

# Operation Update Report

## Locust Upsurge in East and Horn of Africa

Appeal n° MDR60005	GLIDE n° IN-2019-000149-ETH
Operation update n° 1; 22 December 2020	Timeframe covered by this update: 17 April to 10 December 2020
Operation start date: 17 April 2020	Operation timeframe: 12 months (3-month extension to 30 April 2021)
Funding requirements: CHF 1,800,000	DREF loan: CHF 350,000 Partner funding contributions: CHF 253,000
N° of people being assisted: 70,000 people (14,000 households)	
<b>Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners currently actively involved in the operation:</b> British Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, Spanish Red Cross, German Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, ICRC	
<b>Other partner organizations actively involved in the operation:</b> UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Desert Locust Control Organisation of East Africa (DLCO-EA), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Government Ministries of Agriculture in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda	

### Summary of major revisions made to the emergency plan of action:

Five National Societies – Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda – were allocated start-up funds (CHF 50,000 each) to enable initial activities including assessments, training and engagement in locust surveillance, and reporting. Major delays were experienced in the start-up of activities, thus leaving little time to complete all the activities within the planned timeframe. Consequently, some planned activities, such as the provision of crop seed, cannot be undertaken in 2020 and would need to be delayed until the next rains in March 2021.

In addition, the locust situation continues to evolve with new invasions from Yemen and parts of Somalia, which are expected to occur in several parts of East Africa as of mid-December. For this reason, the operation needs to remain open to allow for the implementation of outstanding activities, as well as respond to emerging threats of the new locust invasion, which are expected to be worsened by the impacts of *La Niña* on the agricultural season.

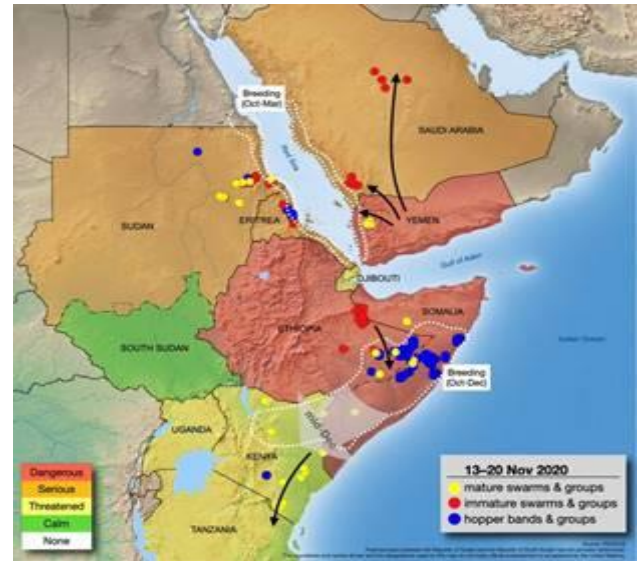
This Operations Update allows the five National Societies to make the following changes to the operation:

- Review the livelihoods support needs in light of the ongoing locust infestation as new locust swarms invade the subregion from Yemen, and the emerging food insecurity due to impacts of *La Niña* that are expected to cause rainfall deficits leading to low production of the January to February harvest.
- Implement lifesaving and livelihoods protection for the most affected people, especially in areas affected by multiple threats of locusts, floods, COVID-19, and now *La Niña*.
- Extend the operation timeframe by 3 months (new end date of 30 April 2021) to allow for implementation of activities, including modifications to cater for the emerging *La Niña*-induced food insecurity.
- It is noted that an allocation of CHF 253,000 has been contributed by Partner National Societies to the five National Societies based on levels of need.

## A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

### Description of the disaster

Eastern Africa experienced a locust invasion starting from November 2019 when the dangerous migratory pests crossed into the region in large numbers. What started as an outbreak eventually covered larger geographical areas developing into an upsurge and causing serious concerns on the food security and livelihoods situation of the region. The ongoing locust invasion in East Africa has been described as the worst in 25 years for Ethiopia and Somalia, and the worst in 70 years for Kenya, with experts predicting the locusts will continue to breed and spread into more countries for most of 2020, thus the impacts on food security and livelihoods will be massive. The desert locusts move in large numbers and can multiply in numbers by a factor of 20 every three months. This is a major cause for concern as they can destroy large areas of vegetation and crops, thus threatening food security and livelihoods of affected populations. Experts have predicted increased cross border movements of the locusts in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia, potentially aggravating an already precarious food security situation.



The IGAD Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG) has predicted in the worst-case scenario up to 100% crop loss could be experienced. Even in the event of mid-case scenarios being experienced, localized damaged would be severe, requiring humanitarian assistance to the affected communities. In February 2020, the IFRC released an Information Bulletin on the locust situation, highlighting the most affected countries and the need for urgent anticipatory funding to mitigate the potential impacts of the locust upsurge. This was followed by an emergency appeal launched in April 2020.

Funding for start-up activities was disbursed between June and October, which has enabled each of the five National Societies to implement initial activities including assessments, training of staff and volunteers, community awareness raising and mobilization, and identification of households for livelihoods support interventions.

According to the latest FAO Locust Update as of 20 November 2020, a new locust invasion is underway, mainly coming from Yemen and expected to reach several countries in East Africa by mid-December, further exacerbating continued breeding in parts of Somalia and northeastern Ethiopia.

With an increased risk of regional spread, especially from breeding areas in Yemen, Somalia and Ethiopia into Kenya, South Sudan, and potentially Tanzania, the impacts of locusts on food security and livelihoods will continue to increase, calling for continued review and implementation of activities with the highest positive impact for the most-affected people.

The operation has so far not attracted the much-needed funding, so innovative ways to link it with other ongoing disaster response plans and operations, including COVID-19, floods, and *La Niña* early actions, are being considered. The Eastern Africa team has been discussing this with National Societies, especially on the possibility to link *La Niña* early actions with the locust operation by selecting the same counties.

Organizations such as FAO have already adjusted their response plans to June 2021 to reflect the ongoing and projected locust impacts on food security and livelihoods. The Regional Desert Locust Alliance (RDLA), which is tasked with monitoring the collective responses to the locust crisis, has also adjusted its timeframe to the end of June 2021.

### Summary of current response

#### Overview of Host National Society Response Actions

Since the escalation of the locust upsurge in the subregion, IFRC has been at the forefront of planning, preparedness and response actions, in collaboration with Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) partners and other agencies such as UN FAO, UN OCHA, and the RDLA.

IFRC held consultations with ICRC and Partner National Societies (PNSs) in the five countries to identify areas of support to the National Societies, strengthen coordination, and experience sharing. The ICRC developed key messages on locusts for the National Societies.

To date, the RCRC responses are summarized below.

### **Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS)**

The ERCS has been closely working with government departments of agriculture and disaster risk management on the coordination of the response, including active participation in the Desert Locust Task Force meetings at national, regional, zonal, and district levels.

ERCS branch staff covering the two target districts have conducted assessments on locust impacts on crops and pastures and the report has been finalized. ERCS is also working closely with FAO on assessments to inform planning for emerging risks as the locust invasion evolves.

Under this Appeal, ERCS was allocated start-up funding to enable activities such as assessments, training, and identification of households to benefit from the food assistance interventions. These activities started in September 2020 and are currently at over 80% completion, with the remaining activities being the continued awareness raising and support in identification of community-led risk reduction interventions. Additional resources will be allocated upon reporting on at least 80% of the allocated start-up funds. The main achievements to date are as follows:

- Conducted locust impact assessments in Teltele and Wachille districts.
- Completed desert locust control and prevention training for 48 participants selected from 10 districts of Borena zone namely: Teltele, Wachile, Yabelo, Dhas, Miyo, Dirre, Guchi, Arero, Moyale, and Dillo. The training was carried out in 2 sessions and attended by ERCS Borena Zone staff.
- Trained a total of 24 resource persons on community engagement and accountability (CEA). The training participants were volunteers and staff from District Agriculture and Natural Resource Development Offices, Crop Protection, Development Agents, and Community Desert Locust Scouts.

### **Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS)**

KRCS has been closely working with government and UN partners at national and county levels on coordination, assessments, training, and response planning. KRCS was contracted by FAO to undertake comprehensive desert locust impact assessments in the 16 most-affected counties and the report was released in November 2020. The assessment aimed to assess the impacts on food security and livelihoods, and to guide planning for emergency response and recovery interventions.

With the start-up funding, KRCS has worked on the following activities:

- Conducted 2 project inception meetings, with Turkana and Marsabit County Steering Groups.
- Conducted 3 training sessions (70 pax) for Red Cross Action Teams (RCATs) and Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) on locust messaging dissemination in Turkana (1 session, 35 pax) and Marsabit County (2 sessions, 35 pax)
- Conducted 1 assessment on impacts of locusts in Turkana Central, East, and South. The draft report is currently under review.
- Planned 1 assessment on impacts of desert locusts in Marsabit County (to be conducted in mid-December).

### **Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS)**

SRCS signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Environment (MOE) during the inception meeting with the government. Volunteers drawn from the community were trained by technical experts from the MOE and tasked with keeping communities informed of operational activities and progress. The trained volunteers continue providing a platform for community feedback.

The last joint SRCS / MOE assessment was conducted in June 2020 and helped in clarifying emerging community needs for response planning. The latest FAO update of 20 November 2020 indicates massive breeding and a high population of hopper bands in central Somalia. This is expected to result in new locust movements into Kenya, Ethiopia, and Tanzania in December. The continuing locust invasion will result in destruction of crops and pastures, worsening the already bad situation in the Country. The German Red Cross has also worked closely with SRCS Somaliland Office to support preparedness and control measures in areas where resilience programming is being implemented.

To date, SRCS has undertaken the following activities:

- Puntland held an inception meeting with the MOE responsible for the control of desert locust infestation. A work plan was jointly developed and responsibilities agreed. The MOE took responsibility for technical lead while SRCS availed staff and volunteers for surveillance, reporting, and community mobilisation.
- Training of volunteers on community mobilisation, locust monitoring, and reporting was conducted, facilitated by the MOE.
- A joint MOE / SRCS rapid assessment team was established, drawn from the trained SRCS volunteers, who participated in the assessment. The assessment findings have been validated through a workshop and a Plan of Action (PoA) has been developed. SRCS continues to participate in established desert locust coordination mechanisms led by the government, with support from FAO, and regularly receives surveillance updates.
- Community mobilisation and awareness raising sessions were conducted in the 10 target districts.
- SRCS has participated in coordination meetings of the Desert Locust Task Force at national and district levels.

### **South Sudan Red Cross (SSRC)**

The locust invasion in Magwi County has devastated food crops in villages of Obo and Pajok, threatening the food security and livelihoods of the affected communities. Most of the households lost part of their crops, especially cassava, maize, sorghum, and sesame. SSRC has been involved in creating awareness on locusts, including supporting community mobilization and risk reduction planning. As over 12,000 people have been affected, SSRC has identified the need to provide support in risk reduction, emergency food assistance, seeds, tools, and agricultural training.

Initial efforts have been on community engagement in surveillance and reporting on locusts. Follow-up support will be on food assistance, provision of seeds and tools, and agricultural training for increased food production and productivity.

To date, the following activities have been implemented:

- Assessed locust impacts in the target areas in collaboration with stakeholders such as the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO.
- Trained staff and volunteers from the branches and the disaster management team in Juba on locust surveillance and reporting, as well as on promotion of community risk reduction plans.
- Conducting community awareness and mobilisation (to be completed by the end of December).

### **Uganda Red Cross Society (URCS)**

URCS has been active in locust coordination and preparedness activities through participation in coordination mechanisms at national and district levels. Implementation of this operation started much later in September when the upsurge of the desert locust invasion in Uganda had reduced. Despite this, the following interventions were implemented which helped to build community capacity and local preparedness for potential new desert locust invasions:

- Trained 61 staff, volunteers and agriculture extension workers in Amudat, Katakwi and Kumi districts on data collection and management skills in line with the FAO e-Locust Surveillance Systems.
- Trained 64 staff and community-based volunteers on regular surveillance and reporting on locusts in the three target districts.
- Conducted house-to-house public awareness and risk communication activities, as well as meetings with farmer groups, to disseminate information about desert locusts and safety when using chemicals in locust control interventions. This action reached 1,027 people in 6 sub-counties in the implementation districts.
- Trained staff and volunteers in CEA skills, which were integrated during the general training in Desert Locust Information and Surveillance Skills.
- Facilitated the development of three Multi-hazard District Contingency Plans in Katakwi, Amudat and Kumi districts.
- Participated in 2 regional online monthly operation update meetings with stakeholders at national level, while Branch Managers continued to attend District Disaster Management Committee (DDMC) meetings held at respective local government levels.

### **Overview of Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement actions in-country**

- a) Kenya: KRCS has several partners supporting a range of interventions in emergency preparedness, response, health, water and sanitation, psychosocial support, and community resilience building programs. The present partners are British RC, Danish RC, Finnish RC, Norwegian RC, Italian RC, and Netherlands RC. The Netherlands RC supports Kenya on the Early Warning, Early Action through the 'Innovative Approaches for Response Preparedness (IARP) program', which includes forecast-based funding opportunities that this Appeal will link into. The British RC supports disaster risk management capacity strengthening at county level, while the Danish RC supports urban resilience initiatives, and the Finnish RC has been supporting on raising resources for locust response.
- b) Uganda: In-country partners are the German RC supporting community resilience and refugee programs in northern Uganda, and the Netherlands RC supporting Early Warning, Early Action capacity strengthening through the IARP program. The IFRC has a presence in-country and supports coordination of the Movement partners, in addition to leading on emergency operations (ECHO DRR, COVID-19, and Floods Response).

- c) Ethiopia: The IFRC, ICRC and 6 PNSs (Spanish, Netherlands, Finnish, Swiss, Austrian and Canadian RC) have ongoing programs in the country and play key roles in emergency response. The partners hold regular coordination meetings with participation of ERCS program staff. Ongoing operations include COVID-19 with livelihoods support through cash transfers, and the Floods Response in Amhara. ERCS has a national preparedness and response plan to which all partners align their efforts, and the locust operation will be integrated into this plan.
- d) Somalia: SRCS has a few in-country partners (IFRC, ICRC, and German RC) with other partners supporting from other locations, mainly Nairobi. The German RC is supporting the resilience building project and has been instrumental in the locust preparedness and response activities. The IFRC supports coordination of movement partners in-country led by SRCS, and in Nairobi, SRCS, ICRC and IFRC are closely collaborating on operational support, capacity strengthening, and the ongoing COVID-19 response.
- e) South Sudan: The IFRC, ICRC and several partners are based in Juba, offering ongoing support to SRCS. The ICRC leads on food security responses, while the IFRC and PNSs support various operations, including COVID-19 and ongoing longer-term projects. The IFRC leads on coordination of Movement partners' work and reinforces its capacity with technical assistance from the Nairobi office.

### **Overview of non-RCRC actors in-country**

In all the five countries, the main actors are the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Disaster Management, the UN FAO, and the UN OCHA. FAO is the main partner to governments on surveillance, detection, and spraying activities. UN OCHA co-leads with the government on coordination at country and regional levels.

The RDLA, made up of international organisations, has been tasked with compiling consolidated reports on the response activities and gives updates at the regional coordination meetings.

A few NGOs have embarked on response activities, especially on livelihoods protection, but this has largely been insignificant, especially as efforts were put towards COVID-19 responses.

## **Needs analysis and scenario planning**

### **Needs analysis**

The needs of the affected countries have remained high, especially as the locust invasion has reoccurred several times coupled with frequent cross border movements, but also because there are vast breeding areas where control activities are not possible due to security concerns, such as Yemen and parts of Somalia.

The COVID-19 induced restrictions on movements, ban on community gatherings, and general redirection of funding to the COVID-19 response, has meant little attention has been given to the locust situation, including limited or no assessments of impacts. For example, Uganda and South Sudan have not undertaken any government-led impact assessments, and this lends to underestimates of real needs. URCS is collecting information in the three target districts, but the understanding of impacts in other areas remains very low.

The multiple threats of COVID-19, floods, locusts, and conflict have affected several countries leading to redirection of resources, thus deprioritizing locust response activities.

The latest FAO update indicates continued and new infestations through December, meaning the locusts impacts will continue to evolve through much of the first half of 2021. FAO has already adjusted its response plans, including locust control activities until June 2021, in anticipation of the continued and evolving precarious situation.

### **Targeting**

The target for the response remains unchanged, that is, 14,000 households, and 70,000 people in the five affected countries.

### **Operation Risk Assessment**

The locust invasion has been ongoing for several months and the level of impact varies from country to country. In some countries, the need to quickly move from assessments to scale-up of emergency operations is a reality, and this need is not matched with IFRC and partner capacity for resource mobilization. Restrictions on movement and holding of meetings has affected access to information that would otherwise have come through in the planned community meetings.

Additionally, there are challenges with resource mobilization as several donors are prioritizing allocations to the COVID-19 pandemic. IFRC is considering supporting National Societies to integrate components of the response into future COVID-19 and other funding opportunities, leveraging on the auxiliary functions and roles of the National Societies.

Operational capacities of National Societies have also been overstretched by multiple emergency responses, especially the huge response demand by the COVID-19 pandemic activities, which have occupied all National Societies' branches simultaneously unlike any other responses. The level of pressure, however, varies with each National Society based on the strength of their capacities and systems.

## **B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY**

### **Overall Operational Objective**

The **overall operational objective** of this Emergency Appeal is to support five National Societies in Eastern and Horn of Africa to prepare for and respond to the emerging food insecurity situation due to the locust upsurge. The operation will focus on community mobilization and awareness raising, implementation of early actions, and assessments to inform the design and scale-up of response interventions.

### **Proposed Strategy**

The IFRC Regional Office will work closely with the Eastern Africa Cluster Office and the Country Offices for Somalia and South Sudan in coordinating this operation. The lessons learned from the respective country Emergency Appeals in the past will be used to improve on effectiveness of interventions. Coordination mechanisms involving Movement partners supporting emergency and recovery interventions will be established and/or strengthened. The operation will align to the broader COVID-19 response planning and, where appropriate, leverage on the COVID-19 human and financial resources to scale-up activities in this operation. IFRC will continue to offer and mobilize robust technical support, including through partnerships with key UN agencies such as FAO, on training, surveillance and reporting of locust movements, control activities, and impacts. IFRC will also ensure that adequate remote support is provided in CEA, planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER), communications, finance, and operations management. PNSs in respective countries are encouraged to provide support to the NSs to actively engage in national/subnational locust preparedness and response initiatives.

The planned activities remain as stated in the approved EPoA, and fundraising efforts will continue and align with other funding opportunities such as COVID-19, *La Niña*, population movement, and floods operations.

## **C. DETAILED OPERATIONAL PLAN**

Refer to the [EPoA](#). No changes proposed.

## **D. Financial Report**

An initial allocation of CHF 50,000 was disbursed to each of the five National Societies to enable start-up activities, such as training, community mobilisation, impacts assessment, and support for contingency planning, coordination and beneficiary identification.

No changes are proposed to the budget, so it remains as is in the EPoA.

## Funding Requirements

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

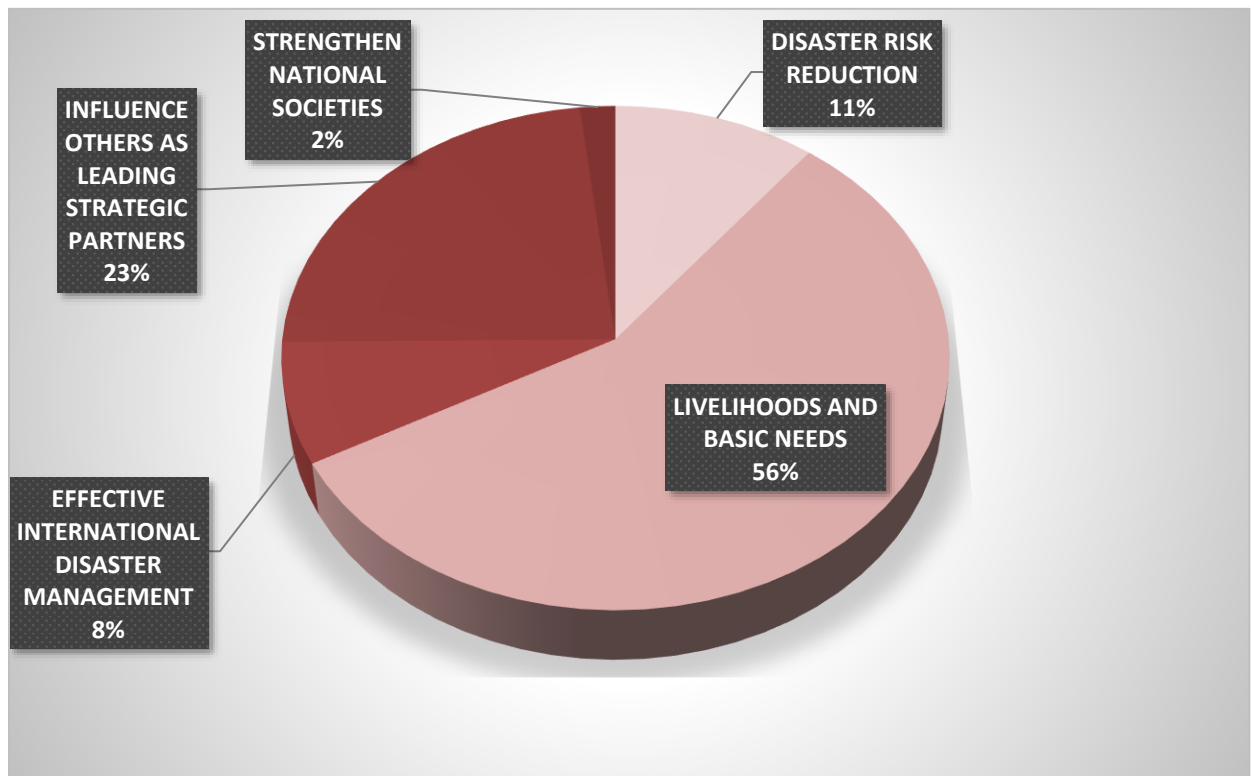
### EMERGENCY APPEAL

#### *MDR60005 – Regional Locust Appeal*

*Funding requirements - summary*

Area of Intervention	Needs in CHF
DISASTER RISK REDUCTION	190,000
LIVELIHOODS AND BASIC NEEDS	1,017,000
STRENGTHEN NATIONAL SOCIETIES	33,000
EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT	140,000
INFLUENCE OTHERS AS LEADING STRATEGIC PARTNERS	420,000
<b>TOTAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>1,800,000</b>

*all amounts in Swiss Francs (CHF)*





## Reference documents



Click here for:

- [Emergency Appeal](#)

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

**Ethiopian Red Cross Society:**

Engida Mandefro, Deputy Secretary General; email:

[engida.mandefro@redcrosseth.org](mailto:engida.mandefro@redcrosseth.org)

**Kenya Red Cross Society:**

Dr Asha Mohammed, Secretary General; email:

[mohammed.asha@redcross.or.ke](mailto:mohammed.asha@redcross.or.ke); phone: +254 701812658

**Somali Red Crescent Society:**

Mr. Yusuf Hassan Mohamed, President; email [benebene1@hotmail.com](mailto:benebene1@hotmail.com)

**South Sudan Red Cross:**

John Lobor, Secretary General; phone: +211 912 666 836;

email: [john.lobor@southsudanredcross.org](mailto:john.lobor@southsudanredcross.org)

**Uganda Red Cross Society:**

Robert Kwesiga, Secretary General; email: [rkwesiga@redcrossug.org](mailto:rkwesiga@redcrossug.org)

**IFRC Country Cluster Office, Nairobi:** John Roche, Head of Cluster, IFRC Eastern Africa Cluster, Nairobi, Kenya; email: [john.roche@ifrc.org](mailto:john.roche@ifrc.org); phone: +254780436710

**IFRC South Sudan Country Office:** Papemoussa Tall, Head of Country Office, IFRC-South Sudan; phone: +211912179511;

email: [papemoussa.tall@ifrc.org](mailto:papemoussa.tall@ifrc.org)

**IFRC Somalia Country Office:** Surein Peiris, Head of IFRC Somalia Country Office, Nairobi; phone: +254 20 2835 132; email: [surein.peiris@ifrc.org](mailto:surein.peiris@ifrc.org)

**IFRC Office for Africa Region:**

Adesh Tripathee, Head of DCPRR, Nairobi, Kenya; email:

[Adesh.tripathee@ifrc.org](mailto:Adesh.tripathee@ifrc.org); phone +254731067489

**IFRC Geneva:**

Nicolas Boyrie, Senior Officer, Operations Coordination (Africa); phone: +41 22 730 49 80; email: [Nicolas.BOYRIE@ifrc.org](mailto:Nicolas.BOYRIE@ifrc.org)

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

Louise Daintrey-Hall, Head of Partnerships and Resource Development.

email: [louise.daintrey@ifrc.org](mailto:louise.daintrey@ifrc.org)

**For IFRC In-Kind Donations and Mobilization table support:**

Rishi Ramrakha, Head of Africa Regional Logistics Unit; email: [rishi.ramrakha@ifrc.org](mailto:rishi.ramrakha@ifrc.org); phone: +254 733 888 022

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

Philip Kahuho, PMER Manager; phone: +254732203081; email:

[Philip.kahuho@ifrc.org](mailto:Philip.kahuho@ifrc.org)

## 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.

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.**