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# Emergency appeal revision

## Mauritania: Food Insecurity

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Revised Appeal n°  
MDRMR009

7,644 people to be assisted (1,274  
households)

Appeal launched May 2018

Glide n° OT-2018-000112-  
MRT

224,879 Swiss francs DREF allocated

Ops update n° 1 issued June 2018

1,332,866 CHF (revised appeal)

Appeal ends February 2019

This revised Emergency Appeal seeks a total 1,329,991 million Swiss francs, representing a reduction by 361,215 CHF over the initial budget of 1,693,785 million Swiss francs. This reduction reflects the new operational strategy of the Mauritanian Red Crescent (MRC) following the geographic repositioning and implementation constraints. The revised Emergency Appeal focuses on Livelihoods and Health activities, with no significant change in the response sectors in relation to the initial plan of action. However, this revision results in a reduction of the total number of beneficiaries from 17,400 people or 2,900 households to 7,644 people or 1,274 households due to the focus of the operation on a single geographical intervention area (instead of two areas initially planned). In addition, the revised Emergency Appeal puts more emphasis on capacity building for the National Society, by incorporating activities that will enable the MRC to be better prepared for future lean seasons. Lastly, this revision makes it possible to increase the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) support, by strengthening the field team. This revision is not requesting time extension; the operation is still expected to end on 24 February 2019.

## The disaster and the Red Cross Red Crescent response to date

**February 2018:** Following the very poor agro-pastoral season 2017-2018, arising from a severe drought, a joint MRC and IFRC assessment is undertaken in three departments in the south-central part of the country which shows an alarming impact on households' food and economic security.

**12 March 2018:** According to the 2018 Harmonized Framework, 350,600 people are in severe food insecurity (Phase 3,4) and the figures could reach up to 538,446 people for the projected period of June to August 2018 (14 percent of the population).

**24 May 2018:** IFRC issues Emergency Appeal for 1.7m Swiss francs (including a DREF allocation of 224,879 Swiss francs) for 17,400 people for a period of 9 months.

**June 2018:** In coordination with IFRC, MRC is preparing the emergency relief activities in the commune of Magta Lahjar.

**21 June 2018:** Publication of Ops Update n°1, detailing the operation's successes and challenges.

**July 2018:** First cash distribution.

**August 2018:** Second cash distribution and preparation of Livelihoods activities.



Figure 1: Distribution of cash in the Commune of Magta Lahjar

## The operational strategy

### 1. Context

Mauritania is currently facing a serious food and nutrition insecurity situation, the worst that the country has seen in the last five years. According to the results of the last harmonised framework (HF) of March 2018, 538,446 people were at risk of severe food insecurity (phase 3 and 4) for the lean season (June to August 2018). These projections correspond to 14 percent of the population, raising fears of a food crisis comparable to that of 2011-2012. This is the worst situation since the HF analyses were performed in the country.

This alarming food situation is taking place in a country faced with chronically high levels of malnutrition. The results of the most recent SMART (Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions) survey, for instance, show that 23.3% of the children aged less than 59 months are affected by chronic malnutrition, of which 5.9% are in severe conditions. Likewise, the survey shows that several departments (moughataas) in the country (23 out of 56) are considered in a critical nutritional situation (*moderate acute malnutrition* (MAM) and *severe acute malnutrition* (SAM)) (MAM > 15% and/or SAM > 2%)<sup>1</sup>. In view of the growing food insecurity, the nutritional situation could worsen beyond the levels reached in recent years.

While the rainy season has entered its second part, the rainfall levels remain insufficient in some regions of the country, including Brakna (the target region of this appeal)<sup>2</sup>. This finding is alarming in relation to crops and pastures. The Network of NGOs for Food Security (ROSA, *Réseau des ONG pour la Sécurité Alimentaire*) has expressed its concern to the national authorities about the potential impact of this reality on people<sup>3</sup>. If the rainfall conditions fail to improve, this would mean that a bad year will be followed by another bad year. The 2019 lean season could thus affect Mauritania even more seriously. The humanitarian partners and the MRC are already preparing for this eventuality.

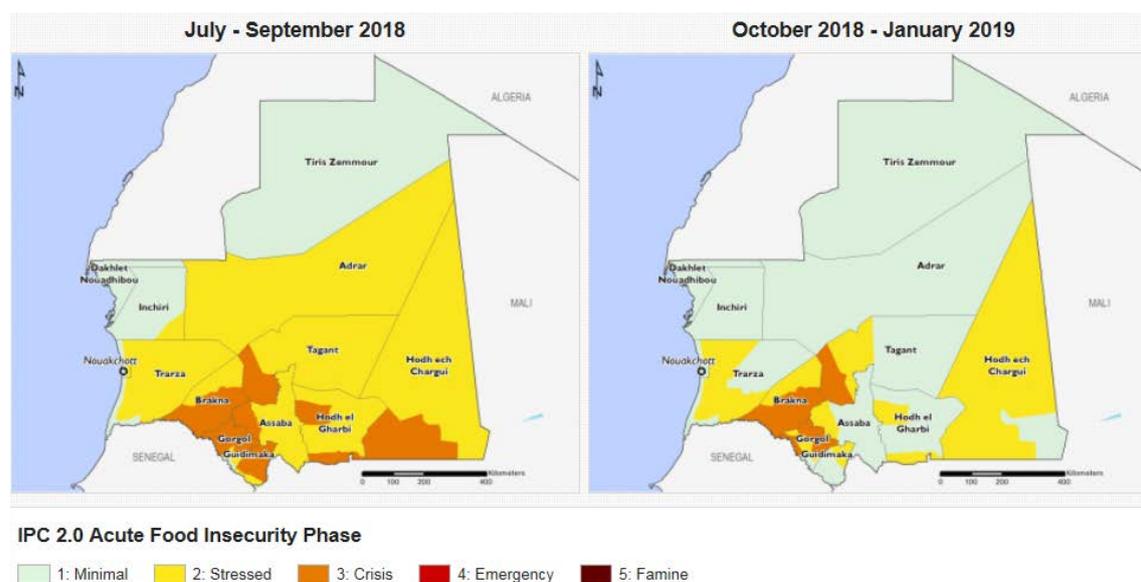


Figure 2: Current and planned food insecurity mapping. Source: “Agropastoral conditions are improving in the southeast but are still mediocre in the rest of the country”, FEWSNET

<sup>1</sup> Résultats de l'enquête SMART 2018 et implications programmatiques, UNICEF, 10 August 2018

<sup>2</sup> “Agropastoral conditions are improving in the southeast but are still mediocre in the rest of the country”, FEWSNET, July 2018

<sup>3</sup> “Inquiétude saison des pluies », RESEAU DES ORGANISATIONS SUR LA SECURITE ALIMENTAIRE (ROSA), 17 August 2018

## 2. Operational strategy

Within the framework of the coordinated response in accordance with the Integrated Response Plan to Food Security and Nutrition (PRISAN – *Plan de réponse intégré à la sécurité alimentaire et à la nutrition*)<sup>4</sup>, the overall objective of this appeal is to save lives and protect agropastoral households (7,644 people in 1,274 households) from the effects of drought on food security, nutrition and livelihoods.

The specific objectives of this intervention are:

- To cover the food needs of the most vulnerable who are affected by the crisis for four months (June to September) until the next harvests;
- To monitor the nutritional situation; support the vulnerable groups and refer them to health centres during the lean season; ensure the prevention component of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) and promote good dietary practices, hygiene and immunization of children and pregnant and lactating women (PLW);
- To avoid further degradation of livelihoods by replacing them and then building households' resilience to shocks by supporting more resilient farming and animal husbandry practices;
- To ensure complementarity, coordination and synergies with the interventions planned by the authorities on one hand, and the humanitarian actors on the other.

This operation is implemented in the Magta Lahjar department and is based on a twin-tracked approach:

- Immediate response to aid 674 vulnerable households (4,044 people) facing food and nutrition insecurity for four months (June to September); down from 10,200 people in the original appeal;
- Initial recovery of the livelihoods of agropastoral communities, according to the following activities:
  - Animal husbandry: recovery of the livelihoods of 400 households (small breeders) through restocking (donations of small ruminants) and feed distribution;
  - Agriculture: support to 40 women's agricultural cooperatives, globally targeting around 1,200 women.

## 3. Needs assessment and beneficiary selection

In view of this problematic situation forecasted for 2018 in several agro-pastoral areas, MRC, with the support of IFRC, has led an assessment of the situation in three departments in the centre-south of the country (Magta Lahjar, Monguel and Barkéole) which are among those hardest affected by the drought. Using the Household Economic Security (HES) methodology, the assessment mission concluded that the drought jeopardises the food and economic security of the households in the three departments visited, and therefore calls into question their ability to meet their basic needs.

This response plan is prioritised following two aspects: geographic prioritisation and beneficiary households' vulnerability profile. In line with the PRISAN approach, MRC and IFRC focus their intervention on the department of Magta Lahjar. Within the department, the humanitarian partners' response was informed by a final priority-setting process between the different municipalities, carried out by departmental commissions, in conjunction with local authorities and public services. As part of the selection of beneficiary households for food and nutrition assistance, the MRC followed criteria harmonized with those of the humanitarian response plan. The community-based targeting is consistent with the Household Economy Approach (HEA) methodology. Furthermore, the targeting focuses on very poor households with children under five years of age and/or pregnant/lactating women (PLW).

## 4. National Society Overview

MRC has been created in December 1970 and has been one of the first humanitarian organisations to be established in Mauritania. It has branches in all the regions (56 committees) where it exercises its role of auxiliary to public authorities of the State of Mauritania. Its network comprises 1,000 volunteers and 20 staff members. MRC maintains regular collaborative relationships with all humanitarian actors (UNICEF, WFP, FAO, NGOs and government agencies) and with some of them, has already collaborated for the implementation of WASH programmes.

During the 2012 food crisis, MRC launched an emergency appeal on food and nutrition insecurity covering four communes of Magta Lahjar, benefiting 7,000 households in 18 villages and 30 women's cooperatives.

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<sup>4</sup> For more information, read *Plan de Réponse Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutrition Sécheresse 2017-2018, Groupe Sectoriel Sécurité Alimentaire et Nutrition, Version juillet 2018*

At the end of 2017, MRC implemented a DREF operation focusing on food security in the departments of Magta Lahjar and Monguel. These past operations focused on food insecurity have increased MRC capacity on these types of response. Moreover, the lessons learned review of the past DREF operation in 2017 was used as a basis for integrating best practices and adapting certain operational modalities for this initiative. MRC is also involved in the working groups on food security and nutrition in the country; it contributes to the response plan established by the humanitarian partners in Mauritania to respond to the difficult situation in 2018. MRC in collaboration with IFRC has participated in the coordination sessions for the 2018 response led by WFP for the finalization of this Action Plan.

## 5. Coordination and partnerships

In light of its vulnerability to food insecurity, Mauritania is amongst the priority countries for assistance on food, livelihoods and basic needs (Area of Focus 3) within IFRC Sahel Cluster annual programming. The rapid assessment conducted in February 2018 aimed at assessing the situation but also falling within the framework of the Food Security and Livelihoods Capacity Building Programme promoted and facilitated by the British Red Cross and the Livelihoods Resource Centre. In April 2018, IFRC undertook a mission to Mauritania to support MRC in the finalisation of this plan of action. During the mission and in collaboration with MRC, several meetings were held with the humanitarian actors involved in the response to harmonise and coordinate the MRC-IFRC response. In addition, the French Red Cross (FRC) is implementing a nutrition (care) programme in the Region of Gorgol, including the Department of Monguel since 2011, through which capacity building actions have been developed. The ICRC does not have a presence in the aforementioned areas of the evaluation but has participated in the strengthening of the National Society in the area of food security (EcoSec).

Given the alarming situation in the country, humanitarian actors maintain regular coordination bodies. Humanitarian actors, through the Food Security Working Group (led by the WFP) have proposed an “Integrated Response Plan to Food Security & Nutrition Partners following the consequences of the drought during the agro-pastoral campaign 2017-2018” (PRISAN). MRC has regularly participated in the Food Security Working Group and this plan of action is part of the PRISAN strategy and approach to the Mauritanian crisis.

In the intervention area of this Appeal, MRC will coordinate with the following actors involved in the response: Save the Children, FAO, CFS, ACF, WFP, Oxfam, Terre des Hommes.

## 6. Summary of the current response

Since the beginning of the operation, MRC has made progress on the planned livelihoods and health activities.

AoF	Activities completed	Activities ongoing	Activities planned
 <b>Livelihoods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of 35 volunteers on the full cycle of the cash approach (targeting, distribution, PDM).</li> <li>• Establishment of the accountability mechanism.</li> <li>• Targeting of cash beneficiaries in 31 villages following the HEA methodology. The data were collected and analysed using the Kobo tool.</li> <li>• Baseline survey.</li> <li>• Selection and preparation of the cash transfer mechanism.</li> <li>• First distribution of cash to 674 beneficiaries.</li> <li>• PDM survey.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Second distribution of cash.</li> <li>• Preparation of livelihood support activities (support to cooperatives and distribution of small ruminant).</li> <li>• Targeting of cooperatives.</li> <li>• Training of 19 volunteers on the Livelihood component implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Third distribution of cash.</li> <li>• Agricultural input procurement process.</li> <li>• Small ruminants and livestock feed procurement process.</li> <li>• Targeting of the beneficiaries of the distribution of small ruminants.</li> <li>• Technical training on animal husbandry.</li> <li>• Distribution of small ruminants and livestock feed to 400 households.</li> <li>• Support to 40 cooperatives (distribution of agricultural inputs and training sessions).</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training of 35 volunteers on nutrition and screening activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalisation of the contract with the complementary flour supplier for the first distribution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First distribution of complementary flour.</li> </ul>

<b>Health</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screening of all children aged 6-23 months and PLW among the cash beneficiary households.</li> <li>• Nutrition survey.</li> <li>• Establishment of a database of complementary flour beneficiaries (220 children aged 6-23 months and 355 PLW).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation of the warehouse to store the complementary flour for the first distribution.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness-raising on good health and nutrition practices.</li> </ul>
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Logistical and operational challenges have delayed the implementation of activities in relation to the initial action plan:

- Nouakchott is in the yellow zone and Magta Lahjar in the orange zone. Therefore, significant work has been devoted from the start to setting up stringent safety and security rules.
- At the beginning of the operation, MRC teams worked on the ground using a single vehicle, which has delayed implementation. Since then, two IFRC vehicles have been deployed to back them up.
- Targeting was done using the HEA methodology and the KOBO tool. Both approaches are new to MRC. Furthermore, a number of recruited volunteers had not been previously deployed. In these circumstances, several mistakes were made, and targeting had to be consolidated in order to ensure a strong and reliable database. These mistakes are being compiled in a lessons learned document.
- In light of the operation's mode of implementation (direct implementation), a consistent workload inevitably falls on IFRC members (Operations Manager and RDRT) deployed to the operation. This disrupts the management and support activities IFRC should normally implement in the context of an emergency appeal. To address this problem, this revised appeal plans to strengthen the team.

## 7. Resource mobilization

The appeal presently has coverage of 1,029,178 CHF. Apart from the internal funding mechanisms, the contributions are as follows:

Partner	Amount (CHF)
Japan RC	55,900
Swedish RC	338,929.00
British RC	197,270.00
Danish RC	77,365.75
Canadian RC	53,051.95
Monaco RC	17,456.00
Hong Kong Red Cross	25,384.74

The main gaps are to be found in the support to livelihoods, MRC's capacity-building and the development of a long-term resilience plan. These activities are essential to prepare the communities and MRC for the coming lean season and in order to go beyond pure emergency activities. This is even more important in light of the bad rainy season, raising fears of an even more difficult lean season in 2019 (read Part 1, "Context").

## 8. Changes brought about by this revision

This revision reduces the budget by 361,215 CHF (from 1,693,785 CHF to 1,332,866 CHF). This reduction is mainly explained by the reduction in the total number of beneficiaries (from 2,900 to 1,274 households) following the focus of the operation on a single intervention area, instead of two initially planned. As the launch of the operation was significantly delayed, WFP made the decision to cover the department of Barkeole before MRC could officially confirm its activities in the area.

The activities most affected are:

- **Distribution of cash:** the number of cash beneficiaries is reduced to 4,044 (against 10,200 initially planned)
- **Distribution of complementary flour:** the number of beneficiaries of complementary flour is reduced to 575 (against 1,030 initially planned)
- **Protection of the cattle:** given the time allocated in the lean season and the delay at the beginning of the operation, this activity was cancelled.
- **distribution of cattle:** the number of 400 beneficiary households is maintained, but distributions will take place in the department of Magta Lahjar only
- **Support to cooperatives:** the number of beneficiary cooperatives is reduced to 40 (against 60 initially planned)

Besides, this revision lays more emphasis on capacity building for the National Society, by incorporating activities that will allow better preparedness of the MRC to the coming lean seasons. This translates into:

- **The strategic positioning of the National Society**, through participations in training sessions or regional meetings.
- **The development of a resilience plan**

Last, this revision helps increase IFRC's support by strengthening the field team. This translates into:

- **The opening of a Field Delegate position**
- **The opening of an Admin/Finance Delegate position**

**This revision is not requesting time extension.** The operation is still expected to end on 24 February 2019.

## Proposed Areas for intervention

As part of a coordinated response within PRISAN, the overall objective of this Emergency Appeal is to help save lives and protect agro-pastoral households comprising 7,644 people from the adverse effects of drought on their food security, nutrition and livelihoods.

## Areas of Focus



### Livelihoods and basic needs

**People targeted: 7,644**

Male: NA

Female: NA

**Requirements (CHF): 611,634**

#### Proposed intervention

In the department of Magta Lahjar, 18,935 people (around 3,155 households) need food assistance. The main livelihood activities of agriculture and livestock in the department are strongly affected by drought, including the depletion of the natural capital (water, pasture) necessary to ensure the protection of livelihoods. This Emergency Appeal is aiming to provide

- immediate response to help 674 vulnerable households (4,044 people) who are food and nutrition insecure for four months (June-September);
- initial recovery of the livelihoods of agro-pastoral communities, through the implementation of the following activities:
  - Livestock: increase in the livelihoods of 400 households, around 2,400 people (small-scale livestock breeders) through restocking (small ruminants) distribution of livestock feed;

- Agriculture: support to 40 women's agricultural cooperatives, globally targeting around 1,200 women.

The planned activities are:

### **Outcome 1: Communities, especially in disaster and crisis affected areas, restore and strengthen their livelihoods**

- Output 1.2: Basic needs assistance for livelihoods security including food is provided to the most affected communities
  - Training on interventions in food security, livelihoods and cash transfer
  - Selection of beneficiaries
  - Establishment of the CEA activities such as setting up targeting committees as well as the complaints system
  - Selection and preparation of the cash transfer mechanism
  - Immediate food assistance for 674 households in the form of cash transfer (for four months)
  - Baseline, Endline, Post-Distribution Monitoring and monitoring of markets (prices and availability of products)
- Output 1.3: Household livelihoods security is enhanced through food production and income generating activities
  - Selection of beneficiaries
  - Identification of a supplier and distribution of livestock/livestock feed
  - Technical training on husbandry/livestock/breeding for MRC volunteers and staff
  - Selection of beneficiary cooperatives
  - Market study and identification of required inputs and purchasing process
  - Supply of agricultural inputs and equipment to revive rain-fed agriculture and crop protection during the 2018/2019 agricultural season/campaign
  - Training on best practices and management to strengthen the resilience of cooperatives
  - Cooperative monitoring



## **Health**

**People targeted: 2,106 (of which 220 children aged 6-23 months and 355 PLW)**

Male: N/A

Female: N/A

**Requirements (CHF): 59,821**

### **Proposed intervention**

Several departments (*moughataas*) in the country (21 out of the total 56) are considered in a critical nutritional situation (moderate acute malnutrition and severe acute malnutrition) (MAM>15 percent and/or MAS>2 percent). The high rate of malnutrition is mainly due to food insecurity (low availability of food products, lack of access to products and low income of household) and non-compliance with good nutrition and hygiene practices. The population to be assisted is composed of households with children between 6-23 months of age and / or pregnant and lactating women – PLW (including MAM beneficiaries) as well as SAM children who will be referred immediately to the health structures.

The planned activities are:

### **Outcome 1: Vulnerable people's health and dignity are improved through increased access to appropriate health services**

- **Output 1.1: Communities are provided by MRC with services to identify and reduce health risks; SAM is addressed in the target population.**

- Training on nutrition, screening techniques and referencing of children and awareness raising techniques on good health and hygiene practices
- Selection of beneficiaries
- Screening and referencing (referral to health centres)
- Distribution of complementary flour - children 6-23 months and PLW
- Training on exclusive breastfeeding, good nutritional practices and vaccination – Organization of the Learning and Nutrition Recovery Centre (LNRC) and the use of BP (Brachial Perimeter)

## Strategies for Implementation (661,412 CHF)

**SF1: National Society capacity building and organizational development objectives are facilitated to ensure that National Societies have the necessary legal, ethical and financial foundations, systems and structures, competences and capacities to plan and perform**

The budget allows the MRC to strengthen its human resources capacities during the operation. The appeal funds 12 positions (coordinators, specialists and drivers).

In addition, the budget enables MRC volunteers to take part in two essential trainings: the Community Disaster Response Training (CDRT) and the National Disaster Response Training (NDRT). These trainings will take place during the last months of the operation, in collaboration with trainers from the IFRC.

Finally, this revision lays more emphasis on capacity building for the National Society, by incorporating activities that will allow better preparedness of the MRC to the coming lean seasons. This translates into:

- The strategic positioning of the National Society, through participations in training sessions or regional meetings.
- The development of a resilience plan

### **SF12.01 Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured**

The budget allows the deployment of an Operations Manager and a Livelihoods RDRT (four months). It also enabled the short-term deployment of a Food Security & Livelihoods Delegates to support in the launch of livelihoods activities.

Furthermore, based on the demand for the technical and coordination support required to deliver in this operation, the budget allows for the following programme support functions to be put in place to ensure an effective and efficient technical coordination: human resources, logistics and supply chain; information technology support (IT); communications; security; planning, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting (PMER); partnerships and resource development; and finance and administration. The following functions have already been deployed: communications, administration, finance and logistics (fleet). More similar deployments are planned in the future.

In addition, this revision enables to increase direct IFRC's support by strengthening the field team. This translates into:

- The opening of a Field Delegate position
- The opening of an Admin/Finance Delegate position

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## EMERGENCY APPEAL

### MDRMR009 - MAURITANIA - FOOD INSECURITY

#### Funding requirements - summary

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION	0
SHELTER	0
LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS	611,634
HEALTH	59,821
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE	0
INCLUSION, GENDER AND PROTECTION	0
MIGRATION	0
STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETY CAPACITIES	243,620
ENSURE EFFECTIVE INTER'L DISASTER MANAGEMENT	417,791
INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS	0
ENSURE A STRONG IFRC	0
<b>TOTAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>1,332,866</b>

*all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)*

**Elhadj As Sy**  
Secretary General

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

**In Mauritania Red Crescent Society**

- Mr Mohamedou, Raby Secretary General, phone: (222) 525 12 49/659 24 10/525 12 49; e-mail: [m.raby06@yahoo.fr](mailto:m.raby06@yahoo.fr)

**In the IFRC**

**IFRC Sahel Country Cluster Support Team**

- Anne Elisabeth Leclerc, Head of Sahel Country Cluster; phone: +22178 6390794; email: [Anne.leclerc@ifrc.org](mailto:Anne.leclerc@ifrc.org);
- Luca Parodi, Sahel Country Cluster DM Delegate; Phone: +221 33 869 30 23; email: [luca.parodi@ifrc.org](mailto:luca.parodi@ifrc.org)
- Lancelot Mermet, Operations Manager; Phone: +222 34 53 32 43; email: [lancelot.mermet@ifrc.org](mailto:lancelot.mermet@ifrc.org)

**IFRC Africa Region**

- Adesh Tripathee, Head of DCPRR Unit, Kenya; phone: +254 731 067 489; email: [adesh.tripathee@ifrc.org](mailto:adesh.tripathee@ifrc.org)
- Knut Kaspersen, Food Crisis Operations Coordinator; phone +254 731067394 email: [knut.kaspersen@ifrc.org](mailto:knut.kaspersen@ifrc.org)

**IFRC Geneva**

- Ruben Romero, Ag. Lead Response and Recovery, DCPRR; email: [ruben.romero@ifrc.org](mailto:ruben.romero@ifrc.org)
- Antoine Belair, Operations Coordinator (Americas and Africa Regions), Tel. +41 22 730 4281, Mob. +41 79 708 3149; email [antoine.belair@ifrc.org](mailto:antoine.belair@ifrc.org)

**For IFRC Resource Mobilization and Pledges support:**

- **In IFRC Africa Regional Office:** Kentaro Nagazumi, Head of Partnership and Resource Development; phone:+254202835155;email:[kentaro.nagazumi@ifrc.org](mailto:kentaro.nagazumi@ifrc.org)

**For In-Kind donations and Mobilization table support:**

- **IFRC Regional Logistics Unit:** Rishi Ramrakha, Head of Africa Regional Logistics Unit; phone: +254 733 888 022 & Fax +254 20 271 2777; email: [rishi.ramrakha@ifrc.org](mailto:rishi.ramrakha@ifrc.org)

**For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)**

- **IFRC Africa Regional Office:** Fiona Gatere, PMER Coordinator; phone: +254780771139; email: [fiona.gatere@ifrc.org](mailto:fiona.gatere@ifrc.org);

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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the **Code of Conduct** for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the **Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response (Sphere)** in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. The IFRC's vision is to inspire, **encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities** by National Societies, with a view to **preventing and alleviating human suffering**, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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



**Save lives,**  
protect livelihoods,  
and strengthen recovery  
from disaster and crises.



Enable **healthy**  
and **safe** living.



Promote **social inclusion**  
and a culture of  
**non-violence** and **peace**.

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