



#DREFinAction

IFRC's Disaster Response
Emergency Fund
Mid-year Report

20
24

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01.

Executive summary

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Every individual and community that has been supported by the IFRC-DREF throughout its history represents a story of hope, resilience, and solidarity. In the first half of this year, the IFRC-DREF has allocated a record-setting amount to support operations across all five IFRC regions.

With our focus firmly on anticipatory action, IFRC-DREF is there for communities, supporting them before and after disasters, and ensuring resilience and preparedness in every corner of the globe through the dedicated work of National Societies.

Yet behind every number and every statistic, there are human stories—families receiving assistance to rebuild their lives after a crisis, children and youth given opportunities to explore their potential, communities rebuilding their lives with dignity. It is these human beings, these heartbeats, that define the true impact of the IFRC-DREF.

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Jagan Chapagain
Secretary General of the IFRC



The IFRC-DREF continues to advance initiatives aligned with its strategic ambition. Dedicated to promoting the localization of aid, in collaboration with the British Red Cross Society, the IFRC-DREF team commissioned a review of the IFRC-DREF pooled funding mechanism to assess its support for localization, in line with Grand Bargain commitments. The objective of this review is to evaluate the effectiveness of the IFRC-DREF mechanism in enabling National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to prepare and lead local responses. It captures findings and lessons from country case studies on National Society engagement with the IFRC-DREF funding, identifying challenges, and opportunities to strengthen the IFRC-DREF’s utility internally and externally. The review has been completed, with the report expected to be published in the second half of 2024.

In extending partnerships and following the recommendations from the [Norwegian Refugee Council’s 2022 report, “Pooled funds: the new humanitarian silver bullet?”](#), the IFRC-DREF launched a cross-learning collaboration with the Start Network (Start Fund and Start Ready) this year. The first hybrid session in June focused on the structure, strategy, and mechanisms of each Fund, with additional sessions planned for September and October.

The collaboration aims to:

- **Jointly identify** common themes, knowledge, and experiences that can be scaled and widely adopted.
- **Provide a space** for participants to candidly discuss barriers and enablers within their respective Funds.
- **Facilitate connections** between counterparts from each Fund.
- **Identify potential advocacy channels** within the broader humanitarian financing landscape.



A key next step is an in-person workshop that will be hosted by IFRC and the British Red Cross in London, co-organized with the Start Network, in November 2024. This workshop will further explore and establish systemic learning between pooled funds, and identify potential joint research, advocacy, and policy themes. Other pooled funds have already expressed interest in joining this event.

Aligned with these partnership developments, the IFRC-DREF featured prominently at the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Weeks held from 29 April to 10 May 2024, in Geneva. Four sessions were organized by the IFRC-DREF, focusing on:

- The IFRC-DREF as a Pooled Fund using data

through the IFRC GO platform (in coordination with the IFRC IM team and the Head of Disaster Management from Malawi Red Cross).

- Humanitarian Pooled Funds' contribution to the global localization agenda (in coordination with British Red Cross, FCDO, Malawi Red Cross, and Start Network).
- Enhancing Two-Way Accountability Systems through Feedback Mechanisms (in coordination with the IFRC CEA team, Ground Truth Solutions, and Start Network).
- Lessons Learned from Anticipatory Action supported by Humanitarian Pooled Funds (in

coordination with American Red Cross and Start Network/Start Ready).

The IFRC-DREF continues to develop applications on the IFRC GO Platform to better support National Societies. New developments are on track, and a review of the prioritization of modules was conducted in the first semester. The development of the Early Action Protocols (EAPs) modules will begin in the second semester of 2024, along with translations into the four official IFRC languages.

Simultaneously, the revision of the IFRC-DREF procedures to reflect the evolution of the operational parameters is still ongoing. During this process, new areas for improvement were identified and integrated

into this revision. The development of the new IFRC-DREF advance payment modality and the revision of the IFRC-DREF imminent modality have delayed the revision process but are expected to enhance flexibility and impact for National Societies in anticipating and responding to disasters and crises.

The IFRC-DREF is also working to improve its visibility with a stronger communication strategy and the live operational dashboard. Additionally, an interactive online report micro-site is being developed for the annual IFRC-DREF report to complement the PDF version, enhancing interactivity for donors and partners, and better highlighting IFRC-DREF's progress, results, and impact.

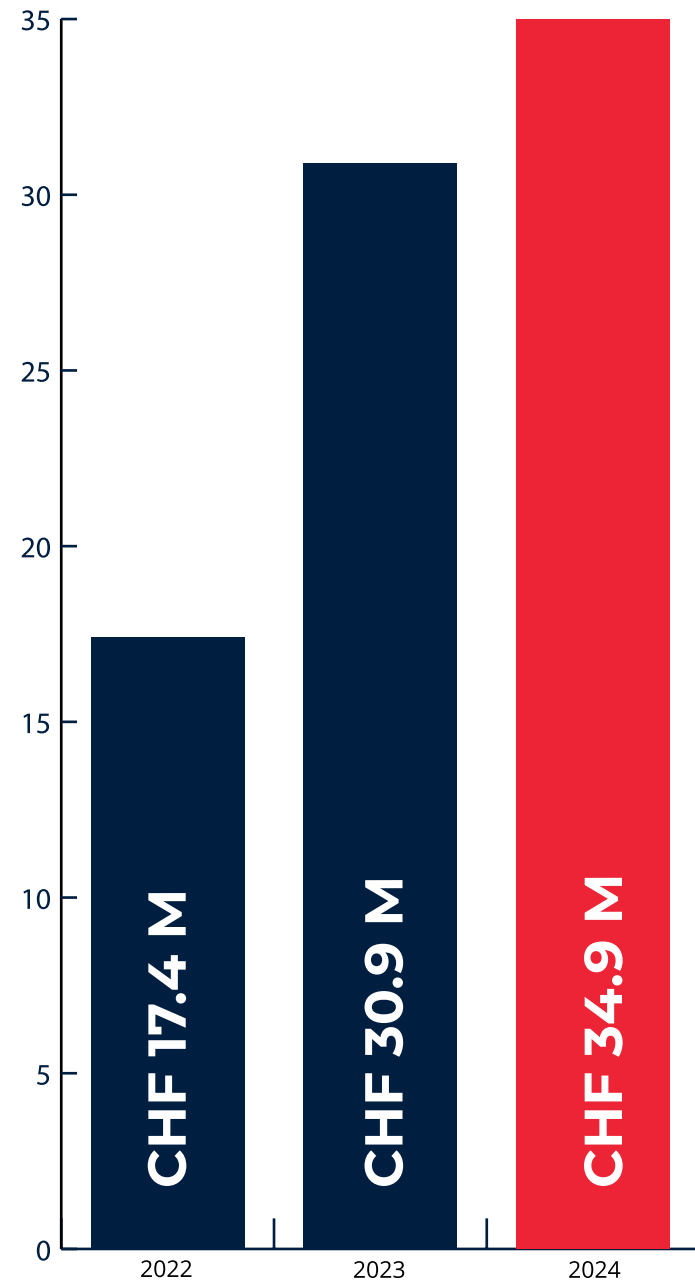


02.

Overview

2.1 IFRC-DREF results at a glance

Total allocations:



From January to the end of June, IFRC-DREF allocated the record amount of **34,989,993 Swiss francs** to support operations in all five regions. This is a significant increase from the 30.9 million Swiss francs allocated during the same period in 2023, and the 17.4 million allocated in 2022. In the first half of 2024, 87 operations were funded to support National Societies in responding and anticipating to small, medium and large-scale disasters.

The funding raised in the first half of 2024 has also reached its record with 38.8 million Swiss francs processed income and an additional 15.9 million confirmed income by the end of June 2024. This represents funding coverage of close to 65% against the funding target of 85 million Swiss francs at the end of June.

In the first six months of 2024 the **most common disaster types were floods, droughts, epidemics, cyclones and cold waves**. Floods took the first place both in 2022 and 2023 but cyclones and cold waves were not in the top 5 in either year. More than 14 million Swiss francs were spent in response to flood operations. The biggest operation was in Brazil where IFRC-DREF allocated 1 million Swiss francs in form of a loan. In the first half of 2024, 77% of the total allocations went to weather-related crises operations (cold wave, cyclone, droughts, fire, flood, heatwave, landslide, pluvial, storm surge, volcanic eruption).

The **Anticipatory Pillar of the fund managed 9.6% of the total allocations (3,381,456 Swiss francs)**. For the same period in 2023, the allocated amount was 2 million Swiss francs, comprising 7% of the total spent in the first half of the year. The increase in the allocated amount, the number of operations, and the proportion of the total budget clearly indicates the Anticipatory Pillar's growing significance.

In January 2024 the Working Group for Anticipatory Action and Population Movement was established with the objective of supporting the technical review and validation of Early Action Protocols (EAPs) and

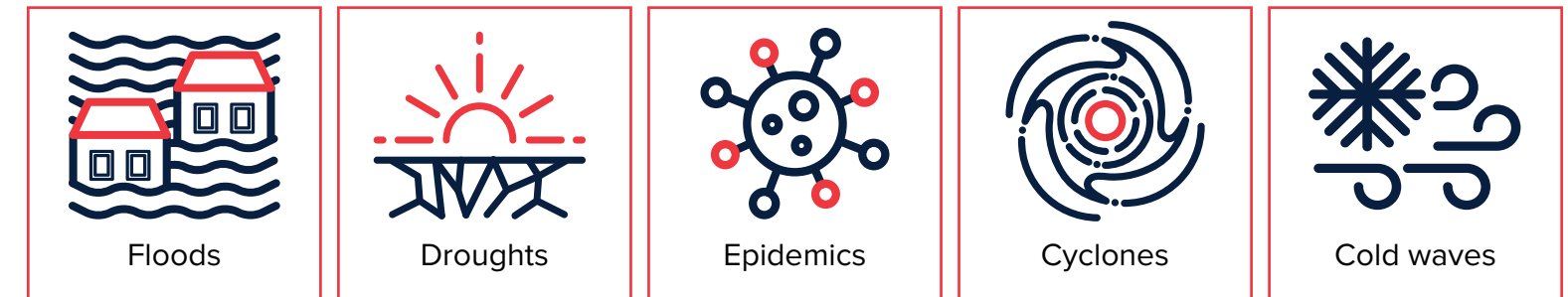
simplified Early Action Protocols (sEAPs) related to population movement. The Working Group will also be responsible for adjusting the current quality criteria to make them applicable to the different types of migration and displacement scenarios. This working group is comprised of National Society and IFRC experts in anticipatory action, migration and displacement, information management, shelter and response.

In the first six months of 2024 epidemics formed a big challenge in all five regions. The complexity of the problem is illustrated not only by the geographical

dispersion of the operations but also by the various types of diseases categorized under epidemics. From January to July, the IFRC-DREF responded to the outbreak and spread of Lymphatic Filariasis, Cholera, Measles, Dengue, Lassa Fever, and Polio. IFRC-DREF in total allocated more than 4 million Swiss francs to help 12 National Societies responding to epidemics.

It is also worth noting that in April and June 2024, the first simplified EAPs focusing on air pollution (from Thailand) and epidemics (Dengue, from Sri Lanka) were submitted to the IFRC-DREF Anticipatory Pillar and are under review.

Most common disaster types:



2.2 Operational highlights



Americas:

From January to the end of June 2024, 20 IFRC-DREF operations were approved in the Americas, totaling 7.4 million Swiss francs. Nineteen allocations were grants amounting to 6.4 million Swiss francs. Additionally, a 1 million Swiss francs loan was allocated to kick-start operations following the devastating floods in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. Of the allocations approved in the first half of 2024, 17 operations (6.6 million Swiss francs) were from the Response Pillar, and three operations (846,000 Swiss francs) were from the Anticipatory Pillar. In comparison, during the same period in 2023, only 13 IFRC-DREF allocations were approved, totaling 3.2 million Swiss francs, and nine operations, totaling 2.3 million Swiss francs in 2022.

The first half of 2024 demonstrated the vital role of the IFRC-DREF in addressing urgent humanitarian needs. The complexity and impact of disasters are

escalating, requiring more robust and comprehensive responses. The marked increase in funding and operations reflects the growing demand for rapid and flexible financial support. This ensures that National Societies are better equipped to respond swiftly and effectively, reinforcing the importance of IFRC-DREF in providing timely assistance and building resilience.

The 2024 Pre-Hurricane Conference, hosted by the IFRC Americas Regional Office from April 23-25, addressed challenges posed by extreme weather events, focusing on the El Niño Southern Oscillation and La Niña Southern Oscillation. The conference highlighted the need for improved early warning systems, response mechanisms, and early funding to better prepare National Societies and regional infrastructures for the hurricane season.

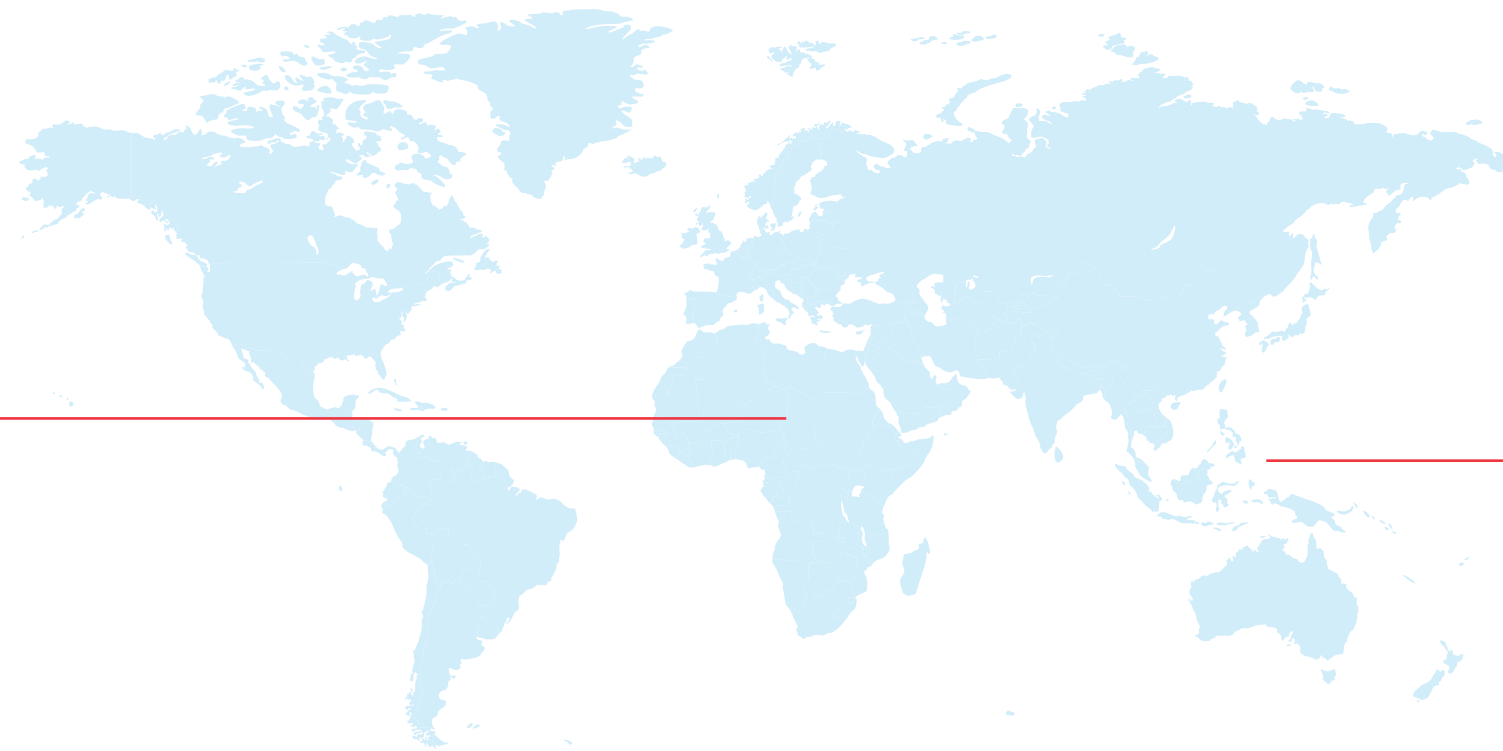
On the first day, the IFRC-DREF regional focal point led a session on early action funding, demonstrating how the IFRC-DREF Anticipatory Pillar can provide

financial resources ahead of disasters. This session, attended by 202 people, showcased how anticipatory action helps mitigate the impacts of weather and non-weather events. Additionally, an IFRC-DREF laboratory was held to provide an in-depth look at risks, triggers, and early actions to reduce these impacts, drawing 86 participants.

Honduras Population Movement EAP was approved at the end of 2023. Since its approval, work has progressed on (i) A detailed case study on the Honduras Population Movement EAP and (ii) Establishment of a steering group to oversee the impact evaluation should the EAP activate this year.

On February 9, the last trigger of the Ecuador Red Cross's EAP for floods was reached. The National Society took early measures to lessen the impact on communities at risk by assisting 1,000 vulnerable families with multipurpose cash, vector control, and safe water kits before the floods peak.





Africa:

Several IFRC-DREF modalities were activated to anticipate and manage drought related to El Niño in Southern Africa. Zimbabwe fully activated their Early Action Protocol, starting in late 2023 with a 12-month lead time. Allocations were made under the IFRC-DREF modality for drought in Eswatini, Zambia, Lesotho, and Botswana. Each country benefited from the flexibility of the IFRC-DREF modality for drought, depending on their context. These allocations, along with loans to the Mozambique and Zambia emergency appeals, served as a springboard for coordination, visibility, and resource mobilization beyond IFRC-DREF funding. In the region, we are seeing increased use of IFRC-DREF as a key leverage for funding and institutional engagement, particularly for protracted crises and small National Societies. This trend was evident during the first half of the year, with many IFRC-DREF allocations aimed at scaling up visibility, communication, and coordination for sub-regional

crises such as cholera in East Africa and drought in South Africa.

The use of IFRC-DREF is evolving towards non-traditional disasters, with more attention to non-climatic slow-onset crises. While floods remain the major disaster type for IFRC-DREF allocations in Africa, the first half of the year saw a shift towards more slow, silent, and protracted crises that are not exclusively climate related. Fifty-one percent of allocations in the first six months of 2024 supported National Society responses to cholera outbreaks in East Africa and the Comoros (1.2 million Swiss francs), drought in South Africa (2.5 million Swiss francs), and displacement crises beyond Sudan (1.5 million Swiss francs). This shift reflects a change in the approach to IFRC-DREF usage, favoring flexibility in implementation time, resource thresholds, and scope of eligibility.

The Zimbabwe Drought Early Action Protocol (EAP) second trigger was activated in early May due to the critical situation reported by humanitarian agencies and the Government's emergency declaration. The

first trigger was reached in September 2023, including early warning dissemination, drought-tolerant seed distribution, and livestock dosing as prioritized early actions. For the second trigger, early actions focused on cash voucher assistance and school supplementary feeding.

Asia Pacific:

Drought continues to intensify throughout the region, particularly in the Pacific Islands, where many isolated and hard to reach islands faced significant water scarcity and livelihood impacts. Two IFRC-DREFs for drought were launched in the first half of 2024, for the Marshall Islands (MDRMH004) and Micronesia (MDRFM002).

IFRC-DREF provided flexibility during the evolving flood situation in Sri Lanka, with three Operations Updates approved and published throughout the operational lifespan based on changing and escalating ground conditions.

In Bangladesh, IFRC-DREF facilitated transitions through disaster stages. The Heatwave EAP was triggered to mobilize early actions and was soon escalated to a response operation. The Bangladesh Heatwave EAP was triggered on April 21 in Dhaka city, when the Bangladesh Met Department issued an alert for severe to very severe heat, with temperatures peaking at 38 degrees Celsius. The Bangladesh Red Crescent quickly disseminated early warning messages, provided access to cooling centres and safe drinking water, and referred cases for further medical treatment. Additionally, 23,500 at-risk individuals received multipurpose cash assistance.

The first submission of an epidemic sEAP to the Anticipatory Pillar of the IFRC-DREF took place in this period. The sEAP, from the Sri Lankan Red Cross for Dengue Fever, taps into the Anticipation Hub's Technical Working Group for Epidemics, drawing experienced counterparts to support the technical validation of epidemic-related s/EAPs.



MENA:

During the first half of 2024, five IFRC-DREF operations were launched in MENA, all in response to weather-related events. This contrasts with the same period in 2023 when only 2 out of 7 operations were weather-related. In 2024, four operations responded to floods, and one addressed a cold wave.

Europe:

The Greece Heatwave sEAP was activated on 8 June after the National Observatory of Athens predicted scorching temperatures, reaching the sEAP trigger. The Hellenic Red Cross team carried out anticipatory actions to mitigate the impacts of the forecasted heatwave. They targeted 2,000 people, distributing bottled water, isotonic drinks, food and early warning messaging for homeless individuals and other vulnerable groups. They also conducted wellness checks for the homeless and elderly and set up a two-way call centre, to disseminate warnings about the health risks of extreme heat, along with information on how to reduce its impacts.

2.3 Operational challenges

Procurement

Many National Societies face challenges in procurement for their IFRC-DREF operations, particularly in parts of Africa, Small Island Developing States and other areas in Asia Pacific, the Americas, and Middle East North Africa. Such challenges can delay the timely delivery of essential services. This issue is particularly pronounced in remote areas where the National Society is often the sole provider of these services, as well as in countries under sanction, and those with high currency value fluctuations.

For example, in the Asia Pacific region, the Maldives Filariasis operation (MDRMV004) faced challenges with medical procurement. The necessity for international tender and procurement processes made

it impossible to administer the required items within the original operational timeframe. Consequently, an exceptional extension of five months was approved to ensure the completion of planned procurement and operations.

Similarly, in Iran, the National Society frequently encounters difficulties finalizing procurement processes due to inflation and fluctuating prices. The decreasing currency value affects suppliers' willingness to participate in tenders or honor their commitments during the tender period. This often forces the National Society to repeat the procurement process to adapt to changing conditions and identify new suppliers.

Recurring disaster patterns

The impacts of climate change are creating escalated seasonal events which could be viewed as a recurring request, greying the areas of eligibility and increasing the need for IFRC-DREF support to at-risk communities. This requires flexibility while remaining aligned to IFRC-DREF procedures. In such cases support is provided to National Societies on the basis of the scale of the disaster and its impact on

communities, rather than on the recurrency of the specific disaster type. To ease this process, analysis is being requested and provided by National Societies, on the scale of the crisis, impact on communities, pre-existing vulnerabilities including community capacity to cope and added value of National Societies support, taking into account their capacity to deliver the direly needed services in a timely manner.

Increased request for staffing costs

The request to cover staff costs is recurring and increasing, driven by the growing frequency of emergencies that divert National Society staff from their regular programmes. This is a direct consequence

of the increased number of emergencies and the need to maintain the capacity to address both programmatic and emergency requirements simultaneously.

Operational Monitoring and Reporting

Overdue final reports of IFRC-DREF supported operations remain a risk for the Fund, with outstanding

allocated amounts and operation activities remaining unreported, in some cases for extremely long periods





of time. At the end of the first half of 2024, 52 final reports remained overdue. This included two final reports from 2021 operations, eight final reports from 2022 operations, 41 final reports from 2023 operations and one final report from 2024 operations. Considering the maximum timeframe that is available for IFRC-DREF operations, it is concerning that there are operations from 2021 that still have not been reported on.

In most cases, the issue of late reporting requires active engagement of the Senior Management to resolve it. IFRC-DREF maintains that it is important to

address the challenges behind the lateness of final reports and to put into place appropriate mitigation measures at the relevant levels.

On the other hand, it should be highlighted that some of the previously long overdue final reports have been cleared and submitted during recent months.

IFRC-DREF is continuing to strengthen its monitoring efforts and is working to raise awareness in IFRC Regional Offices, Delegations, and National Societies on the need to help ensure better control and overall compliance and accountability, including timely reporting on IFRC-DREF funded operations.

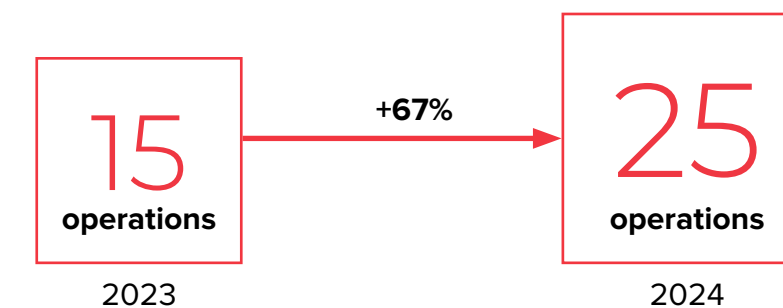
Increased Exceptional Approvals

The trend of increasing exceptional approvals of IFRC-DREF operations has continued during the first half of 2024. A total of 25 IFRC-DREF operations were exceptionally approved during the first six months of 2024, marking a significant increase of 67% compared to the same period in the previous year where 15 exceptional approvals were granted.

The late arrival of IFRC-DREF final reports is the main reason behind the increase in exceptional approvals. Out of the total of 25 exceptional approvals, 16 were granted due to overdue final reports (64% out of the total). The other reasons have included late requests (requests submitted after the eligible time from the disaster trigger date), an operational timeframe going

beyond the eligible length for type of operation and crisis level, procurement issues including delays, changes in operational strategy, and requests not meeting the operational vs. support cost ratio and cost per person eligibility threshold. The increasing frequency of exceptional approvals highlights the continued need for support, capacity, and coordination to be enhanced with National Societies to address the existing bottlenecks.

Efforts continue to be undertaken to resolve outstanding issues and support National Societies to be better prepared for the management of IFRC-DREF operations.





03.

Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators

The following main indicators were set to measure the performance of the Fund

Response Pillar:

Key Performance Indicators:

Total Allocations (Anticipatory and Response Pillar):

CHF 34,989,993



Total # of operations:

87



Amount of funds allocated through the IFRC-DREF for National Society responses to crises and disasters each year:

2023: **74M**

2022: **57M**

2021: **44M**

2020: **35M**



IFRC-DREF allocated to Anticipatory Actions (CHF allocated), disaggregated by region:

Total: 3,381,456



Average amount of allocations (grants):

CHF 329,288



% of allocations that go to yellow emergencies:

58,9%



of IFRC-DREF funded operations reviews conducted:

6



% of the total annual allocations that go towards operations funded by the Anticipatory Pillar:

9,664%



Average # of days for IFRC-DREF allocations approved from trigger date (a-DREF, DREF, i-DREF):

13,875



of NS accessing the IFRC-DREF (INFORM - from high-risk countries):

60

of new NS accessing the IFRC-DREF:

1 – Grenada

of new NS with EAPs and sEAPs:

3

of NS accessing IFRC-DREF for imminent events:

4 (i-DREF)



General Performance Indicators:

% of implementation rate for concluded operations:

89%



Average length for signing of Project Funding Agreement (Response and Anticipatory):

5,27 days

% of final reports submitted timely:

9,91%



Critical Performance Indicators:

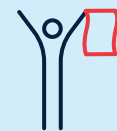
% of operations approved outside of IFRC-DREF criteria:

42



of IFRC-DREF Council meetings (continuous engagement with the IFRC-DREF Council):

2



of EAPs and sEAPs reviewed and validated by all levels in under 30 days:

3



of monthly IFRC-DREF newsletters disseminated:

6



Contributions from the private sector:

In the first half of 2024, **CHF 4.2 million** was raised from the private sector, which is more than the total raised from the private sector in entire 2023 when CHF 2.4 million was raised.



The following main indicators were set to measure the performance of the IFRC-DREF Anticipatory Pillar:



Total number of active Early Action Protocols (EAP) and sEAPs in place: **32 protocols in place (26 EAPs and 6 sEAPs)**



EAPs triggered in the first half of 2024: **2 protocols were triggered in the first half of 2024, and 2 additional protocols that were triggered in 2023 reached the 2nd trigger this semester**

Number of IFRC-DREF for imminent crisis launched in 2024:

4

Number of EAPs validated by the Validation Committee during the first half of the year:

9

Number of people targeted by the approved EAPs:

229.500

Number of National Societies trained on anticipatory action through forums, workshops and direct discussion:

42





ANTHRAX IN ANIMALS

TRANSMISSION

Animals such as cattle, sheep and goats can become infected when they breathe in or ingest spores (tiny germs) present in contaminated soil, plants, or water.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Loss of appetite or failure to feed.

Abrupt collapsing or sudden death. Blood oozes from the openings of the dead animal.

PREVENTION

Vaccinate all healthy animals against anthrax annually.

Isolate sick animals and avoid communal grazing.

OR: Bury any dead animal in a 2-4 metre deep pit under close supervision of a trained burial team.

Report all suspected cases to the nearest veterinary office.

Obulamu?

USAID unicef

04.

Progress towards outcomes



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1:
Enabling local action - enough funding as direct as possible

In the first half of 2024, 38.8 million Swiss francs was raised, with an additional 15.9 million Swiss francs confirmed by the end of June. This brings the funding coverage to nearly 65% of the 2024 target of 85 million Swiss francs, marking significant progress towards the goal of raising 100 million Swiss francs by 2025 to address emerging disasters and crises worldwide. A noteworthy development is the inclusion of Chanel as a first-time donor to IFRC-DREF, following the signing of a multi-year agreement. The IFRC-DREF Council now includes representatives from 12 governments and National Societies, along with DG ECHO. Recently joined members to the Council are Saudi Arabia and Denmark.

During the 5th session of the IFRC-DREF Council meeting in April 2024, a decision was made to continue monitoring IFRC-DREF allocations to non-ODA countries. Allocations to these countries will only be made after all other options have been exhausted, ensuring that the primary focus remains on regions with the greatest humanitarian needs, particularly those that are fragile and under-resourced.

Engagement with the IFRC-DREF Advisory Group

In alignment with the IFRC-DREF's strategic ambition, engagement with the IFRC-DREF Advisory Group has been further strengthened. Two Advisory Group meetings were held in the first half of 2024.

The first online meeting in February provided updates on key 2023 results, 2024 plans, and ongoing initiatives. It introduced the inaugural IFRC-DREF Catalogue of Initiatives, detailing ongoing processes and future innovations categorized by focus area. The second meeting in May, held at IFRC Headquarters in Geneva, included joint sessions with various IFRC departments and a strategic discussion led by USG NSDOC Xavier Castellanos on the future direction of IFRC-DREF.



In the first half of 2024, the IFRC-DREF Advisory Group continued to provide invaluable support:

- **Anticipatory Action Support:** The Belgian Red Cross, active Advisory Group member collaborated with the IFRC-DREF Anticipatory Action team to develop a concept note for scaling up anticipatory action in Africa. Their support, confirmed with a pledge of 154,500 Swiss francs, will fund a Francophone training on Anticipatory Action for African National Societies, a review of the impact of readiness activities under an EAP or SEAP, and support the development of an EAP in Rwanda.

IFRC-DREF Insurance

Now in its second year, the IFRC-DREF insurance policy enabled the IFRC to raise 2.9 million Swiss francs for insurance premiums in the first half of 2024. Negotiations with AON began at the end of this semester to potentially review the policy for its third year. Discussions are ongoing to revise certain parameters, and both the IFRC-DREF team and AON are exploring the possibility of extending insurance coverage to include the Anticipatory Pillar of the fund, with work continuing into the second half of 2024.

As of the first half of 2024, 66% of the IFRC-DREF-Insurance attachment point has been reached, with 26.8 million Swiss francs allocated to natural hazards in ODA countries. The insurance could be triggered in exceptional years if 33 million Swiss francs is allocated to natural hazards in ODA countries.

IFRC-DREF communications updates

IFRC-DREF Monthly Newsletter: The IFRC-DREF monthly newsletter includes at least one article or audio story related to its operations. Typically, one article is provided by the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre. We continue to maintain strong working relationships with both the Climate Centre and the Anticipation Hub to spread awareness of IFRC-DREF's work. The new structure of the newsletter features a section called "Stories from the Field" to ensure our subscribers are informed about the latest developments.

Participation in Global Campaigns: IFRC-DREF participated in three global campaigns related to international days.

- **World Immunization Week:** An annual global public health initiative aimed at raising awareness and increasing immunization rates against

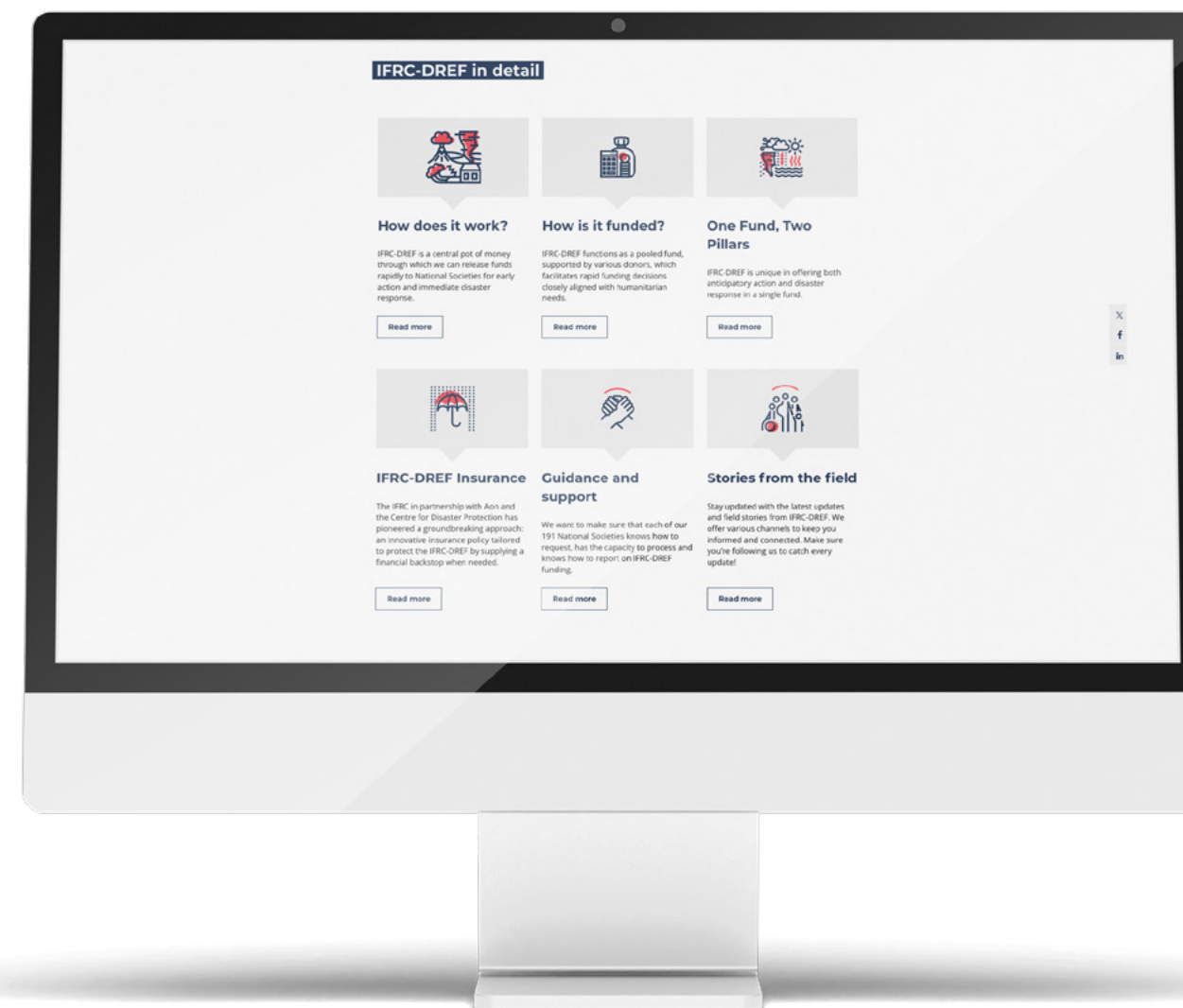
vaccine-preventable diseases worldwide. This year, IFRC-DREF participated by highlighting two National Societies that used IFRC-DREF funding to support efforts against the measles epidemic.

- **World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day:** Showcased a story about Nimao Abdi Bade, an exceptional volunteer from the Somali Red Crescent, who identified a suspected case of AWD/cholera in her community, prompting critical investigation and an allocation from the IFRC-DREF.
- **Heat Action Day (June 2):** Addressed the increasing global heat risk due to climate change by presenting the story of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society activated its EAP for heatwaves in April, supported by nearly 249,270 Swiss francs for their activation budget from IFRC-DREF, benefiting 124,000 people.

Newsletter Survey Results: Satisfaction with the instant notification emails was rated at an average of 7.9 out of 10, and the monthly newsletter received an average rating of 8, indicating high satisfaction levels. Based on the survey, several changes were introduced such as welcome emails for new subscribers to introduce other communication channels and ensure emails land in their inbox and "Share on X" button for easy reposting of social media posts.

Webpage Reconstruction:

One of the major projects in the first half of the year was the reconstruction of the IFRC-DREF webpage to improve navigation and better reflect key messages. Additionally, a separate page was developed for the pledging conference, where members of the public can watch the conference live and view documents such as the event agenda.





STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2:
Saving more lives by anticipating crisis and acting earlier

In the first half of 2024, six Early Action Protocols (EAPs) and two simplified Early Action Protocols (sEAPs) were approved, including protocols for Mozambique Cyclone, Mozambique Floods, Bangladesh Cyclone, Eswatini Drought, Guatemala Drought, and Guatemala Floods (caused by Tropical Storms). The approved sEAPs cover Comoros Volcanic Ash and Nepal Floods. So far, in 2024, there have been two heatwave activations—an EAP in Bangladesh and an sEAP in Greece. Additionally, two EAPs that had been triggered in 2023 reached the second trigger this semester: Ecuador El Niño Floods and Zimbabwe Drought.

An IFRC-DREF Working Group for Anticipatory Action and Population Movement was established to oversee the technical review of new sEAPs related to migration and displacement, and to clearly define the scope and modalities of when and how the Anticipatory Pillar of the IFRC-DREF can support National Societies in implementing anticipatory action for people on the move.

This pillar has also broadened its scope with the review of the first protocol for epidemics, originating from Sri Lanka (Dengue Fever sEAP). Given that non-

weather-related hazard sEAPs require additional technical expertise and the growing number of sEAPs needing review and support, the Validation Committee has been discussing how to restructure the group to remain effective amid this evolving landscape. The new structure and operational approach are expected to be finalized in the coming months.

Following several IFRC-DREF team working sessions, including a team workshop in Kenya in March, in response to various challenges in processing sEAPs and imminent IFRC-DREF requests, the Anticipatory Pillar has proposed a new approach to the imminent IFRC-DREF modality, alongside a more centralized method for submitting and processing EAPs. These improved mechanisms will be widely communicated in the third quarter of 2024.

Additionally, to enhance the performance monitoring of the IFRC-DREF, key performance indicators (KPIs) for anticipatory action and other performance metrics have been reviewed. The team is currently exploring the most efficient methods to record, track, and analyze these indicators, with implementation planned for early 2025.





STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: Increasing the value of IFRC-DREF in protracted, slow onset and complex events

As already highlighted in its 2021-2025 Strategic Ambition, the IFRC-DREF is committed to providing support to National Societies experiencing slow onset and protracted crises.

A new IFRC-DREF funding modality was introduced in 2022 to address drought, the most severe form of slow onset crisis. It is named the 'Drought IFRC-DREF parameter' to reflect the multifaceted and critical effects of drought on affected communities. Such effects can include lack of water, food insecurity, disease outbreaks, population displacement, migration and insecurity. It is acknowledged that further analysis is required to ensure a clear linkage between these effects with the impending or existing drought, as well to assess the potential risks for IFRC-DREF to continue providing funding for such interventions under this parameter.

After wide consultation, a proposed Guidance for Drought IFRC-DREF Modality is being finalized to provide clear directives for using IFRC-DREF grants and loans to address drought-related crises. It will also clarify the eligibility thresholds and commonly used triggers for initiating anticipatory actions and responses to such crises. The guidance also aims at ensuring a continuum between the Anticipatory and Response Pillars, as it allows National Societies to implement early actions ahead of a foreseen peak and response. The feedback on this guidance is currently being addressed by the IFRC-DREF team to ensure alignment with the Procedures and the sustainability of the Fund as it opens to this money-consuming crisis type, while also ensuring sustainability of the actual modality.

In the first half of 2024, the IFRC-DREF allocated 2,156,421 Swiss francs from the Response Pillar to four operations as part of the Drought IFRC-DREF modality. These allocations were provided to Botswana, Lesotho, Micronesia and Zambia (although the crisis in Zambia later escalated into an Emergency Appeal with increased allocation). This represents 42% of overall allocations made from both Anticipatory and Response Pillars, which was at 5,157,399 Swiss francs as of 30 June 2024. The allocations towards drought anticipation and

response represent 14% of total allocations made by the IFRC-DREF in Q1 and Q2 of 2024.

The IFRC has conducted a [study](#) on Protracted Crises and Complex Emergencies aimed at assessing contexts, identifying operational learning, and finding promising practices and solutions for gaps in IFRC operations. The study concluded with recommendations for the IFRC, including flexible use of its tools and response system which encompasses the IFRC-DREF. This study will help the IFRC to mainstream anticipatory and response actions into operations focusing on slow onset, protracted crises and complex events.

As part of the IFRC-DREF Evolution, the operational timeframe for orange level IFRC-DREF operations was increased to nine months while IFRC-DREF funding thresholds were increased to 1 million Swiss francs for orange emergencies and 2 million Swiss francs for red emergencies. In the implementation of orange level emergencies, National Societies can engage in early to mid-recovery activities for affected communities, reducing their vulnerabilities to these slow/protracted/complex crises.

IFRC management also allows for country/context specific analysis in a complex crisis which may affect several countries at the same time. This allows the National Societies to access funding aligned with the categorization of the crisis in their country, provided the overall allocation for the crisis does not exceed 5 million Swiss francs distributed among all the affected countries. This limitation ensures the sustainability of the Fund to still be able to provide support to small scale crises, while providing adequate support to medium/large scale crises.

Finally, the ongoing exploration by the IFRC-DREF Anticipatory Pillar to extend services to population movement which has been identified as a slow onset, protracted and complex crisis with multiple effects, also indicates the utility of the IFRC-DREF not only in response, but also in anticipation of all forms of plights affecting the most vulnerable communities across the world.



ENABLER 1: A lean, efficient fund

Accountability and Compliance

The first six months of 2024 were marked by continued efforts to strengthen compliance and accountability, including closer monitoring and the optimization of key tools and processes.

- Compliance and accountability issues have continued to be systematically collected and updated in the Issue and Risk Register, IFRC-DREF's internal tool used to increase awareness of overall compliance within past or current operations.
- IFRC-DREF has continued to develop the IFRC-DREF Quarterly Compliance Reviews, which analyze compliance and accountability issues linked to IFRC-DREF-supported operations, with the aim of raising awareness of the noted compliance issues and challenges from IFRC-DREF operations.
- Efforts are continuing to further integrate and align the Fund's two pillars into the compliance and risk management processes. Revision of the performance indicators related to the Anticipatory Pillar commenced during the first half of 2024, with the aim of ensuring that appropriate indicators are in place to help IFRC-DREF to better monitor the performance of this growing pillar.
- IFRC-DREF has continued to maintain good collaboration with the IFRC finance, audit and risk management units. It should be noted that audits of several IFRC-DREF operations are planned to be conducted in the second half of 2024.



ENABLER 2: Increased support to strengthening National Societies

During the first half of 2024, outreach efforts on Anticipatory Action reached 681 individuals. Outreach primarily focused on engaging host National Societies, participating National Societies, IFRC Delegations, and Regional Offices. The outreach also extended to DG ECHO staff and technical advisors. Additionally, in collaboration with START Ready colleagues, the outreach targeted a broader humanitarian audience at the Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week.

Key milestones reached by the Anticipatory Pillar of the IFRC-DREF in terms of capacity strengthening initiatives include:

Outreach to IFRC Delegations included seven tailored sessions (Philippines, Central Asia, Caucuses, Myanmar, New Delhi, Indonesia and Nepal), as well as three dedicated sessions for IFRC Regional Offices (Asia Pacific and Africa).

DG ECHO webinars, presenting the IFRC's anticipatory action approach and looking at DG ECHO feedback on replenishment: two webinars (one featuring sEAPs case studies from Niger (Drought), Mongolia (Dzud) and Kazakhstan Cold Wave) and another featuring sEAP case studies from Honduras and Guatemala (Floods), Honduras (Drought) and Zambia (Floods).

IFRC-DREF Workshop, a three-day dedicated workshop in Nairobi Kenya for the IFRC-DREF team on approach, processes and roles and responsibilities. The workshop helped to promote shared leadership of the Anticipatory Pillar and the role of the regional IFRC-DREF focal points in the process.

Two training events were supported in the first six months of 2024, one face to face in Johannesburg, and one virtual IFRC-DREF training which resulted in the development of an sEAP (Croatia Heatwave, which is currently under technical review).

The Americas annual Pre-Hurricane Conference included on the first day a dedicated session on Anticipatory Action, which focused on types of actions



possible, the support available from the IFRC-DREF and peer to peer experience sharing.

In May 2024, there was a simulation exercise with Hellenic Red Cross around the simplified Early Action Protocol (sEAP) for Heatwave. The simulation highlighted some key lessons for a smoother and more timely activation, which proved extremely valuable as the sEAP was activated for real the following month. Go [here](#) to read more about how the simulation prepared the National Society for a better activation.

Throughout the first half of 2024, a number of ongoing capacity strengthening and mentoring initiatives have been ongoing for new members of the Validation Committee, particularly onboarding of members from the AA and Health Technical Working Group, who will be assisting with the technical review of the epidemic sEAPs, as well as onboarding for new IFRC AA staff, in West and Central as well as Southern Africa.

Finally, also during this semester, the Anticipatory Pillar provided technical input into the development of a [training package](#) developed by the Anticipation Hub. The package is aimed at governments and hydrometeorological agencies, and was launched at

Understanding Risk Global Forum in June 2024.

For the Response Pillar, IFRC-DREF training continued across various regions with National Societies, using the package developed from the IFRC-DREF evolution in 2022. Efforts are ongoing to develop country- and hazard-specific scenarios for emergency response planning simulation exercises.

The integration of AI has significantly enhanced the development of tailored scenarios. In the first half of 2024, six scenarios were created for training on hazards such as forest fires, droughts (including transitions from activating Early Action Protocols to response phases), floods, tropical storms, and epidemics. The aim for the rest of the year is to continue providing National Societies with customized experiences during IFRC-DREF training sessions through specific scenarios.

From January to June 2024, three training sessions were conducted in the Africa Region – in Ethiopia (including the Djibouti Red Crescent), Mali, and South Africa (including Namibia, Lesotho, and Botswana). Additionally, and one training was held in the Americas Region, in Bolivia.



Operational Reviews

As per the IFRC-DREF Operational Reviews Framework, these are designed to gather insights to support the management and growth of the Fund. Secretariat teams coordinate when Real-Time Evaluations are planned, to avoid duplication and overburdening National Society teams. Acknowledging the ambition of the Operational Reviews Plan for 2024, the IFRC-DREF team is open to deprioritizing the less strategic reviews and/or to conduct them in 2025.

Overall, out of 13 operational reviews prioritized in 2024, the following three were completed with reports being finalized, while three others are ongoing in the first half of 2024. This includes:

- A review assessing the implementation of EAPs triggered in the past three years (plan vs. actual) was completed during the first half of 2024. Supported by the American Red Cross, this review aimed to learn from the 14 activations from the launch of the Fund in 2018 to Q1 2023. Activations ranged EAPs for tropical storms and cyclones (5 activations), floods (4

activations), cold wave (2 activations), heatwave (1 activation), drought (1 activation), volcanic ash (1 activation). This was a desk-based review, with more than 400 documents screened and 128 documents reviewed in depth. The resulting ten recommendations looked at flexibility, efficiency and learning, focusing on the Anticipatory Actions approach as well as the Anticipatory Pillar of the IFRC-DREF going forward. The findings of this study were presented during the 2024 Humanitarian Network Partnership Week, in a joint session with the Start Network, which also included learning from Start Ready 2 rounds of financing. The Executive Summary is available in all IFRC official languages available [here](#).

- A case study on Armenia Red Cross has examined how findings from initiatives funded by different Red Cross and Red Crescent funding mechanisms - such as IFRC-DREF, the Capacity Building Fund, the National Society Investment Alliance and the Empress Shôken Fund - could contribute to the longer-term development of the National Society. The report is currently under final review and validation and expected

to be published in September 2024.

- Review on IFRC-DREF's contribution to the localization agenda and positioning with other pooled funds was conducted during the first half of 2024. Commissioned with the support the British Red Cross, this desk-based thematic review looked at the effectiveness and contribution of IFRC-DREF in supporting National Societies as part of the localization agenda, in line with Grand Bargain commitments. The review report is expected to be published in September 2024.
- The operational review on Epidemic Preparedness in Africa started in early 2024, focusing on seven countries for a desk review (Uganda, Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Gabon, Tanzania, and Côte d'Ivoire) and planned field visits to Côte d'Ivoire and Tanzania. This review is assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of epidemic preparedness operations supported by IFRC-DREF since 2018 (loans and grants), to develop actionable recommendations which would inform the strategic and operational directions of IFRC-DREF, adapting to the current context of increased disease outbreaks.
- Operational review of Dengue Preparedness and Response in Asia Pacific and Americas started in the first half of 2024, covering Bangladesh, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Honduras, Guatemala and Costa Rica. Including desk review and field visits, this review aims to assess the preparedness and response of the recent Dengue IFRC-DREF operations, to compare patterns and trends across the countries' interventions, and to identify learning and innovative/best practices, as well as recommendations to inform future Dengue operations.
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support the British Red Cross, this desk-based thematic review looked at the effectiveness and contribution of IFRC-DREF in supporting National Societies as part of the localization agenda, in line with Grand Bargain commitments.

- Review of timeliness of the transfer of funds to enable early action. Also supported by the American Red Cross and based on the findings of the above-mentioned review of triggered EAPs, this desk-based review is looking into the timeline of how funds move from the IFRC to a National Society for anticipatory or early action and how processes and policies could be streamlined.

In addition to the above, the IFRC-DREF Coordination Team is working on the following key initiatives to optimize operational learning through reviews:

- Updating the IFRC-DREF Operational Review Toolbox, using learning from reviews since 2023.
- Revising the IFRC-DREF Operational Reviews Framework, aligning with the updated IFRC Evaluation Framework to enhance reviews of Anticipatory Pillar operations.
- Translating Key Review Reports, ensuring reports are available in all four IFRC official languages for broader dissemination (subject to funding).
- Systematically publishing Operational Review Reports to the IFRC Evaluation Database on the IFRC [Evaluations and Research](#) web page, making the learning available to entire Movement.

These efforts aim to streamline processes and enhance the impact of IFRC-DREF operations for Movement operational learning for disaster anticipation and response.





ENABLER 3: **National Society ownership and trust**

Significant milestones have been achieved by the GO platform since 2022, including the online availability of all necessary forms for IFRC-DREF operations (applications, operational updates, and final reports). In the first half of 2024, efforts have focused on enhancing the user experience and improving the platform's functionality. Key improvements include UI updates in the IFRC-DREF applications tab, enhancements to the online form itself, and better visuals and stability of exported documents. These improvements aim to streamline processes and improve overall user satisfaction.

During the first half of 2024, the piloting of the IFRC-DREF feedback mechanism has been completed with selected 11 National Societies and 18 IFRC staff members across all five operational regions. Among the respondents from the National Societies, 72% were heads of disaster management. The IFRC feedback included contributions from technical teams (11%), disaster management teams (16%), support teams (22%), operations coordinators (33%), and others. During the Feedback Pilot, both groups highlighted the positive impact of IFRC-DREF on National Society capacity strengthening and coordination. The IFRC-DREF is appreciated for its user-friendliness, reflecting the effectiveness of this funding mechanism. However, there are shared concerns about operational timeframes, indicating areas where IFRC-DREF's efficiency and impact could be improved.

The IFRC-DREF feedback mechanism is designed to collect valuable insights from National Societies regarding the effectiveness and impact of IFRC-DREF operations. Its primary aim is to evaluate how well these operations meet established guidelines, respond to emergencies with agility, and enhance the visibility and positioning of National Societies within the humanitarian sector. By identifying strengths and areas for improvement, the feedback mechanism ensures that IFRC-DREF operations continue to effectively support National Societies, enhance their operational capacity, and address the needs of affected communities. This ongoing assessment is crucial for optimizing the delivery and impact of emergency financial support, thereby strengthening the overall effectiveness of disaster response initiatives.

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