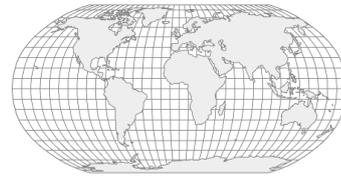


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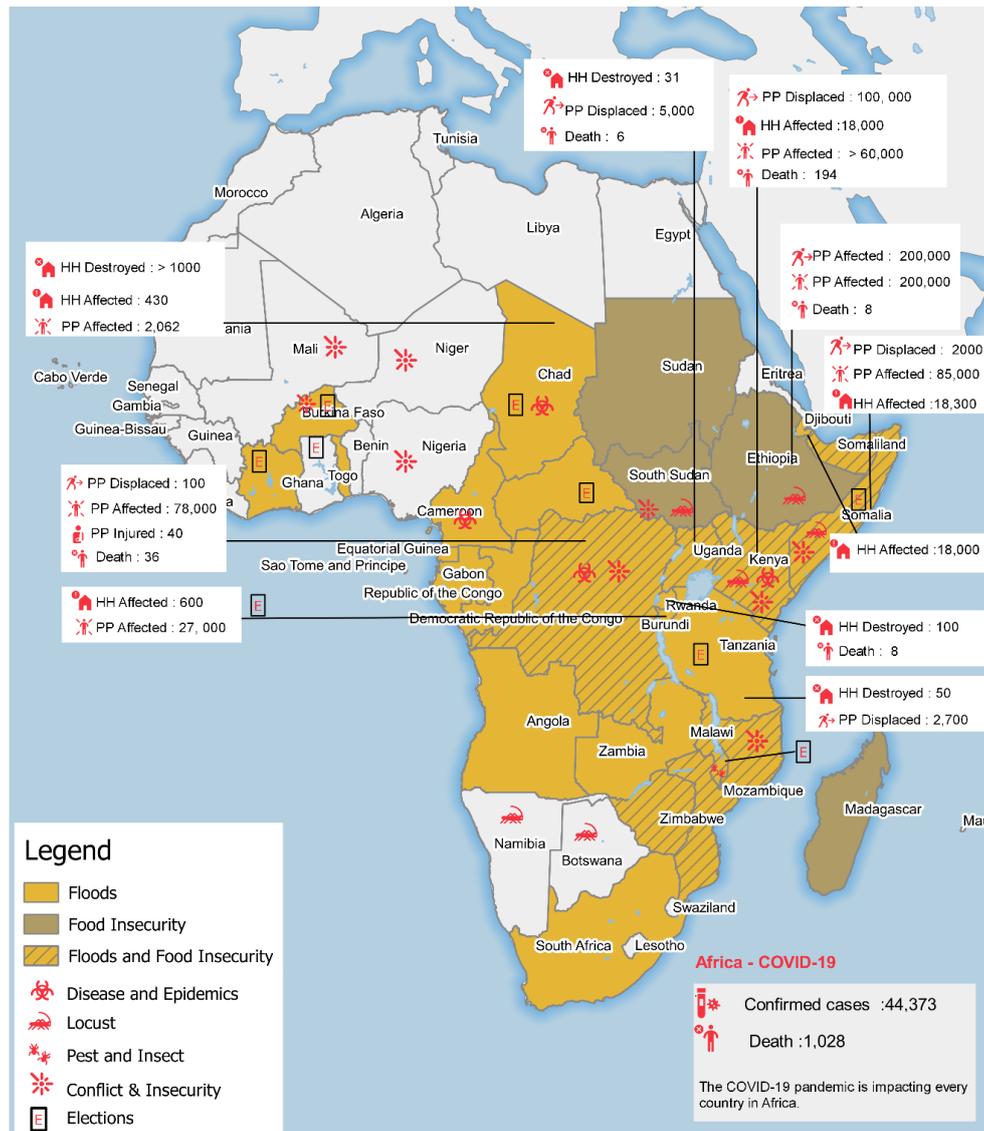
Africa: Multiple disasters and hazards

This bulletin is being issued for information only and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. Respective National Societies, with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), are working to respond to each of these disasters through different means. Some have DREFs or Emergency Appeals launched, and others may require additional support in the future.



Africa: Multiple Hazards and Crisis

14 May 2020



The maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.
Map data sources: Somalia RC, IFRC. Map produced by: IFRC Africa Regional Office, Nairobi



The situation and Red Cross and Red Crescent action

Summary:

Africa is facing several disasters and crises which are multi-faceted and overlapping. The most widely publicized of these is the COVID-19 pandemic. As of 17 May 2020, there were 51,842 confirmed cases in Africa, with 2,011 deaths reported.¹ The actual numbers of people infected and who have died from the virus are likely to be much higher, due to lack of testing capacity in many countries and general under-reporting. The countries with the highest burden of confirmed cases are South Africa, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Guinea, and Senegal, followed by Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan, Somalia and Djibouti. Health systems and infrastructure vary by countries and are not up to international standards in most of the countries, and also burdened by other diseases including HIV, malaria, cholera and Ebola. This means that the existing health system in most countries cannot handle the full effect of COVID-19 pandemic. Long-running conflicts or protracted crises have exacerbated the impact of COVID-19, both in terms of health and economics, in some countries. In Somalia, South Sudan, Central African Republic, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Sahel region (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger) and Cameroon, ongoing violence and insecurity further limit the abilities of authorities to track the spread of the pandemic, while impeding the abilities of populations to access health care and life-saving information. In the DRC, COVID-19 is also affecting the eastern part of the country, which is still responding to the outbreak of Ebola which began at the end of 2017. In addition, the shut down of markets and restrictions on movement further limit the abilities of highly vulnerable populations to access food and livelihoods, create price hike due to interruptions in trading and supply chain and cause unemployment particularly in informal labour sector.

In Eastern and Southern Africa, several countries are being affected by one of the worst infestations of locusts in decades. The insects are breeding and spreading across thousands of acres of farmland and especially concentrated in Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, Sudan, Djibouti, Eritrea and South Sudan. This is having an extremely worrying impact on the food security and livelihoods situations as their prevalence coincides with the crop growing season, and they are expected to continue to be present during the harvesting season.

The combination of these disasters will result in increased food insecurity and destruction of livelihoods. Floods have displaced thousands of people and destroyed their means of livelihoods, including farm lands and livestock. The displaced people have no access to farm lands to replant and yet this is the most important cropping season of the year. COVID-19 restrictions are already hampering food supply chains leading to localised sharp increases in price of food. Losing crops due to a combination of flooding and locusts, combined with increased food prices will have devastating impacts on the affected people.

Floods are now affecting parts of most countries across the African continent. In Eastern and Central Africa, moderate to heavy rainfall associated with the long rainy seasons (March to May) has caused floods in several regions. In Kenya, the rains have led to the displacement of over 100,000 people and 194 deaths. In Ethiopia, the rains have affected over 200,000 people and caused 8 fatalities. Uganda has seen 5,000 people displaced with 6 fatalities, and 3,800 people on the Lake Islands in Mayugi district have been evacuated due to an increased level of water in Lake Victoria. Across some regions in Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, Djibouti and Burundi, homes have been destroyed, and over 120,000 people, including some of those in IDP camps, have been left without shelter. In the DRC, floods around Lake Albert destroyed 100 homes in Djugu territory, with 78,000 people left without shelter, drinking water supply and road accessibility. Flooding in Chad saw over 1,000 homes on the Maingama site damaged, forcing 430 households to flee their destroyed homes. Elsewhere, in West Africa, the southern halves of Togo and Cote d'Ivoire have begun experiencing heavy rainfall which is expected to continue into June 2020. Lastly, in Southern Africa, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, South Africa and Angola experienced heavy rainfall from January to April 2020. In Angola, River Cambamba broke its banks and displaced 113 families in Luanda province after it damaged their homes.

¹ WHO SitRep, 17 May 2020.

The ongoing insecurity in countries such as Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan, Nigeria, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique continues to affect people's abilities to feed themselves and their families, earn a living, and access essential services. Further, 18 African countries will hold elections in 2020 and there are possibilities of election-related violence and insecurity in some of them. Malawi, Burundi, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Chad, Central African Republic, Seychelles and Somalia all have major elections scheduled to take place this year. In Burundi has scheduled her election on 20 May and violent clashes have already broken out in the lead up to the election.

The above situations are likely to further affect food supply and demand, decreasing both the purchasing power of households and their capacities to produce and distribute food. Households which may be affected by more than one type of shock will be additionally vulnerable due to having exhausted their coping mechanisms. It is clear that there are significant, multi-layered and critical risks and hazards that will continue to face the African continent in 2020 and the effects will extend beyond will be felt couple of years to come.

Detailed Overview

Coronavirus COVID-19: The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting every country in Africa to some degree, overlapping with and exacerbating the impacts of other disasters and crises, and in some cases threatening to overwhelm already fragile health care systems. The number of COVID-19 infections is on the rise and as of 17 May, there were 51,842 confirmed cases in Africa, with 2,011 deaths reported. The actual numbers of people infected and who have died from the virus are likely to be under-reported due to limited testing capacities and poor health surveillance systems. While the initial rates of infections in Africa have generally been lower than expected, there is a serious risk that as governments ease restrictive measures due to their economic impacts, secondary waves of infections will eclipse the first wave. In many African countries, the prevailing socio-economic conditions also mean that the impacts of restrictive measures have the potential to have devastating consequences on already impoverished and food insecure populations, with substantial numbers of people engaged in informal sectors of employment or precarious employment. Rumours and misinformation on the pandemic are also increasing levels of insecurity and confusion, preventing or interrupting the practises of social distancing and good hygiene, and sometimes causing hostility towards authorities and health workers. As restrictive measures continue, the likelihood of civil unrest or widespread insecurity also increases.

Pests: The re-infestation of desert locusts after the first wave of invasion continues to destroy thousands of acres of crops in East African countries. It is estimated that the second wave of invasion is 20 times larger than the first invasion and an increase in the amount of rainfall is setting a conducive environment for them to breed in large numbers. The locusts' breeding season is occurring at the same time as the crop growing season, impacting the growth of these crops while threatening to wipe out the harvest when the insects are full grown. The desert locust upsurge comes at a time when the region is already facing food insecurity, with approximately 18 million people classified as in Crisis (Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Phase 3 - IPC 3) or worse in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan. In the worst-case scenario, up to 100% of crop production loss could be experienced. While pest control measures were undertaken in the first months of the year, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on the ability of governments and agencies like FAO to implement control mechanisms such as import of pesticides as a result of border closures and flight restrictions. In Southern Africa, the African Migratory Locust outbreaks recorded in Botswana and Namibia, fall armyworm in Malawi and foot and mouth disease also remain a challenge and a threat.

Flooding

East Africa: The rainy season in East Africa is bringing with it significant floods in some regions. In Kenya, more than 100,000 Kenyans in 122,000 households have been adversely affected by the ongoing heavy rains which are expected to continue until June. The Kenyan government has reported that at least 194 people have died in floods or associated landslides in the country since mid-April, which has affected 29 of the country's 47 counties, including Busia, Siaya, West Pokot, Elgeyo Marakwet, and Narok. Across the border in Tanzania, thousands of people have been affected by flooding and mudslides in Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions. In Arusha region, at least 50 homes have been destroyed while the flooding has also blocked the important Arusha-Moshi road in Arumeru District. In the Kilimanjaro region, more than 2,700 households have been made homeless by flooding, with several people reported to have lost their lives.



A flood victim receiving household kits and hygiene items in Kasese Uganda

In Uganda, flooding and landslides have displaced over 6,000 people and killed at least 6 in Isingiro, Rubanda, Kabale and Nakapiripiri Districts, also destroying crops. In Eastern Uganda, heavy rains have increased the levels of Lake Victoria forcing 3,800 people on the Lake Islands in Mayugi district to be evacuated. In Rwanda, heavy rains continue to destroy homes and infrastructure in several regions. More than 100 houses are reported to have collapsed with roads closed and 17 people are reported dead. Other impacts of the heavy rains include destruction of crops and loss of livestock. Rwanda Meteo reports that rainfall is expected to continue in Kigali City, Northern province, Rubavu, Nyabihu, Rutso, Ngororo, Muhanga and Ruhaango districts, increasing the risk of further floods and landslides. Heavy rains have also affected parts of Bujumbura province in Burundi, with around 600 households (27,000 people) impacted by flooding.

In Ethiopia, flooding has affected over 200,000 people since late April in the regions of Somali, Afar, Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region, Dire Dawn and Haran. The floods have caused the total collapse of several major bridges, while heavy rains have further caused landslides in SNNP Region resulting in 8 fatalities, displacement and destruction of houses. Heavy rains have affected widespread areas of Somalia since April, causing rivers to rise and triggering flash flooding. Tens of thousands have been displaced or affected in areas including North Eastern Bari Region, parts of Puntland, South West State, Jubaland, Bandire, and Somaliland Bay Region. The damages include destruction of shelters for those living in 73 IDP settlements and loss of crops in other areas. In Djibouti, flash floods heavily affected Djibouti City and surrounding areas after Djibouti City received 80 mm of rainfall in few hours. Some 18,000 households were affected across Djibouti City and its suburb of Balbala. Heavy rains also occurred in other areas of the country, causing additional damages.

Central Africa: Strong winds and heavy rains in eastern parts of the Democratic Republic of Congo combined to cause Lake Albert to overflow in Ituri Province. The rising waters damaged or destroyed around 100 homes in Djugu territory, while heavy rains in the city of Uvira and surrounding areas of South Kivu also caused the Mulongwe river to break its banks, leaving almost 78,000 people without shelter, drinking water and road accessibility. 36 fatalities have been reported with over 40 people injured.

In Chad, heavy rains and floods destroyed and damaged shelters in displacement camps in the Moyen-Chari Province of Chad. More than 1000 homes on the Maingama site were damaged, forcing 430

households of 2,062 individuals to flee their destroyed homes. Other parts in the region which have experienced some flooding, which is likely to continue until the end of June, include Cameroon, Central African Republic, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Burkina Faso and the Republic of Congo.

West Africa: The southern half of Togo and Ivory Coast have begun experiencing heavy rainfall, which is expected to continue into June 2020.

Southern Africa: From January to March, several countries in Southern Africa have faced heavy rains and flooding, including Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, South Africa and Angola. In Angola, the heavy rains and strong winds in Luanda Province caused 11 deaths and 13 people were reported missing, while the river Cambamba broke its banks and displaced 113 families after damaging their homes.

Diseases and Epidemics: Outside of COVID-19, after 40 days with no confirmed cases, a new case of Ebola Virus Disease was reported in east DR Congo. As of 14 May, seven new cases of EVD have been reported in and around Beni Health Zone in North Kivu, 4 of whom have passed away. This new cluster of cases resets the clock on the countdown to the end of Ebola, while also threatening to cause a wider outbreak due to the insecurity in and around Beni. In Chad and Cameroon, meningitis and lung diseases are expected to affect the region in May and June. In Kenya's northeast an outbreak of cholera has been reported, which has so far claimed the lives of 7 people with 134 persons being treated. With heavy rains in most parts of Eastern, Central and West Africa, spikes of malaria or water-borne disease cases are expected in these regions.

Food Insecurity: In Eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa, the desert locust upsurge, flooding of croplands and the COVID-19 situation is threatening an already precarious food security situation in the region. The COVID-19 pandemic is already affecting food production and distribution systems through impacts on food supply and demand, and through decreases in purchasing power and limited capacity to produce and distribute food. These events will more strongly affect the poor and vulnerable. Further, the COVID-19 restrictions have greatly affected informal workers due to the disruption of supply chains and demand-side shocks significantly affecting commodity prices. In Southern Africa, early cessation of rains caused premature wilting of many late-planted crops, which were previously in good conditions after favourable January/February rainfall amounts. Overall, poor seasonal rainfall distribution will dampen harvest prospects for many parts of the region, potentially leaving 43 million people acutely food insecure. Bordering areas of Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali continue to be food insecure not only due to poor rainfall, but exacerbated by ongoing insecurity which disrupts household access to livelihoods and markets. At least 1.2 million people are displaced throughout the region. COVID-19 restrictions are putting added stress on already disrupted livelihoods and access to food particularly along the international borders within the region. In the DRC, ongoing conflicts in the Kasai Region, North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri, Maniema and Tanganyika provinces have caused continued displacement and affected households' abilities to engage in typical livelihood activities.

Conflict and Insecurity: A deteriorating security situation continues to be witnessed a number of areas of Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, Somali, South Sudan, Nigeria, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo and Mozambique. As stated earlier, the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to cause an increase in crime rates as governments insist on total lockdowns in some countries. In Nigeria, increases in armed robberies have been seen in Lagos which is under lockdown, and the military was able to intercept Islamic militants before a planned attack. In Mozambique, further security deterioration amid increased capabilities by insurgents has led to new displacements. Kenya has reported increased tension and clashes in Maasai areas, with some houses were destroyed by opposing clans. In the DRC, ongoing insecurity caused by a multitude of armed groups in the northeast of the country continues to hamper efforts to respond to food insecurity, flooding, and COVID-19 as well as Ebola. In the Sahel, armed groups and extremists, especially in the regions bordering Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali, regularly force displacements of local populations due to violence and attacks. In Somalia, the extremist Al-Shabaab group continues to stage attacks throughout the south and central areas of the country has recently increased the number of attacks in Puntland. In the Lake Chad region, Islamist insurgencies continue to cause insecurity and displacement amongst the populations of the region.

Elections: In 2020, 18 African Countries will be holding National election. As from May 2020, 11 countries including Malawi, Burundi, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Chad, Central African Republic, Seychelles and Somalia will be headed to the polls amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. In Burundi, violent clashes between the security and ruling party youth wing forces and main opposition party have raised the risk of escalation around the general election scheduled for 20 May 2020.

Red Cross and Red Crescent actions

The IFRC continues to monitor the risks and crises affecting the entire Africa region, using a multi-hazard risk mitigation approach which ensures the responses to different disasters and crises are integrated, cross-cutting, and non-siloed. The IFRC is currently using a number of tools to support National Societies to respond to the hazards impacting their respective countries, including Appeals, DREFs, and integration of response activities into existing projects and programs. The COVID-19 response is being implemented through existing programs where possible, while other operations are integrating COVID-19 into their response plans. For further details please see the Adaptation to COVID-19 Response section.

Multiple hazards have cumulative negative impact on people's coping capacity. Floods are a seasonal and recurring phenomenon, and in anticipation of the recurring events, National Societies and communities prepare for response. Response triggers are determined by the extent and scale of these events. This year the humanitarian context is much more complex, with flooding, epidemics, locust upsurge, and civil unrest coinciding with the COVID-19 outbreak. National Societies require exceptional strategies for COVID-19 preparedness and response. Where possible and relevant, the National Societies recognize connections with and integration of COVID-19 into other operations by packing awareness messaging, maximising volunteers and staff bandwidth and reducing exposure to COVID-19. This tactic allows National Societies to operate within the government imposed travel and access restrictions to communities.

COVID-19 Response

In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the IFRC launched a global international Appeal for COVID-19, with Africa receiving a portion of the total funds raised. The response is being coordinated by the IFRC Africa Regional Office through a decentralized approach, with funds being sent to almost every National Society through sub-regional Cluster offices. The main activities of National Societies depend on their various capacities and the most pressing needs in each country context, but in general include the provision of health and hygiene promotion information and hardware; provision of clinical services including pre-hospital care where capacities allow; community epidemiological surveillance and contact tracing; provision of information and feedback including rumour tracking to counter the flow of misinformation on COVID-19; provision of cash and livelihoods support; as well as support on shelter, protection, gender and inclusion, support to migrants and displaced persons; national society development and capacity building, and disaster risk reduction. In this vein, there have been several elements of the COVID response which NS's have capitalized on to improve their responses to other disasters and crises. For instance, some NS's have planned to undertake branch capacity building activities to improve the overall early warning and early action responses to disasters such as floods and epidemics. Others are integrating elements of the Preparedness for Effective Response approach to ensure that NS's are building their capacities to respond to future crises while responding to the COVID pandemic. The Africa response is integrating all aspects of the Movement, with the integration of Partner National Societies and ICRC through regular Movement coordination calls and cooperation in integration and sharing of programmatic information to avoid duplication and ensure activities are complementary. A major part of the COVID-19 response in Africa has also been the development and/or refinement of Business Continuity Plans and Contingency Plans to ensure that NS's and IFRC continue to provide effective responses to other crises outside of COVID-19. For further information on this, see the Business Continuity Plan and Contingency Plans section below.

Relevant information is available in the links below :

IFRC Emergency Appeal on COVID-19 : <https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/emergency/global-covid-19/>

IFRC EPOA- COVID-19 response, Africa: <http://adore.ifrc.org/Download.aspx?FileId=305839>

IFRC COVID 19, Ops updates: <https://go.ifrc.org/emergencies/3972#details>

Desert Locust/food insecurity Response

The rainy season provides a favourable environment for the breeding of locusts. The locusts will likely continue to breed exponentially from March onwards when the eggs hatch into new generations of locusts, (hoppers). If the rain continues during the cropping seasons, the hoppers will be at the most destructive stage and if control measures have not significantly reduced them, we expect severe damage to crop and pasture. The heavy rains recently experienced have caused a slowdown in locust control operations due to poor visibility during aerial spraying and affected the movement of the spraying teams.

The combination of these disasters will result in increased food insecurity and destruction of livelihoods. The floods have displaced thousands of people and destroyed their means of livelihoods, including farmlands and livestock. The displaced people have no access to farmlands to re-plant and yet this is the most important cropping season of the year. COVID-19 restrictions are already hampering food supply chains leading to localised sharp increases in prices of food. Losing crops due to a combination of flooding and locusts, combined with increased food prices will have devastating impacts on the affected people.

A multi-country Emergency Appeal has been launched to respond to the massive surge of desert locusts affecting East Africa. It is seeking CHF 1.8 million to support 5 National Societies (Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda) to deliver assistance to 75,000 people affected by the desert locust invasion for 9 months, with a focus on Livelihoods and Basic Needs and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). The operation started with a CHF 350,000 DREF loan to support the initial phase of community-level locust preparedness and prevention, needs assessment and early actions for livelihoods support. The operation also recognizes and takes into account some of the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 response, and will ensure the compatibility with COVID restrictions.

Floods Response

Since the onset of flooding in the region, three DREF operations to support Somalia RC, Tanzania RC and DR Congo RC have been launched. Under these operations, IFRC has released around CHF 1 million to assist approximately 35,000 people.

Somalia: Following the unprecedented flooding in several regions, the Somalia RC requested a DREF to support its response activities. The DREF operation of CHF 328,070 has been launched to support 1,500 households (9,000 people)¹ in Qardho-Bossaso in the areas of emergency shelter and non-food items, health care, and WASH for 3 months. Movement partners are working together closely in Somalia and complementing each other in terms of geographical targeting and programmatic response.

Tanzania: A [DREF](#) operation of CHF 196,796 to assist 2,108 flood-affected displaced households in Kilimanjaro, Kagera, Katavi, Mara and Rukwa regions of Tanzania has been launched. The operation focuses on immediate shelter needs, WASH and health for 3 months. IFRC and Tanzania RC are coordinating through established weekly Movement coordination meetings, with ICRC and other movement partners such as Spanish and Belgium Red Crosses are playing an active role in ensuring coordinated strategies for the floods response.

DR Congo: A [DREF](#) operation of CHF 375,388 has been launched to assist 3,000 households (15,000 people) affected by the floods in Uvira. The operation mainly focuses on livelihoods and basic needs through the provision of multi-purpose cash transfers, while also including activities on psychosocial support and community hygiene promotion. The Movement coordination in east DRC is well established through the Ebola response, with ICRC providing support which enabled the DRC RC to conduct the initial rapid assessment. Depending on how the situation evolves, the ICRC is ready to enable its ECOSEC program to support the flood-affected people.

Kenya: Given the large-scale flooding, the Kenya RC has carried out an in-depth needs assessment to inform the scaling up of its ongoing Emergency Appeal for floods to support the additional people

affected by the recent flooding. The scaling-up strategy focuses on increased support in shelter, livelihoods, WASH and PGI to assist 150,000 people affected by the flooding. The revised operation seeks CHF 5 million, increased from the initial funding requirements of CHF 2.5 million, to support 300,000 people for 9 months.

Adaptation to COVID-19 and holistic-response strategy

Adaptation to COVID 19 response

Spurred on by the COVID-19 pandemic and its threat to the continuity of ongoing operations, IFRC developed Contingency and Business Continuity Plans (BCP) for 29 ongoing operations: 14 Emergency Appeals, 14 DREF and one Early Action Protocol-EAP of Forecast-Based Financing by DREF operations. These plans help for increasing adaptation of operational activities to COVID-19 restrictions and to integrate common response efforts into COVID-19 and vice versa, and inform actions to be undertaken for continuity of the operation. The majority of Emergency Appeal operations (non-COVID-19) are adjusted by prioritising essential/lifesaving activities. Time extensions of some emergency appeal operation may also be required to cover time. These operational agility measures vary depending on National Societies' specific contexts, security considerations, and access restrictions. In most countries, National Societies activities have been identified as essential services, allowing them to continue their priority activities. Community mobilization activities have adapted to the restrictions on numbers of people permitted to gather in a group, and some training or simulation activities have been put on hold until the COVID-19 restrictions are over. A selection of the ways that responses are being adapted to COVID-19 is below:

- In Niger, the National Society has received special authorization to maintain critical activities-procurement of essential items (HP, Foods, Vegetable seeds, PPEs). It has changed distribution modalities from community to households to avoid crowds of people.
- In CAR, activities continue without much interruption as the RC Movement can operate within COVID-19 and security restrictions. The operation, however, may face difficulties if the government closes the border with Cameroon, the main provider of goods, foods and NFIs.
- For the Ebola response, the process of reorienting activities has been completed in the Priority 1 risk countries surrounding the DRC (Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan and Burundi), with a number of agreements made with donors to ensure the flexibility of funds to respond to both threats. In the DRC, the DRC RC is taking advantage of the slowdown of Ebola activities to reorient many activities to prepare for and respond to COVID-19 as well.
- The South Sudan RC includes COVID-19 messages during hygiene promotion campaigns under its existing floods response operation. Cash distributions apply physical distancing techniques and use of PPE during the distributions.
- Under the multi-country food insecurity Emergency Appeal, Eswatini RC, Botswana RC, Lesotho RC, and Namibia RC are adjusting numbers of volunteers and logistics plans to abide by restrictions, i.e., having smaller distributions instead of big ones to abide by assembly rules. National Societies are resorting to phone surveying and cutting down numbers of people surveyed for Post Distribution Monitoring to avoid exposure. In addition, provision of PPEs for staff and volunteers as well as prevention measures are put in place for cash disbursement activities.
- The Mozambique cyclone operation has revised procurement plans and initiated tenders for essential items/materials. The operating budget is also being revised to ensure functional support services for the extended period.
- In Malawi, the National Society has adjusted the speed of implementation to avoid crowds during distribution and community training activities. Messaging on COVID-19 prevention is disseminated during interactions with communities.
- Kenya RC is observing the Ministry of Health guidelines to mitigate the risk of exposure. Distributions are undertaken while observing physical distancing to reduce risks to volunteers/staff and communities. The floods operation is being reviewed to include protective equipment for frontline responders to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19.

- In Uganda, the National Society is revising activities to maintain COVID-19 restrictions imposed by the government. Changes/modifications made on the operational strategy will be communicated to partners through an operation update proposed and expected to be agreed with back donor and implemented accordingly.

Holistic response strategy for COVID-19 in Africa

The pandemic's secondary impacts and the health and socio-economic crisis they cause are likely to be serious in Africa in many contexts, particularly countries with existing humanitarian crises, new waves of floods, recurring food insecurity crisis and protracted crisis and fragile state settings. Negative impacts on health systems, food security and income generation, inability of the most vulnerable to meet their basic needs, disruption to markets, and spill-over effects from the global economic slowdown are all expected. In addition, compromises to livelihoods and access to protection pose severe threats to people's ability to cope safely and risks of exploitation, negative coping strategies and human trafficking increase, especially in fragile contexts with weak formal protection and labour structures.

In view of this, IFRC adopts holistic-response strategy to reduce mortality and morbidity from COVID-19, while protecting the safety, wellbeing and livelihoods of the most vulnerable. The response strategy focus on assisting African National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies to:

- ensure that all RCRC workers can operate safely and National Societies are organisationally adapted to efficiently meet the pandemic's new demands while maintaining quality and safety of services.
- maintain and adapt services and humanitarian response programmes wherever possible and incorporate COVID-19 prevention, mitigation and control actions into them.
- develop and implement specific COVID-19 reduction programmes for defined high-risk vulnerable populations and settings.

The IFRC's COVID-19 response in Africa has integrated food security related interventions, preparedness for effective response (PER), disaster contingency planning, community-based health, WASH, volunteer mobilization, local branch development and community engagement and accountability. Exercises will be continued further to determine other specific actions while undertaking the holistic response efforts to tackle multi-layered disasters as the local context evolves.

For further information, specifically related to this Information bulletin please contact: IFRC office for Africa Region:

- Adesh Tripathee, Head of Disaster Crisis Prevention, Response and Recovery Department, Nairobi, Kenya; email: Adesh.tripathee@ifrc.org phone +254731067489
- Khaled Masud Ahmed, Regional Operations Coordinator, Tel +254 20 283 5270, Mob +254 (0) 780 440 908, email: khaled.masud@ifrc.org
- Jennifer VIBERT Jennifer.VIBERT@ifrc.org, Roving Operations Manager
- Alina Atemnkeng, DREF Delegate Africa Region, phone +254 731067277, e-mail: alina.atemnkeng@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**.
