Investing in Africa
African solutions to Africa’s challenges
October 2012
The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world’s largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through our 187 member National Societies. Together, we act before, during and after disasters and health emergencies to meet the needs and improve the lives of vulnerable people. We do so with impartiality as to nationality, race, gender, religious beliefs, class and political opinions.

Guided by Strategy 2020 – our collective plan of action to tackle the major humanitarian and development challenges of this decade – we are committed to ‘saving lives and changing minds.’

Our strength lies in our volunteer network, our community-based expertise and our independence and neutrality. We work to improve humanitarian standards, as partners in development and in response to disasters. We persuade decision-makers to act at all times in the interests of vulnerable people. The result: we enable healthy and safe communities, reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen resilience and foster a culture of peace around the world.
Investing in Africa

African solutions to Africa’s challenges

October 2012
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The designations and maps do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities.
FOREWORD

Africa, land of opportunity

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At a time when Africa has become synonymous with growth and opportunity, leaders of the Red Cross Red Crescent in Africa meet in Addis Adaba to promote investing in the continent and its people. African National Societies are eager to look beyond the dependency model and take control of their own development.

More than ever, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies recognise the recurring and growing risks and opportunities facing Africa – particularly in the areas of food security, climate change, health, urbanisation and growing populations of youth, and highlight how investing in the capacities and actions of volunteer networks can positively contribute to addressing these development and humanitarian challenges.

But aid dependency undermines local incentives for resource mobilisation by offering easier routes to finance. It reduces the need for institutions to worry about local accountability as their financial power comes from abroad. It stifles local initiative and ownership in favour of international donor priorities. Today, we see a will to go past the donor-recipient paradigm, and it is coming from African institutions themselves. The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement embraces this change, and looks forward to an African success story, owned by National Societies through effective leadership.

Africa is one of the fastest growing economic regions in the world, driven by a range of political, social and economic reforms, and by entrepreneurship and private sector investment. This changing environment provides new opportunities for domestic and regional partnerships that will shape the future role and relevance of Red Cross Red Crescent in Africa.

In a telling example that there are domestic investment opportunities, Kenya Red Cross Society raised 10 million US dollars from local donations in 2011. African National Societies are eager to engage in partnerships with government, regional bodies, the private sector and local communities; to root financial and institutional accountability in its local context. In doing so, African National Societies will consolidate country level ownership of the international aid and development agenda. African National Societies need to have the confidence to attach conditionality to the sort of aid that will be accepted and a commitment to compliance.

Besides, non-emergency aid is another form of investment into sustaining development work at a national level. This implies a mutual responsibility:
the investee needs to provide assurance of the security of a return – that institutions will get stronger and that resources can be raised nationally. In parallel, the investor needs to focus on the long journey of building the capacities needed to achieve that return – people, management systems and technology.

Overall, African Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies offer a unique and valuable proposition to investors in humanitarian access and community reach. Across the continent, a multitude of Red Cross Red Crescent workers are hard at work in their own community. They strive every single day to serve their communities, and in doing so, strengthen their National Societies. African National Societies seek to propose locally-owned projects aimed at expanding their network of volunteers, broadening their appeal, and consolidating their attractiveness for potential investors.

And African Red Cross Red Crescent leaders see a shift in emphasis – from international aid designed for specific services to investment into the capacities to grow humanitarian and development action nationally and regionally – through investing in people, in systems, in home-grown innovations and in technology. Such investments will strengthen the national institutions and partnerships that can sustain locally owned and relevant Red Cross Red Crescent work in the years to come.

In this document, we present a collection of case studies. We focus on the examples of Burundi and the 8 National Society Initiative. Both examples underline the shift from aid dependency to a local ownership of development challenges. We also present efforts in other regions of Africa. But this document should be seen as a collaborative work in progress. We welcome innovative ideas from all National Societies that underline this shift towards a locally-owned development led by African National Societies for the benefit of all Africans.

Bekele Geleta,
IFRC Secretary General
SPOTLIGHT ON 8 NATIONAL SOCIETY AFRICA INITIATIVE

Reflecting on the project with a Côte d’Ivoire Red Cross worker

The 8 National Society Africa Initiative (8NS), a multinational project that brought together four African National Societies and four partner National Societies is in its final year. It is time to reflect on how it represents a strategic investment that can be replicated elsewhere in the Movement and particularly on the African continent. Roselyne Houssou from the Red Cross Society of Côte d’Ivoire helps us pick up the key elements that truly made 8NS stand out as a successful partnership.

1. The African National Societies were Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Mozambique. The partner National Societies were the Netherlands, Canada, United Kingdom and Norway.
There have been a number of Movement initiatives to address how to improve collaboration and how to more effectively support the building of capacities in National Societies. From the Africa Review in 1998 to the 2003 Algiers Plan of Action, the NEPARC initiative in 2004 and Federation of the Future in 2005, many good ideas and intentions have thrown new light on how to go about capacity building and organisational development. The 8NS Africa initiative is the most recent – and arguably one of the most successful – example.

The overall goal of 8NS was to build a more sustained organisational and programming capacity through long term and pervasive partnerships, working in pairs and as a collective. The initiative started at the end of 2005 and is due to end in the spring of 2013. In June 2005, building on commitments made in Algiers, the Norwegian Red Cross launched the idea. Soon, under the auspices of NEPARC, the British Red Cross, the Canadian Red Cross, the Netherlands Red Cross, as well as the National Societies of Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Mozambique and Sierra Leone were invited and later accepted to be part of the pilot project.

Aimed at sharing, reflecting and reviewing existing processes, 8NS included both senior leadership and project staff from all the National Societies involved. Moreover, each National Society picked a project staff to act as country focal point. The leadership of 8NS met once a year – with country focal points in attendance – to discuss progress so far and strategic directions. The country focal points were involved in the day-to-day follow up of the project.

**Experiencing 8NS in Côte d’Ivoire**

Each African National Society was paired with one Partner National Society. The pair were more closely working together. The Côte d’Ivoire Red Cross was associated with the Netherlands Red Cross. Roselyne Houssou, a finance and administration manager with the Red Cross Society of Côte d’Ivoire was her country’s focal point. Her vantage point allows her to draw lessons on the overall performance and shortcomings of the project.

Houssou fully endorses the conclusions of the Windsor learning workshop in May 2012, and agrees the main achievement of the project was simply to put partnership on the agenda. Besides, she confirms that the size of the group – eight National Societies – was ideal, as each pair endeavoured to match or even excel the other pairs. There was a real sense of ‘emulation between different groups’.

Over the course of the project, there have been some refinements made. For instance, initially a salaried coordinator was identified, but after a year, 8NS was streamlined and the coordination was passed on year-over-year from one African National Society to the next. Houssou justifies the choice and explains: “We each had the opportunity to lead the initiative. When we were in charge of the project, we had the opportunity to have an overall view of the plan of action. This also taught us the notion of coordination – an interesting experience per se.”

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2. The other pairs were Liberia-Canada, Sierra Leone-UK and Mozambique-Norway.
Moreover, the involvement of African National Societies in the rotating chairmanship of the initiative also helped to reinforce ownership of the project. Houssou said: “I believe we got more involved into the project. We took a step forward. We had a vantage point on the project evolution. Had we been working under a general supervisor, we would have been less involved in the strategic implications of the project.”

One of the tools developed by the 8NS initiative was the Measurable Partnership Chart. This is a tool to evaluate the relevance of partnerships. In using this tool, Houssou says she enjoyed a “frank debate on the nature of [their] partnership” with the Netherlands Red Cross. Through the use of this tool and others, 8NS has permitted the Red Cross Society of Côte d’Ivoire to enhance its institutional communication.

“8NS has genuinely allowed us to reinforce the capacities of the Red Cross Society of Côte d’Ivoire,” Houssou says. “It was a positive experience to exchange working methods with other National Societies. Sometimes, both National Societies were working on first aid trainings, or reviewing their core cost model, but they were doing it in a very different manner from one another.” In this case, 8NS would provide an interesting vantage point on how another National Society works. Internally and between Movement partners, 8NS has proven to be a good communication platform.

Houssou also underlined that both National Societies have struggled to initiate a direct dialogue between technicians among themselves. The direct dialogue between governance or administrators has been smooth, but both societies sometimes struggle to identify the respective collaborators to put in contact on specific projects.

Besides, some concerns remain in spite of the relative success enjoyed by the 8NS initiative. The very different reporting requirements from one donor to the next remains a concern. Even within the Movement reporting requirements from one funding National Society partner to the next are different. This forces the National Society to review its reporting habits on an ongoing basis, Houssou says. “It would be interesting to work on harmonising the reporting format within the Movement to consolidate the differences between National Societies.”

### Paving the way for the future

Today, the project is winding down, but the momentum will be carried by all National Societies involved. In summary, multinational cooperation between movement partners represents an opportunity for investment. This is particularly relevant as long as such a project contributes in reinforcing the core systems of National Societies.

The Côte d’Ivoire-Netherlands Red Cross collaboration over several years has created strong ties between the National Societies. A few months before the end of the project, the two societies have embarked on a three-year project on mother and child health. This new project started in September 2012 is due to last until September 2015.

Participation in 8NS has boosted the confidence of Côte d’Ivoire Red Cross. According to Houssou, they believe in their own capacities, and are convinced that sustainability can be achieved. The Red Cross Society of Côte d’Ivoire has raised its profile through 8NS and established itself as a interesting investment proposition for partners.
Finding inspiration to diversify its funding resources

The Red Cross Society of Côte d’Ivoire has been inspired by 8NS to further diversify its funding sources. Corporate partnership are already a source of funding. For the last six years the National Society has received local support in water and sanitation through a global partnership with Nestlé that includes capacity building. The next area of investment for the Red Cross Society of Côte d’Ivoire will be commercial first aid.

As a matter of fact, the society has completed a market study and found that there is indeed a market for commercial first aid in Côte d’Ivoire. It seems the potential investment is drawing interest from PNSs. The needs assessment was confirmed by a British Red Cross evaluation. The organization also registered Canadian Red Cross interest in helping out to find potential investors in the project. The Finnish Red Cross is also following the progress of the project closely.

The Red Cross Society of Côte d’Ivoire has demonstrated that active participation in a multinational partnership, where African National Societies and their partners openly debate strategic directions can truly strengthen a National Society, can help it develop its business plan.

Partner’s perspective

Interview with The Canadian Red Cross Society Programme Managers for Africa

What are the priorities when it comes to investing in Africa?

Ultimately, investment priorities in Africa should be determined by Africans themselves. In our partnerships, African National Societies have consistently said that what they want to achieve is sustained capacity to be national leaders in meeting the humanitarian and development needs of their people, and to contribute to regional, continental and global efforts to address the humanitarian needs of our times.

We support this goal wholeheartedly, but we recognise too that this is a long-term goal that may take 10 or 20 years or more to achieve – and more than a lifetime to sustain. We must define and keep our focus on that ultimate goal – and question whether our partnership with, and investment in, African National Societies moves them further towards achieving this goal or has the potential to undermine progress. We need – both the African National Societies and partners - to be accountable to and committed to that goal.

What areas precisely are we looking at?

Achieving this long-term vision can be broken down into component parts. Each National Society may need greater support in different components, but this could include investment in
leadership development, investment in core administrative and operational systems and investment in sustained capacity to deliver effective services to those most in need. All National Societies also need strong planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) and skills associated with building strong relationships with donors. The vision of a strong National Society is also underlining the Red Cross as a voluntary organization that is accountable to communities.

What would be a good example of The Canadian Red Cross Society investment?

The Canadian Red Cross has learned a tremendous amount in the 8 National Society Africa Initiative (8NS). When we look at where the 8NS African partners were in 2005 and where they are now, there has been tremendous change. One of the key changes has been that the four African National Societies that took part in the 8NS are far more confident in their capacities, and are more confident to speak to PNSs as equal and accountable partners, rather than simply donors. The Canadian Red Cross sees this confidence – and the open and frank dialogue which it has delivered – as a huge step forward. These steps towards equality in our Movement are critical components of our Fundamental Principle of universality.

Would The Canadian Red Cross Society be ready to engage in other such projects?

Of course, we are always looking for good opportunities to build long-term, meaningful relationships which will make change happen. The Canadian Red Cross and the Canadian government are developing a Strategic Partnership, which will allow for investment in the long-term capacity development of a few targeted National Society partners. The recognition by the Canadian Government that capac-
ity development may need support for the long term is really important.

**How do you see sustainability in your investment strategy?**

One of the keys to sustainability is to ensure that a National Society is of value to the people it serves; that its capacities to respond in emergencies and to deliver programs are relevant and important. A National Society with these characteristics will find it far easier to raise funds within and outside its own country.

There are many building blocks to put in place to ensure strong organizational structures. But at the centre of this strengthening process, Movement partners must be accountable to beneficiaries. Without these elements, a National Society cannot be sustainable.

**Is it about being accountable to donors?**

Accountability to donors is important, but ultimately if a National Society – and its partners – are accountable to its beneficiaries, they will be accountable to donors.

Accountability to beneficiaries also means transparency, wise use of funds, strong focus on results. These are critical for donors, our Movement and the beneficiaries themselves.

**Where does accountability lie in your investment strategy?**

Accountability is tied to our long-term strategic goal in International Operations: to meet humanitarian needs in situations of natural disaster and conflicts, and to build strong National Societies and resilient communities through delivering sustained and effective support to the actions of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

We are accountable to our partners, to communities, to the Movement as a whole – and to those who support our work and that of our partners.

**Will your involvement in Liberia continue beyond the end of 8NS?**

Our involvement in Liberia will not cease with the end of the 8NS initiative in March 2013. A new maternal, newborn and child health – MNCH – project has just started in Liberia and the West Africa Partnership Program, which also includes Sierra Leone and Mali, will continue for another 18 months.

**What lessons should we draw as a Movement?**

As a Movement we always struggle to find enough resources to meet the humanitarian and development needs of the communities we serve; our cooperation and collaboration are therefore essential.

We need to develop innovative ways to save resources and to learn from each other, benefiting from our Movement partnership with the IFRC and ICRC. Over the past few years, the Movement has changed significantly, and the opportunities for collaborating to support the development of strong African National Societies have never been greater.

These are very exciting times and by working together – by bringing together the strength of our Movement – African Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies will bring even stronger leadership to improving the lives of Africa’s people.
“Investing in Africa is investing in young people, investing in training, in building and strengthening National Societies and other associations trying to do good for the human being.”

– Dr. Hussein Suleiman Abusaleh, President, Sudanese Red Crescent
FOCUS ON THE LIBYAN RED CRESCENT

Interview with Mohamed Almisrati, Communication Coordinator for the Libyan Red Crescent

The Red Cross Red Crescent gathers in Addis this month for the Pan African Conference. They will reflect on the theme investing in Africa. What do you think this means? What should people consider when they think about investing in Africa?

They should think about youth and volunteers. Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies should invest in youth and volunteers who are their most valuable assets. They should give a voice to them, and listen to them. Young people within the movement should have the opportunity to express their opinions, to express their needs. National Societies must listen to their feedback, acknowledge their needs, train them to answer their needs. This is about training the leaders of tomorrow.

In Libya, we have developed a volunteer database. We work hard on promoting the role of volunteers within their communities. Our aim is to acknowledge the importance of the role of volunteers.

Would you like to share an experience with Red Cross Red Crescent leaders across Africa?

During the recent conflict in Libya, our action with communities was very difficult. People in the communities thought our mission was only to help the most vulnerable, and disregard others. They did not understand that our concern was to alleviate the sufferings of all in times of crisis. Our stand was further complicated with partisans and opponents of the old regime who vied for our attention.

Our volunteers spent a lot of time in their communities communicating about our principles. They spent a lot of time explaining our independence and our neutrality. Both parties in the conflict wanted to take advantage of the Red Crescent. We had to go in great details to explain our principles, and our specific role in armed conflicts. I believe we should invest in dissemination about the role of the Movement. We should also organise dissemination on the Geneva Conventions and the law of armed conflicts.

What are the strength of the Libyan Red Crescent?

Without a doubt – its network of volunteers. They are trained and contribute to alleviate the sufferings of the most vulnerable, they save lives.

Is there one thing you learned during in your work with your organization that you believe all Red Cross Red Crescent workers around the world should know and remember?

I would like to call all sister societies, and remind them that none of us is immune to disasters – be they man-made or natural. We have to invest in disaster preparedness at all levels. We have to invest in disaster response at all levels.
Do you see Youth as a key area for investment in Africa?

Yes – definitely! Youth is a key area. As a matter of fact, today, young people represent a majority of our volunteers. Interestingly, I have recently been involved in a YABC workshop that brought together volunteers from Tunisia and Libya. Fate put young Libyans and young Tunisians in very similar situations. Both Red Crescents have been mobilized in the aftermath of the Arab Spring.

4. YABC stands for youth as agents of behavioural change. It is a training concept – in line with Strategy 2020 – aimed at spreading a culture of peace and non-violence, well adapted to the Tunisian political transition context.
In these emergencies, volunteers, and especially young volunteers have had to run crash courses on the theories of humanitarian intervention. Lacking technical knowledge at first, the volunteers have had to apply their basic skills in dramatic real-life situations. In these emergencies, our young volunteers have also used their existing skills – their ability to find their way in their communities.

**Is it crucial that volunteers work in their home communities or can volunteers also intervene in other parts of the country?**

There were 24 local chapters involved in humanitarian interventions during the Arab Spring. Not all these areas were directly affected though. Some chapters did send their volunteers outside their home region to go out and support other Tunisian Red Crescent chapters. Besides, when they are not involved in emergency operations, they are deeply rooted in the community. They provide social work, first aid, support work.

**How did you manage the influx of new volunteers during the recent crisis?**

New recruits have been quickly integrated. We have tried to reinforce the Red Crescent chapters that were in the most severely hit areas of the country. We have exchanged experience with the volunteers who joined us during the crisis. We have really created a network of volunteers.

**How do you coordinate volunteers in the Tunisian Red Crescent?**

Recently – after the crisis subsided – we have started adding to our network of volunteer coordinators. Before the crisis, there was no volunteer coordinator. Today, we have a national coordinator – myself – but we also have regional coordinators throughout the country. In my capacity, I work in close cooperation with the governance of the National Society. I also work on trainings for all regional coordinators on management techniques, recruitment processes and most importantly how to motivate the volunteers.

**Is there one thing you learned in your work with the Tunisian Red Crescent that you believe all Red Crescent workers around the world should know and remember?**

The Tunisian Red Crescent has grown its profile during the Arab Spring. It now enjoys the support and the trust of the government and the people. For the future, I believe the Tunisian Red Crescent should continue to invest in training where volunteers can exchange ideas, where they can share their experience. The volunteers capitalise on their existing experience, let them use their existing skill-set, let them exchange with fellow volunteers. YABC was our most recent example of such training, and it was a success.
"I believe it’s possible to make Africa the giant it needs to be. Giant in the sense to reach out to the myriad of humanitarian problems we are faced with. Once we are strengthened, we will do so much better in making Africa a proud continent."

– Emmanuel Hindovei-Tommy, Secretary General of Sierra Leone Red Cross Society
Building solid foundations

SPOTLIGHT ON BURUNDI

320,000 reasons to invest in the Burundi Red Cross

Burundi’s investment promotion authority lists a handful of reasons to invest in the country. The reasons can be grouped under two general themes: Burundi’s geography at a crossroad between Southern, Central and East Africa, and regional integration; the country is a member of a number of regional organisations. When it comes to the Red Cross National Society, if recent history serves as a guide, there would be over 320,000 more reasons to invest in the Burundi Red Cross.
In a post-conflict country with many chronic vulnerabilities, Burundi Red Cross has developed door-to-door access to every vulnerable person in the country through its network of sustainable community volunteer units. In turn, the potential of the network has attracted further resources to help support the rest of the National Society. A key factor in this development has been strategic investment by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies’ (IFRC) Capacity Building Fund to enable National Society leadership to begin the work of increasing its service delivery capacity while becoming more sustainable at the same time. Flexible investment of this type was crucial in enabling the total transformation of the Burundi Red Cross business model.

Prior to 2007, Burundi Red Cross had a structure similar to that of the State: a national level, regional level, provincial and communal levels of representation. But there was no Red Cross present at the lower colline level. The project bridged that gap and succeeded in creating a Red Cross colline unit in virtually all of the country’s 2,900 collines, the smallest level of administrative subdivision in Burundi with an average population of 2,000 – 3,000.

A National Society rebuilt from the ground

From 1994-1996, the National Society provided humanitarian assistance to refugees from the genocide in Rwanda in the north of the country, with support from the IFRC, which alongside Participating National Societies (PNS) supported organisational development of the Burundi Red Cross, as well as humanitarian assistance to displaced people. But at the end of relief operations, in 2002, partner confidence in the National Society started to dwindle. Issues with financial transparency resulted in the loss of most staff positions, and the collapse of almost all project activities. This triggered a shift in vision and strategic thinking within the leadership of the National Society, and led to the appointment of a new secretary general.

2004 and early 2005 saw National Society governance elections take place in 122 of Burundi’s 129 communes. Governance was renewed in 16 of the 17 provinces. In 2005, the National Society held its first democratically constituted General Assembly. Movement confidence in the National Society grew, and a strategic plan for 2007-2009 was developed based on consultation with provincial governance. The secretary general’s vision was for each community and each colline to have a trained Red Cross first aider.
A house rebuilt with solid foundations

With a governance renewed through elections, and then a General Assembly, the 2007 national strategic plan earned legitimacy at all levels of the Burundi Red Cross. The idea was to develop the National Society’s community presence as the basis for delivery of sustainable services across the country irrespective of the availability of international funding. This sustainable community network would provide Burundi Red Cross with a unique position within the country, giving it an important strategic advantage over NGOs in attracting funding from government and external partners.

The IFRC Capacity Building Fund invested financial and technical support in realising this vision: not enough to carry out the entire process, but enough to demonstrate success and to attract other potential donors.

Additional funding was contributed to the process by ICRC and Norwegian Red Cross and to a lesser extent other PNSs. While not all of this funding was earmarked for organisational development, there was enough flexibility in programme funding for it to be used to develop sustainable National Society structures as well as supporting programme goals.

To start the pilot project, two provincial branches were selected. One factor in choosing them was the quality of local leadership. Another was that these were provinces in which the National Society had not been active in delivering relief services. The fear was that in areas where the National Society was associated with making payments to volunteers, it would be very difficult to persuade communities to self-organise without paying them.

Initial discussions were tough. Although the Red Cross was not well-known in these areas, there was an assumption that it was another NGO come to give things away, or to employ people to do things in the community. In challenging this perception, the project team spoke of the Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and their compatibility with ikibiri, the traditional Burundian value of mutual self-help within communities that had broken down during the periods of ethnic violence. Enough people ultimately agreed to form a Red Cross unit. There followed elections to a committee, which formed the leadership core of the unit.

Initial services were decided using the Fundamental Principle of humanity to determine the most vulnerable people in communities. The activities carried out were agricultural and based on existing skills and tools. The logic was that lots of people doing simple things once a week would lead to very visible results which, in turn, would attract further resources from within the community.

A successful model to replicate

Once the model showed success in the handful of communities in which it was tried, the challenge was to replicate it through all 2,800+ collines in the country. The National Society managed a planned process of extending the idea while at the same time, duplication took place informally as people moved between communities, saw what was happening, and persuaded their own communities to approach the National Society for support in setting up their own units.
Over the next few years, the model was replicated across the country. As of mid-2012, there are about 2,900 units and over 320,000 volunteers, of which 70,000 are youths.

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<td>77,545</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2,507</td>
<td>185,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2,850</td>
<td>300,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2,900</td>
<td>320,000 of which 70,000 are youths</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Success attracts further investment**

As Red Cross units developed within communities, they began to attract further investments. Local government in particular gave gifts of land that could be farmed to generate funds for the society. Deforested hillsides were given to units to stabilise with trees that could also be used to harvest firewood in the future.

The World Food Programme began partnering Burundi Red Cross for food distributions. They discovered that working through local units that already existed in, and were respected by, communities was more effective than working through NGOs that came into communities as outsiders.

And vulnerable people themselves invested in the Burundi Red Cross, coming together to build a number of branch offices.

**Sustainable by design**

The Burundi experience is a rich learning opportunity, a model of major organisational change in a resource-poor environment. It shows how a focus on self-led and self-resourced, community level service delivery can be a driver for organisational change that touches every aspect of a National Society’s structure and management.

Over the 4-5 years of the change process, the National Society’s business model has changed from one set up to receive and spend donor funding in project-based activities, to one whose focus is on mobilising communities to deliver sustainable community services. This service delivery capacity attracts financial support from other partners. Strategic investment by IFRC and other partners was fundamental to this change.

Globally, many Red Cross Red Crescent activities are designed as time-bound projects implemented in communities. If they are not designed for sustainability from the start (ie building on the needs, wishes and resources of communities), then
they will not be sustained once project funding ends. But the Burundi Red Cross has shown that sustainable Red Cross activities can be designed and implemented at the community level. In this way sustainability is at the core of the organisation, from the onset.

### Spanish Red Cross in Burundi

**Lasting result for food security**

The traditional way of exploiting marshes in Burundi did not achieve its full potential due to rudimentary techniques and lack of water control. The aim of Spanish Red Cross food security projects in Burundi was to reduce vulnerability through farmers’ support and capacity building in water resources management in two communities: Rugasi and Makamba, a 140-hectare swamp in Southwest of Burundi.

A similar project on 114 hectares of rice potatoes and other cultures in the commune of Cankuzo in 2010 benefited over 865 households. The culture of rice is the main cash crop for farmers.

The introduction of improved seeds, modern agricultural techniques including conservation, boosts the output. The creation of a stock house for surplus and the acquisition of a rice-peeling machine generates significant income for the community.

Burundi Red Cross supports the project though its unités colinaires in both marshes. The provincial committees of Cankuzo and Makamba are actively and closely following the project. A Steering Committee manages the irrigation water and infrastructure. Burundi Red Cross trains volunteers on water management and infrastructure management.

Burundi Red Cross plays an important role in the following key activities:

- Enhanced use of the water resources;
- Train and advise farmers in both communes;
- Follow activities of the Marsh and management of equipment (Hangar, husking, and other materials);
- Mobilize volunteers from unités colinaires near the marshes;
- Support farmers in agricultural inputs (seeds, fertilizers, plant protection products) and crop management (implementation of the storage shed);
- Support agricultural products processing techniques;
- Staff a technical team (technicians, agronomists, agricultural leaders, coordinators of activities) for monitoring of agricultural activities and transmission modern farming techniques.

Spanish Red Cross supports the Burundi Red Cross by building offices for the provincial branch in Cankuzo. This allows the branch to better coordinate its unités colinaires and volunteers. This, alongside the construction of strategic storage, allows the Red Cross to enhance its humanitarian actions. The training of trainers in unités colinaires supports community development in Cankuzo province. Finally, the project improves Burundi Red Cross visibility in this region.
FOCUS ON THE ETHIOPIAN RED CROSS

Interview with Mrs Frehiwot Worku, the Secretary General of the Ethiopian Red Cross

How do you understand the theme investing in Africa?
Investing in Africa has to be an all-encompassing idea. Africa has so many needs; it should be a holistic approach not only limited to humanitarian action and development.

It should address the root causes of African needs.

How does it apply to your National Society?
As a matter of fact, we are currently engaged in a thorough review of all our processes at the Ethiopian Red Cross Society. To go about such a change, you need to find competent people and invest in the development of their capacities on the one hand, but you also have to develop existing capacities.

How do you go about changing a National Society?
You need a vision. You need to identify and mobilize the right competencies, and you need the right kind of leadership to implement it. You have to prepare the ground, mobilize resources and communicate on the changes you plan on implementing. Besides, you have to set yourself a very clear plan of action to achieve your results. Finally, you have to persist in following the plan of action you designed.

What are your priorities in terms of investment?
My priority area in terms of investment is educating the community about our programmes. Our role is to raise the awareness of the community on our humanitarian actions. If we don’t educate people, whatever we mobilize will not be sustainable.

But more generally, we need to invest in development and capacity building. We have to invest in human resources and core systems and structures.

Could your experience help other African National Societies who plan on reviewing their own processes?
I believe in sharing experiences. I would be happy to discuss with other African National Societies and exchange ideas. Let’s share experiences and exchange on our visions. Such an exchange would benefit us as much as anyone who is willing to engage with us.
What is investing in Africa?

Investing in Africa means investing in the future of Africa. The future of Africa is its young people. If we fail to invest in the young people, we are already planning to fail in all our endeavours. Investing in Africa is building the leadership capacity of the young people.

We need to invest in young people so that they are fully prepared and well-equipped. The goal is to build the capacity of the volunteers so that they can be well-prepared in case of emergencies. We are talking as Red Cross Red Crescent people. If we invest in the young generation, then we are investing in ourselves. The community will be building their own resilience through the young people. Investing in inter-generational dialogue so that older and younger generations can come together and share ideas.

How does it apply to the Youth Commission?

The work of the youth commission consists in pushing the agenda of the youth platform. The IFRC youth commission is approaching National Societies in Africa who don’t have yet a youth platform to invite the youth to really take part in governance. We are trying to say that youth also have a place in the humanitarian world. Investing in Africa means investing in key priority areas within the African context.

What are the goals we seek to achieve as a movement?

Ideally young people should be invited to sit in the senior boards of National Societies as is the case in a few African National Societies. Because young people can inject new ideas.

What does it take?

Mobilizing the youth doesn’t take money, all it takes is to offer a space where the youth can contribute in their own way. We need the National Societies to invest more in their young talents, in their young leadership, to build their capacity and prepare them for the future.

5. In Africa region, there are two youth commissioners. Geoffrey Korir is one of them. Geoffrey Korir is a member of IFRC Youth Commission, and the National Youth chair of Kenya Red Cross Society.
Interview with Sylvie Montembault, ECHO’s Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Coordinator

What does it mean for you investing in Africa?
When I first heard of the theme of the Pan African Conference, ‘Investing in Africa’, I thought we were speaking about business investments. When you think about investments, you don’t necessarily think about National Societies, but the theme is surprisingly relevant. Investing – this is the work we do reinforcing capacities of National Societies. This is about giving a chance to the population of Africa to develop themselves. This is about giving them means of subsistence in respect of their human dignity. This is about promoting communities. This is about tooling communities in terms of exchanges. This is about transferring skills.

Can you name good examples of investment in African National Societies?
There are many examples – although ECHO channels its support through the IFRC. One of the biggest assets of the Movement is that it is sustainable by design, deeply rooted in the communities. In places faced with structural under-development, ECHO aims to invest in established national organisations or Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies. The majority of ECHO’s capacity building investments in Africa have taken place in the Horn of Africa in the framework of disaster and drought preparedness. We have programmes in Kenya and Uganda right now. We see that they
can quickly mobilise their network of volunteers. This surge capacity is crucial to our support. In these specific programmes we are investing to give these volunteers the tools they need to respond to nutrition-related emergencies.

**What is the key element in your decision to invest?**

A wide-ranging network of volunteers is a key factor. The volunteer development policy is also instituted by the Kenyan Ministry of Health. The mobilisation in parallel of a strong network of volunteers by the Kenya Red Cross Society is an asset. In order to develop and grow a network of volunteers, the certification of training allows it to build on the long-term. Especially since in a region like the Horn of Africa – with structural risks involved – a humanitarian response can only be relevant in the long-term.

**Is good leadership crucial to attracting investment?**

Yes. We do monitor and evaluate the projects supported by ECHO. We evaluate the capacities of the partners, this is not limited to their leadership. We realized that volunteers lacked technical expertise in order to be credible in the eyes of the community. On a sensitive subject such as early warning systems or the risk of droughts, a young volunteer might not earn enough credibility to sensitize a community. But we also understand that young age can be compensated. This is why we decided to further invest in reinforcing credibility and legitimacy of volunteers. And this is done through capacity building.

**How do you measure the sustainability potential of proposed projects?**

In short, we look at the process. Sustainability is very hard to evaluate. When you include national systems, local actors, knowledge transfer – a central element of disaster risk reduction – then your project is aiming towards sustainability. But the clearest indicator of sustainability is local political ownership. When local politics and local investors get involved in the project, you have a clear indicator that it is driven towards sustainability.

**Can investment at community level be replicated?**

Investments at community-level is at the heart of all investment. The logic in our drought preparedness efforts in the Horn of Africa is community sensitzation. We finance pilot projects at the community level. Communities are a test bed for new ideas. Documenting successes and failures at this level helps us influence develop-ment policies at home. ECHO has invested 90 million euro since 2006 in drought risk reduction. The current investment phase runs until 2013. We are about to begin evaluating the progress made over the past six years. We will include a reflexion on community resilience in humanitarian context in our monitoring.

**Is this pilot project approach aimed at curtailing risks?**

No. It is more in response to a need. Investment is targeted strategically. We steer clear of quick onset emergencies towards community preparedness so that communities views can be taken into account in our development policies. We tend to invest more in preparation - in prevention - rather than in response. I believe it is more cost-effective, but this remains to be verified.
FOCUS ON THE RWANDA RED CROSS

Model villages for sustainable development

In Rwanda, the National Society developed a project called model villages as a way to look at a community-based risk reduction approach. The project known as ‘Agazozi ndatwa’ is aimed at preparing model villages for self-reliance, and creating impact in the communities. It has been running since 2008.

In a context where challenges can be daunting and basic amenities are a luxury to many, the Rwandan Red Cross model villages combine integrated volunteer development with sustainable project design. The ultimate goal is to overcome donor dependency and go beyond heavyweight projects in favour of smaller scale community-level operations.

The secretary general of the Rwanda Red Cross, Apollinaire Karamaga has says: “We have been known for disaster management interventions. But the question is what do we do in the absence of these disasters. We will not wait for disasters to strike for us to work; eradicating poverty – which is the root cause of some of these disasters – is our new motivation.”

The model villages project took off following an IFRC community-based health and first aid (CBHFA) and evaluation workshop. Rwanda Red Cross identified the 270 most vulnerable cells – the smallest administrative subdivision – in the country. In each cell, two villages were identified for a total of 540 model villages throughout the country. All 30 districts of the country were covered by this project – about 15 per cent of the territory is covered as the villages are located in 270 of the country’s 2,148 cells.

Secretary General Karamaga underlines local solutions often already exist for local problems: “From experience, most of the challenges don’t require a lot of funds to be addressed. Most of the issues like sanitation, hygiene and nutrition only require sensitization. The communities themselves have the ability to provide solutions. We help people help themselves; we don’t construct latrines but we show them that it is within their capacity to do that. Kitchen gardens are very easy to plan, but we provide seeds where they are needed.”

Liberata Uwimana, 37, bears witness to the success of the model villages. A mother of two, she used to struggle. She joined a model villages cooperative two years ago. She can now afford decent housing, and is able to provide her family with a balanced diet. She says: “Thanks to the Rwandan Red Cross, I can now provide for my family. Working in a cooperative and receiving support from the Red Cross has helped me to improve my social welfare. I now have hope for a better future.”
Red Cross volunteers from the community have also managed a hygiene and sanitation campaign promoting proper feeding habits. Jean Baptiste Ndahiriwe, 30, observes that the lives of Mbeho residents have changed and this has improved sanitation. Residents can now drink milk and use the animal droppings as manure on their farms. As a cooperative, they are expecting a harvest of over three tons of cassava from part of their 30 hectare piece of farmland. “This is a significant example of how our lives are improving,” says Joseph Iyakaremye, the coordinator of Indatirwabahizi Cooperative.

Jerome Rutaburingoga, the Executive Secretary of Kansi sector says that partnership with the Rwandan Red Cross is contributing towards a poverty-free society. “It is clear that hope for a better future has been restored. Residents now look to the future with more optimism because they have been able to take charge of their lives by being empowered economically,” Rutaburingoga says.

**The community-based approach – an attractive investment**

Small-scale community level projects do not necessarily require heavy investment. They can be setup through limited training. They contribute to producing visible and immediate results that can be credited to the National Society. They are replicable, and can be imitated and transported from one community to the next. Rwanda’s model villages are in essence an inexpensive and attractive proposition for potential investors.

Capitalising on the success of the model villages approach, the Rwandan Red Cross will continue to work on strengthening community resilience and disaster risk reduction activities in its Strategic Plan 2012-2016. In the long run, Rwandan Red Cross wants to be a catalyst in community development, based on its decentralised structures and its national network of active volunteers. It intends to make its modest contribution in solving the challenges facing the community.
FRENCH RED CROSS – INVESTING IN PARTNERSHIPS

Interview with Antoine Peigney, Director of International Relations and Operations, French Red Cross

What does ‘Investing in Africa’ mean for the French Red Cross?

Investing in Africa means a commitment to partnership and increasing the capacity of governments and communities. It is all about reinforcing African National Societies’ and public authorities’ capacities so these actors, with their joint actions – one being auxiliary to the other – can improve the services they give to communities.

Could you give us an example of an investment that has generated long-term impact?

There is a very good example in the health sector. In the 90s, we invested a lot in training of African health workers so they could deliver antiretroviral (ARV) treatments to HIV positive people. This strong technical engagement from the French Red Cross has enhanced National Societies partnership with the Ministry of Health to improve health care in the zone where they may not have the necessary medical structure, and also to improve the paramedic training.

This was done over a period of 15 years, and the results show that today access to ARVs is much wider in Africa, which was not the case when we started the work in the 90s. Back then drugs were typically available in the North, and the prevention was the strategy in the South.

We have shown that it was possible, by investing in health workers from Africa – and this before the creation of the Global Fund for AIDS tuberculosis and malaria – that Africa could take care of health priorities by itself.

In 2012, the French Red Cross has trained over 4,300 Red Cross staff or volunteers in Africa.

What are the lessons learned through your partnerships with African National Societies?

It is necessary to have a dialogue between the public authorities and the National Societies in order to create sustainable actions. We can’t just have bilateral partnership between National Societies and their Red Cross Red Crescent partners, we also need to know what is our added value for the state.

Today, we are very cautious to ensure that this link has been established before we engage in a partnership. We try to understand how the National Society talks to its public authorities to see what activities we should develop.
A good example of this is on food security. Since 2005, in West Africa, we have been working on finding the appropriate response to the ongoing food crisis. Now we know that it is not only about food distribution, but that issue must be addressed first, which means that we are talking about development, training of health workers and training of mothers in the communities to improve their knowledge of malnutrition symptoms and related actions. For all this to happen, the National Societies need to have a constant dialogue with the local public authorities so they can find their right way of supporting, and being the voice of, the most vulnerable.

**EQUAL PARTNERS AT EVERY LEVEL – A NEW APPROACH FOR SWEDISH RED CROSS IN AFRICA**

**Interview** with Andrei Engstrand
Neacsu, Head of Desk, Africa zone, Swedish Red Cross

**What does ‘Investing in Africa’ mean for the Swedish Red Cross?**

It means that given the auxiliary status with public authorities, National Societies must have the capacity and skills to operate effectively to fulfill that role. It means that as a donor, or the conduit for Swedish donors, we must ensure that we look beyond a traditional project approach to a deeper engagement that spans levels of operation, structure and governance. Traditionally, a PNS representative in country have been project managers, and so when National Societies raised strategic issues it was sometimes difficult to take them forward. This is why we aim to work beyond the project level and more closely with our Partner National Societies at all levels.

**Could you give us one example of an investment that has generated a long-term impact?**

The West Africa Disaster Management Capacity Building Project involving Swedish Red Cross, Myndigheten för Skydd och Beredskap (MSB) or the Swedish Civil Continencies Agency and IFRC has demonstrated that real value can be created, sustained and ultimately rewarded.

In Sierra Leone and Liberia the project has been a four-year process of strengthening contingency plans between the National Societies and their respective authorities in preparation for emergencies. For example, the Liberian Red Cross put into practice greater cooperation mechanisms with their authorities in responding to the Ivorian refugee emergency. The result? Recognition by the Liberian authorities of a new un-
derstanding of the National Society’s added value and a 100,000 US dollar donation to support its ongoing disaster response work. A great return on investment by any measure.

**What are the lessons learned through your partnership with African National Societies?**

Firstly, we have learned that partnerships need to be equal, meaning both partners being open in identifying the weaknesses that may hamper progress at all levels – not only in operations departments, but in governance, finance, communication, IT and human resources. As a result we need to look beyond operations in the field to create strong National Societies.

Secondly, we need to send a strong signal that we want to be shoulder-to-shoulder with our Partner National Societies for the long-term – beyond funding and planning cycles. Our aim next year is to move to MoUs that extend from seven to ten years.

Thirdly, strengthening the capacities of the branches in a Partner National Society cannot be underestimated. In the past, cooperation was often based at headquarters level, and the related dialogue and training has not always reached branches. We have seen the benefits of our new focus at all levels including branches, particularly in Liberia through the smooth and efficient cooperation demonstrated during the Ivorian refugee crisis.

Our Framework for Cooperation with Partner National Societies incorporates all of these lessons and, a year into its implementation, we believe that they were lessons well worth learning.

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**Spanish and Tanzania Red Cross Societies**

A partnership that has focused on long term, sustainable model

The Spanish Red Cross (SRC) and the Tanzania Red Cross Society (TRCS) have been working together since 2004 supporting both the local communities and the refugee population in the Kigoma Region with a view of creating a continuum in terms of health service supplies.

Supported by SRC, the Tanzania Red Cross Society (TRCS) has developed health, logistics and finance management compatibilities and capacities while ensuring constant monitoring and evaluation of the programmes. This consistent approach has generated successful projects combining a wide-range of activities and services: maternal and child care, community therapeutic care, water and sanitation, distribution of food and nutrition, repatriation, health prevention (focused on good hygiene habits and awareness raising on HIV-Aids), emergency response and training. The programme also fostered social mobilisation activities with host communities.

Keeping a high degree of coordination and mutual support have strengthened local capacities on needs assessments to adequately meet local communities needs and management requirements. Furthermore, it has increased the possibility for long-term sustainable activities in order to improve the lives of the most vulnerable people in their communities.
“We want to end this in-out approach. We need to think about rebuilding communities – otherwise the same thing happens every year.”

– Ahmed M. Hassan, President, Somalia Red Crescent Society
At a time when most nations in Africa are still developing, most National Societies in Africa are not able to pay their core costs. Most African National Societies depend on donorship coming from outside Africa. When we gathered in Johannesburg for the 7th Pan African Conference, we discussed believing in Africa. This time in Addis, we debate on investing in Africa. I believe in investing in Africa. I believe we can work together to build sustainable African National Societies and make them more relevant for the 21st century.

First of all, African National Societies should be self-sustaining. They should be able to cover their core costs. They should be able to cover their recurring expenses in order to better serve the beneficiaries. To reach this goal, we have to consider what it takes to invest in National Societies in a sustainable manner.

We need to change our mode of operation, we must change the way we have been working. We are looking after the humanitarian needs of our people, but we should also look in terms of development to create our own resources into the future. African National Societies must be sustainable. They must be able to generate their own income. They must be able to get their own resources.

Let’s think of how African National Societies engage with donors – both within the Movement, and within the international community of donors outside the Movement. When we think about investing in Africa, we must consider the resources that are already in Africa. Where are these resources, and what do we require them for? Let’s remember we also have resources that can come from the corporate sector in our own country, as well as from our own government.

Investing in Africa is also investing in human resources. The resources are within ourselves. There are men and women of goodwill who would like to put their resources for the benefit of the community. When we consider investing in our leadership, we should invest in people who are capable of taking on leadership positions – both in management and governance. What we need is credible leadership and good governance. Credible leaders are able to generate ideas on getting resources and utilising those resources for the benefit of beneficiaries.

But at the end of the day, we should remember our resources, our investments must reach the beneficiaries. Investors will look away if they believe the resources do not reach the beneficiaries. This is why we must spread a culture of accountability and transparency. We want to cultivate this culture within African National Societies leadership. This will ease the flow of investment into our National Societies.

In conclusion, we should invest in three key areas: good leadership, good governance, self-sustainability. Good governance and good leadership should help build self-sustaining National Societies. So that one day, we will move on from being the receiving end of investment to becoming also providers.

We need to call upon all Red Cross Red Crescent players in the field to review our own processes, and consider changing our mode of operation so that we can invest in Africa, and African nations. This will make National Societies relevant to the needs of the 21st century.

Governor Paul Birech
Kenya Red Cross Society President
IFRC Vice-President
Chairman of the PAC Steering Committee
The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

**Humanity** The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

**Impartiality** It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

**Neutrality** In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

**Independence** The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

**Voluntary service** It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

**Unity** There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

**Universality** The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.
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