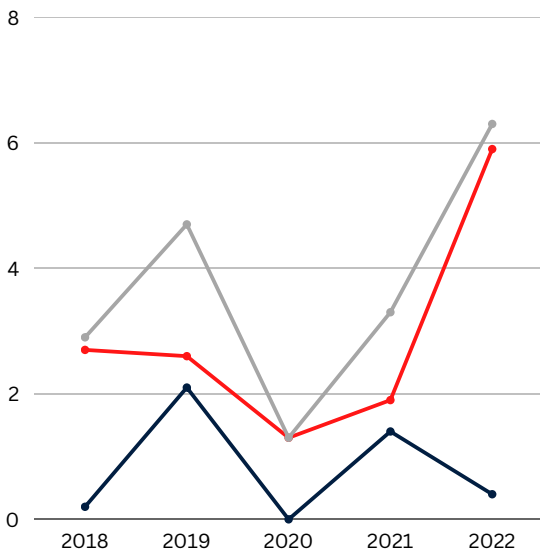
CHF 7,6 Million in 2022



A regional crisis with Global roots: In 2022, the DREF supported 15 operations in response to droughts and food insecurity in three regions (Africa, Asia Pacific, and MENA). One highlight is the contribution to the Africa Hunger Crisis Emergency Appeal, through which the fund loaned CHF 3,6M in addition to the CHF 5,7M in grants and loans to active operations. Allocations for this hazard are forecasted to grow in 2023, based the WDR forecast on the increase in droughts in Africa, and the DREF ambition of increasing its relevance for slow and protracted crisis through a new modality to assess, anticipate and respond to droughts and food insecurity.

Epidemics

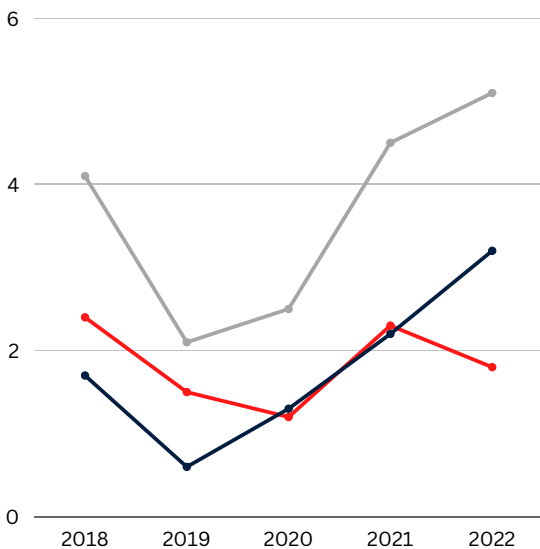
CHF 6,4 Million in 2022



Anticipatory actions for epidemics: The allocations for epidemics have significantly increased in 2022, with two highlights 1. Request for support in the MENA region, for the first time since 2009 (to a Cholera Outbreak in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon); and 2. The increase in requests to anticipate this crisis – there were four imminent DREFs for the Ebola Virus Disease and one imminent DREF for Dengue. While climate change is also impacting the outbreak of epidemics, 2022 has shown that National Societies' request to anticipate and prepare for these hazards is a trend.

Population Movement

CHF 5 Million in 2022



A humanitarian crisis in Central America: The DREF loans to population movement Emergency Appeals has significantly increased in 2022, with CHF 1,2M to Ukraine and impacted countries appeal and CHF 1M to the Mexico and Central America migration crisis. Conflict, internal violence, and economic instability were the main driver for population movement responses in Africa, Americas, and Europe. The last WDR highlights how the socioeconomic situation increases the vulnerability and exposure of these populations to weather-related emergencies. While climate change can cause an increase on the number of displacements on the upcoming years, the devastating socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemics (2020) can be seen as a catalyser on the demand for allocations in response to migration crisis.

Looking forward:

The five-year DREF strategic ambition (2021 – 2025) builds on the followed-up action plan of the 2020 audit report, the continued dialogue with IFRC delegations and National Societies. This annual plan is the operationalization of the strategic ambition and outlines key milestones for 2023, linked to the strategy and the outcomes of the November 2022 pledging conference. Progress against this annual plan will be reported through standard IFRC annual reports.

The IFRC Disaster Response Emergency Fund is the most agile, simplest, and fastest way for National Societies to access predictable international, short-term funding for a local response when needs exceed the resources available at the national level. The growing needs of the communities affected and the growing response capacity of National Societies are addressed through a significant scale-up of the use of DREF to anticipate and respond – before, during, and after the impact.

The following main directions are identified in the DREF Strategy 2021–2025:



Strategic Objective 1:

Enabling local action – enough funding as direct as possible.

Strategic Objective 2:

Saving more lives by anticipating crises and acting earlier.

Strategic Objective 3:

Increase the value of DREF in protracted, slow onset, and complex events.



Enabler 1:

A lean, efficient fund

Enabler 2:

Increased support to National Societies

Enabler 3:

National Society ownership and trust



The DREF Strategic Ambition is fully available here.



Strategic objective 1: Enabling Local action – enough funding as direct as possible.

The DREF continues to act as a funding mechanism for National Societies to enhance early action and response to hazards and disasters that surpass their financial capacities. The DREF supports the localization agenda, as resources are channeled directly from donors to communities in need. **While the average of international humanitarian funds directly channeled to local actors every year lies around 1.2%,¹ globally, 80% of DREF's allocation is directly transferred to the National Societies.** The IFRC commits to promoting local action through stronger communication and fundraising strategies to enhance its donor base and increase commitments to the Fund. We are exploring new modalities for funding and engaging with new partners.

Based on the revised management structure (which includes the DREF Advisory Group, DREF Council, and DREF Steering Group) the further expansion of the DREF Council is envisaged with more engagement from non-traditional partners, and closer follow-up on sharing information with main DREF donors allowing them to have a more in-depth oversight on the functioning of the Fund. Through the DREF advisory group, more roles and responsibilities are planned for partners to be engaged in the specific thematic areas of the DREF, including more involvement in reviews and strategic research, analysis, and building further partnerships.

During 2022, the DREF advanced its communication and visibility by increasing and improving the content shared on different platforms. Since February, a monthly newsletter with key numbers and relevant activities in both anticipation and response has been shared via social media and email with DREF's partners. This publication receives on Twitter an average of 3,000 impressions every month. Beyond that, a positive collaboration has been established with the IFRC Climate Centre, with the systematic sharing of new DREF operations to feed new stories on the DREF. A positive bridge has also been built with the IFRC Communications team, with the DREF participation in the weekly editorial meetings and different channels for monitoring external content published on the DREF.

Furthermore, leveraging the expertise of the IFRC Communications Unit, the DREF team has developed a communications strategy, which will start to be implemented in 2023 with the

hiring of a DREF communication focal point. As part of this strategy more resources will be allocated to profile the DREF, highlighting successes achieved by National Societies as well as the impact on targeted communities. Overall, as well a more systematized content sharing will be in place for 2023, including regular tweets, sharing monthly newsletters with partners, and also regular monitoring of where the DREF can be better profiled throughout other organizations and major platforms.

Milestones for 2023:

- Actualize the new DREF management structure according to the new partnerships developed
- Roll out new partnerships with Insurance.
- Together with PRD, engage new partners through tailored approaches
- Implement the DREF communication and advocacy strategy, together with Partnerships and Resource Development (PRD) and Communications, via the hiring of a Communications Focal Point for the DREF.
- Support communications to develop case studies and stories that highlight the DREF across IFRC, linked to different program areas.
- Rework and implement the social media strategic plan for 2023 linked to the communication strategy.
- Advance the DREF Monthly Newsletter by adapting and expanding its reach with strategic partners.
- Explore the connections with key communication actors such as the IFRC Climate Centre and the Anticipation Hub, to increase the reach and quality of pieces on the DREF Operations.
- Organizing a pledging conference, provide a platform for partners to announce new and continued commitments to the DREF.



Belize Red Cross responding to Hurricane Lisa, with DREF support.



Strategic objective 2: Saving more lives by anticipating crisis and acting earlier.

The merge of the Forecast based Action by the DREF into the DREF in 2022 requires significant revision in the way the Fund operates. In 2023, focus under strategic objective 2 will be aimed at consolidating the changes introduced in 2022 (one fund two pillars, simplified EAP, increased budget cap, full allocations of early action funds...etc.), making them operational and disseminating them to the wider IFRC network. If these three targets are properly met, scale-up will be on track for an increase of the DREF allocations destined for anticipatory action.

The initial step for 2023 will be to develop the procedures that regulate how the DREF fund is operated, this will outline the framework on which anticipatory action funding will be allocated and managed. Alongside the development of the procedures, administrative templates will be produced that respond to the new joint structure of the Fund and its desired objective. To operationalize and roll out these changes the DREF team will work with the DREF Officers in the regions and the anticipatory action focal points to identify priority IFRC Regional and Delegation Staff that need to be trained to act as interlocutors with National Societies. It is important to mention that strategic objective 2 is implemented in close collaboration with the Climate and Resilience unit of the Disaster Climate and Crisis, where the coordination for anticipatory action takes place.

2023 will see the kickoff of a new project focused on promoting anticipatory action in Africa, with support from the Italian Government and the Italian Red Cross. The project, managed by the Africa Regional Office, the DREF Team, and the Geneva Climate and Resilience Unit aims to support up to 20 African National Societies under two work streams:

- Set up and further developing Forecast-based Financing (FbF) systems in 6 National Societies.

- Supporting National Societies without a completed FbF system to act early, by developing anticipatory action plans which are eligible for funding from the anticipatory pillar of the DREF, via a DREF for imminent events or a simplified EAP allocation.

It is expected that both work streams will contribute to increasing the number of people covered by early action planning. The DREF team will be particularly involved in the implementation of the second workstream, as this one will require agile technical accompaniment to ensure the plans are developed to meet the DREF requirements. This is one of the first opportunities for IFRC to directly support the development of these types of plans.

Milestones for 2023:

- More National Societies develop EAPs and Simplified EAPs.
- EAPs and Simplified EAPs are presented on GO and activations are facilitated through the GO Platform.
- Technical support is provided to National Societies via IFRC Delegations, or directly if appropriate for Simplified EAPs and DREF for imminent events.
- An increased number of National societies make use of the CHF 500,000 budget cap, covering a larger number of people at risks.
- A simplified process is developed to transition from a DREF-funded anticipatory action operation to a response operation.
- National Societies present anticipatory action plans to be funded by the DREF for non-weather events.
- Analyze planned vs actual for triggered EAPs during the last 3 years to assess planning accuracy, with the aim of improving the quality moving forward
- The project focused on scaling up anticipatory action in Africa begins as planned and countries supported submit simplified Early Action Protocols and DREF for imminent events.
- Define a new working modality with the Validation Committee that results in more engagement and better response times.
- 15% of overall DREF funding allocated to anticipatory action.



Strategic objective 3: Increase the value of DREF in protracted, slow onset and complex events

The trend from the last five years of increased requests for allocations from National Societies to respond to civil unrest, food security, and population movement, which are slowly deteriorating, or becoming protracted crises has continued with 33% (one-third) of the operations responding to more complex emergencies in 2022. The new DREF funding modality to focus on the slow onset and protracted situations has been included in the DREF evolution launch in September 2022. This allows NSs to request DREF allocations for a longer operational timeframe acknowledging that there might be several allocations as the situation deteriorates. Recommendations have been developed on how to use this modality in terms of eligibility criteria, which has been reviewed to be more fit for purpose for such operations, also allowing external support, and surge deployments.

During 2023 it is important to review how this new modality contributed to maximizing the impact of more targeted assistance for National Societies. This will include close cooperation with partners on developing review criteria, and conducting targeted reviews with NSs and IFRC offices where such operations were implemented. At the same time, further actions will need to take place to sensitize IFRC colleagues and National Society leadership and technical experts on the existence of such modality, and the criteria and work closely together with them to identify triggers. In addition, a more comprehensive tool will be developed to support National Societies to facilitate their access to the DREF in slow onset, protracted or complex events.

Milestones for 2023:

- Pilot, implement, and monitor the achievement of the new modality.
- Develop an analysis framework with IM team support on secondary analysis for slow onset and protracted situations. Is this still the plan, I am not sure how we could do this
- Develop a feedback-collection mechanism to review the impacts of the new modality, to meet specific needs in these operations.
- Identify thresholds and commonly used triggers.
- Analyze the impact of the previous operations on the slow onset and protracted situations.
- Consultation with regional offices on region-specific situations and capacities.



Case story: Africa Hunger Crisis - one of the most alarming food crises in decades

Over the past 30 years, Africa has faced an average of one hunger crisis every four to five years – but in 2022, it reached an unprecedented magnitude and geographic scope. The consequences of the ongoing crisis were exacerbated by the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Ukrainian war, civil conflict, and worsening climate change. Since May 2021, the DREF allocated a total of CHF 10,06 million to support 17 African National Societies in providing emergency response and conducting assessments on the ongoing hunger crisis, which became part of IFRC's [Africa Hunger Crisis Regional Emergency Appeal](#). IFRC is working to raise CHF 132,000,000 to support 7,6 Million people.

• **Enabler 1: A lean, efficient fund**

DREF aims to be a lean, agile, and efficient fund drawing on innovation and digitalization wherever possible to ensure greater efficiencies. Based on the long consultative and development process which started in 2021, in 2022 the online application template and revised review process have been introduced. The testing period will still last until Q1 of 2023, therefore a final review has to be completed. This is also linked with the new procedures, which have been revised during 2022 to reflect the DREF evolution and the new funding modalities. The DREF KPIs have also been updated to reflect the DREF evolution, and the DREF KPIs will need to be carefully monitored during 2023 (when necessary, additional KPIs may need to be added and the overall reporting process may need further adjustment). In addition, the general indicators will be monitored, which are more linked to the overall IFRC policies and procedures but may have an impact on the performance of the Fund.

At the same time, DREF will continue to develop and strengthen its risk management processes and tools, ensuring that risks are monitored, mitigated, as well as communicated and documented in a more systematic way, in line with the overall IFRC Risk Management Policy. Emphasis will be placed on the further refinement of the tools, maintenance, and collaboration with the IFRC Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI) as well as the development of stronger collaboration with the IFRC Risk Management team, particularly in relation to the development of key tools and processes, such as the DREF Risk Appetite Statement and the establishment of a more regular and automatized method of sharing identified issues and risks with relevant file holders to ensure increased awareness and informed decision making.

Milestones for 2023:

- Finalize the new template and digital application process based on the results and feedback from the testing period.
- The DREF online application is also available in French, Arabic, and Spanish.
- KPIs are regularly monitored, and compliance issues are systematically collected and updated in Issue and Risk Register. The progress on the KPIs is regularly communicated to the relevant stakeholders.
- DREF Issue and Risk Register are updated and monitored regularly.
- Develop the DREF Risk Appetite Statement.
- Develop a system for regular and automatized monitoring and flagging identified risks and linking them with file holders to be able to find solutions.
- Establish a regular working relationship with finance, audit, and risk management colleagues to enable an increased level of risk awareness and preparedness.

- **Enabler 2: Increased support to strengthening National Societies**

Investing in the capacity to understand and properly access the fund and its different modalities in both pillars, is a core part of the DREF annual work to increase the access to the fund, with our National Societies as sole users of the DREF, is critical that the systems are in place to ensure the resources in a timely manner when dealing with forecasted and/or occurred events.

Since its launch in 2018, DREF capacity strengthening has involved the development of the necessary resources such as training packages, guidance documents and online resources to support the understanding of the DREF by National Society members and IFRC practitioners. Direct support (technical and financial) is also provided to national and regional level initiatives such as face-to-face trainings, webinars and facilitation or workshops related to the DREF.

Under the anticipatory pillar of the DREF, two new training packages are currently being developed (a foundation level online training and a tier one, in person training). These trainings will help to realise the ambitions outlined in the 2022 Council of Delegates Resolution, “Strengthening anticipatory action in the Movement: Our way forward” where the Movement commits to scale up anticipatory action to protect more people, in more countries, from more hazards. The training packages will be rolled out in 2023, including two pilot trainings in Q1 of 2023. The global training will create a community of anticipatory action practitioners and will identify anticipatory action champions.

The training package will be complemented by one-on-one coaching, mentoring sessions and virtual thematic webinars on anticipatory action topics. Another key priority for 2023 will be to undertake a desk-based review of the use of DREF for imminent events, with the aim of lifting the quality of these plans with better guidance and support pre submission. Throughout 2023, we will continue to promote the use of the Simplified Early Action Protocol for National Societies wanting to adopt a more strategic approach to anticipatory action. We will consolidate learning from the activations to date into the Forecast-based Finance manual and contribute to and promote the Anticipation Hub amongst the Red Cross Red Crescent Network.



Iranian Red Cross responding to Floods, with DREF support

Milestones for 2023:

- DREF training resources revised based on the DREF evolution.
- Anticipatory action training piloted globally and adjusted taking into account the nuanced regional contexts.
- Online DREF training revised based on the DREF evolution.
- At least 2 “DREF mentors/community of practice” session held in 2023.
- Support to regional initiatives which include elements of DREF capacity strengthening, such as National Societies Training, Preparedness and others.
- Improved technical guidance for National Societies and IFRC practitioners in advance of planning a DREF operation for an imminent event.
- Pilot synergies between DREF lessons learned and IFRC Capacity Building Fund.
- Develop a case study on the use of the DREF for population movement.



Case Story: Venezuela floods – Raising awareness through expanding communication.

Located on the Equator line, Venezuela is susceptible to heavy tropical rains, whose impacts are often worsened by the socioeconomic conditions in the country. In April 2022, above-average rains hardly hit the North of the country, affecting over 50,000 people, and 6,159 houses and causing a loss of 150,000 agricultural hectares. The Venezuela Red Cross Society quickly reached the DREF for support, receiving CHF 347,701 to respond to this emergency. But simply addressing the immediate local needs was not enough: VRC used this operation as an opportunity to celebrate and promote the Movement, by adding the production of high-quality audio-visual content as one of the outcomes of their operational plan – the images of the operation had a large impact on social media.

• **Enabler 3: National Society ownership and trust**

The Fund strives to balance access to funding for National Societies, while upholding humanitarian standards, along with maintaining accountability for the Fund. To achieve this, the DREF will support National Societies to better understand and access the DREF funds under the capacity strengthening file. With the development of a more systematic approach and criteria for operational reviews, DREF envisages the implementation of at least 10 operational reviews, thematic reviews dealing with the food crisis and epidemic preparedness, process review looking at the impact of the DREF evolution as well as a review on localization. The outcomes of these reviews shall be promoted and followed by respective regional offices' technical colleagues to build on those experiences in longer-term programming or for future emergency operations.

In parallel, more regular and rigorous attention will be given to conducting and disseminating lessons learned and operational learning, and the information will be incorporated into capacity-strengthening initiatives to inform future decision-making. DREF officers in each region will contribute to enhancing two-way communication efforts and promote a better understanding of National Society needs. It is recognized that some of the issues, can be related to the specific procedures of the Fund, and any change will require further analysis of feasibility and impact on the DREF as well as jointly revisiting the risk tolerance.

Milestones for 2023:

- Develop an annual plan and criteria for conducting operational reviews (operational, programmatic, thematic etc.)
- Ensure implementation of at least 10 operational reviews, 2 thematic reviews, 1 process review and potentially 1 review on localization. 3
- Institutionalize operational learning through highlighting major lessons learned and trends individually to National Societies as well as for the regions.
- Collect and summarize recurrent issues linked to the DREF
- Through hiring DREF officers in each region two-way communication is established for closer communication and assistance to National Societies.
- Develop a two-way feedback mechanism.



Thailand Red Cross responding to Typhoon Noru, with DREF support

Contacts

Nicolas Boyrie

DREF Team Lead

nicolas.boyrie@ifrc.org

Eszter Matyeka

DREF Senior Officer

eszter.matyeka@ifrc.org

Nazira Lacayo

FbA Senior Officer

nazira.lacayo@ifrc.org

Real time information and impact stories:



<https://www.ifrc.org/happening-now/emergencies/dref>



https://twitter.com/IFRC_DREF



<https://ifrcorg.sharepoint.com/Newsletters>

For donors:



<https://www.ifrc.org/happening-now/emergencies/disaster-response-emergency-fund-dref/dref-council>



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network, with **192 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** and around **14 million volunteers**. Our volunteers are present in communities before, during and after a crisis or disaster. We work in the most hard to reach and complex settings in the world, saving lives and promoting human dignity. We support communities to become stronger and more resilient places where people can live safe and healthy lives, and have opportunities to thrive.