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Information bulletin

Africa: Floods and multiple disasters

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 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

This bulletin is 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 Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREFs) or Emergency Appeals (EAs) launched, and others may require additional support in the future.

The situation

Within a month (August to September) 2020, more than 1.21 million people in 12 different countries have been affected by floods across Africa and many other countries are currently experiencing more widespread rainfall than usual in the long rain season leading to transboundary flooding in several areas. Countries most affected by floods during the last five weeks are; Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, Kenya, Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria, Chad and Mali. More countries are in trajectories of being affected by floods during the monsoon season which will continue till November. A brief overview of the situation is given below:

In Sudan, 17 of the country's 18 states have been affected, with North Darfur, Sennar, West Ordofan, and Kassala being the worst affected. More than 0.5 million people have been affected and 99 people have lost their lives and over 100,000 houses have been damaged. Thirty-four (34) schools and 2,671 health facilities have also been damaged. It has also been stated that the magnitude of rain and floods this year exceeds the 1988 and 1946 floods. The affected families are seeking shelter with relatives and host communities. Following a meeting with the Council of Ministers, the Security and Defence Council in Sudan has declared a state of emergency for three months in the whole country and formation of a higher committee to mitigate the effects of the floods



Figure 1: The Sudanese Red Crescent's volunteers in frontline floods assessments and response activities



Figure 2: South Sudan Red Cross's team are carrying out emergency response activities in floods affected areas.

In South Sudan, over 600,000 people were displaced by floods according to the United Nations (UN). Flooding along the White Nile has affected four counties in six states since July 2020. Heavy rains have caused rivers to overflow their dykes and banks, flooding in vast areas and settlements along the White Nile in the center of the country, with the states of Jonglei and Lakes being the worst affected. According to a Rapid Needs Assessment, priorities include water, purification tablets, plastic sheeting for temporary shelter, mosquito nets, fishing kits, and medicines for Malaria, Diarrhea and other waterborne diseases

In Kenya, rains led to the displacement of over 100,000 people and 194 people lost their lives. In Ethiopia, rains affected over 200,000 people and caused 8 deaths. Flooding in Uganda saw 5,000 people

displaced and 6 deaths with 3,800 people on the Lake Islands in Mayuga District evacuated due to an increased water level in Lake Victoria.

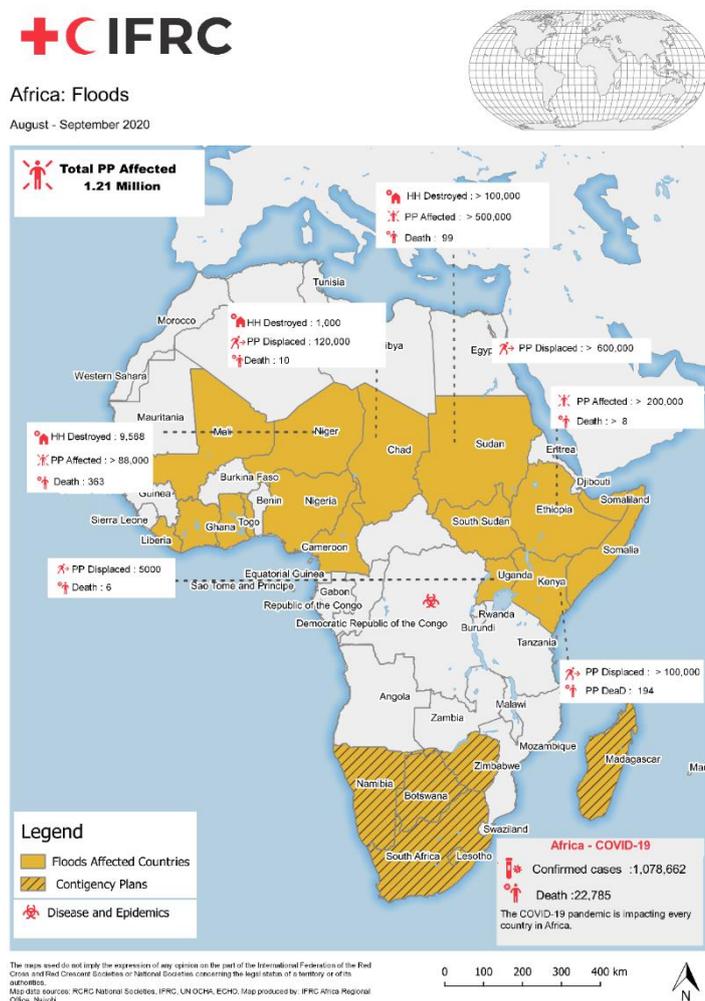
According to the Niger Red Cross Society and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), in Niger, more than 88,000 people have been affected by floods in 8 regions of Niger – Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Niamey, Tahoua, Tillaberi and Zinder – with 33 deaths and 9,568 houses collapsed. Many people have been displaced and had to seek refuge in schools and host families.

In Chad, almost 120,000 people have been displaced by floods during the August 2020 rains. According to a report by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), at least 32,000 of those displaced were in N'Djamena, where 10 people lost their lives. Previously, 1,000 homes on the Maingama Site were damaged, forcing 430 households to flee their destroyed homes.

In West Coast, Togo, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, and Ghana have also experienced flooding throughout August-September 2020.

The multi-layered disasters and climate crises in Africa

Africa is not only being affected by floods but also multi-layered disasters and crises, these include COVID-19, Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak (EVD) in DRC, food insecurity, civil unrest, disease outbreaks, population movement, and climate-induced disasters such as flooding, strong winds, tropical cyclones, and storms. Further, the scale and scope of disaster risks, underlying vulnerabilities, and complex socio-political and economic factors are unparalleled. Climate change and environmental degradation are exacerbating risks many times over. Between 2019 and 2020, Africa has been in the media and world news because of months of relentless rains that have submerged villages and farms, bringing to reality the common phrase 'A continent of too much water and too little water.' While some countries in Africa are experiencing drought and famine, other countries are facing devastating floods from months of relentless rains. In 2019, the most devastating floods were seen in Mozambique after Tropical Cyclone Idai and Kenneth left hundreds of thousands of people displaced and thousands of crop acreage destroyed. Other countries that were affected by severe flooding in 2019 included Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Ivory Coast, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Tanzania, and Sudan. For more information on the impacts of these 2019 floods, please refer to link [here](#).



Extreme weather events in Eastern Africa were attributed to the positive Indian Ocean dipole – a climate system defined by the difference in sea surface temperatures between Western and Eastern areas of the ocean. Warmer Indian Ocean waters marked by a positive dipole of 2 degrees Celsius in Eastern Africa resulted in higher evaporation and moist air flowing inwards over the continent as rain

The seasonal outlook and risk watch

During September to December, weak La Niña conditions are expected to occur in some regions of Africa and bring wet conditions in parts of Eastern Africa and Southern Africa. From the Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF), the seasonal forecast indicates a high possibility of depressed rains for large parts of Eastern Africa, especially in Tanzania, Burundi, eastern parts of Kenya, southern and central Somalia, and southeastern Ethiopia. These areas are likely to experience a late start to the rainy season. An early start of the rainy season is forecasted in southern Uganda, Rwanda and western Kenya. Even with potentially low rainfall totals, localized flooding may be experienced in some countries. The combination of below-average rains and a late start to the rainfall season is likely to have adverse effects on the food security situation in Eastern Africa. The situation will be further compounded by the ongoing impacts of flooding, locusts, and COVID-19 in the region. The seasonal forecast information from Southern Africa region indicates higher than normal conditions, with Namibia, South Africa, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Madagascar, and Mozambique expected to receive higher rainfall totals. IFRC analysis indicates that countries that are most at risk of weak La Niña conditions include Somalia, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Madagascar, and Zimbabwe.

Africa's weather is affected by seasonal movement of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone and monsoonal patterns. Central and Eastern Africa regions have two major rainfall seasons, namely March to May (long rain season) and October to December (short rain season). Southern Africa region has two main seasons, namely wet season (September to March) and dry season (April to August). West Africa and Sahel regions' main rainfall season is between May and August.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Actions

To date, the IFRC is supporting 10 different African National Red Cross/ Red Crescent Societies with active flood response operations by mobilizing its' Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and Emergency Appeal (EA) mechanism. Please refer to the table below for an overview of active DREF and EAs regarding floods response in Africa.

Country name	Type of Operation	Ops links	Funded (CHF) as of 4th Sept 2020	Amount-requested (CHF)	# of beneficiaries	Remarks
Sudan	DREF	MDRSD028	476,272.00	476,272.00	17,500	The process has been started to upgrade DREF into Emergency Appeal due to worsening situation
South Sudan	Appeal	MDRSS009	664,482.48	2,350,000.00	97,308	The Appeal is being revised upward due to deteriorating situation
Kenya	Appeal	MDRKE045	1,549,235.90	5,000,000.00	300,000	Fundraising efforts are ongoing. Encouraged to take holistic response approach.
Somalia	DREF	MDRSO009	328,070.00	328,070.00	9,000	
Tanzania	DREF	MDRTZ027	280,512.00	280,512.00	5,500	
Rwanda	DREF	MDRRW019	499,768.00	499,768.00	11,690	
Malawi	Appeal	MDRMW014	395,414.00	3,300,000.00	69,713	
Central African Republic	Appeal	MDRCF025	1,149,901.61	3,000,000.00	44,918	Fundraising efforts are ongoing
Côte d'Ivoire	DREF	MDRCI012	311,996.00	311,996.00	6,000	
Niger	DREF	MDRNE024	264,300.00	264,300.00	7,000	Recently launched DREF
Total			5,919,951.99	15,810,918.00	568,629	
During January 2019 to August 2020, the IFRC supported a total of 29 response operations related to floods across Africa.						

In view of the worsening situation, the floods response preparedness and response efforts have been scaled up in Africa. For instance, Sudan is upgrading DREF operations into an Emergency Appeal and South Sudan is revising existing Appeal upwards. Similarly, other affected countries are mobilizing local resources, staff, volunteers and are initiating DREF operations. The National RC/RC Societies are working closely with in-country partners, national and local governmental and non-governmental agencies for humanitarian response efforts. Multi-hazard response approach has also been promoted to create synergies, leverage resources and avoided duplications. The RC/RC Movement's Africa Disaster Management Advisory Group (ADMAG) is proactively promoting multi-hazard response approach strategically. The RC/RC readiness to response efforts are also linked with ongoing DRR and Climate actions in 41 African National Societies. The National RC/RC Societies are working closely with in-country partners, national and local governmental and non-governmental agencies for humanitarian response efforts together.

The following are key highlights of ongoing readiness and response efforts of RC/RC National Societies in Africa:

- **Sudan:** DREF operation ([MDRSD028](#)) ongoing with CHF 476,272 to enable the National Society to respond to the needs of 17,500 people with a focus on shelter, health and WASH. The Emergency Appeal is being launched. The IFRC regional leadership and Operational teams are closely working with Sudanese Red Crescent Society and other RC/RC movement partners to augment the response operation. The rapid response personnel are being deployed to support the National Society
- **South Sudan:** The current appeal ([MDRSS009](#)) is being revised to include a new area affected by flooding and to support the additional people affected. The revised EA operation will support early recovery of 40,000 people already covered and 77,730 people who have been affected by recent flooding till June 2021.
- **Kenya:** Floods EA ([MDRKE045](#)) has been revised to increase funding requirement to CHF 5 million following new waves of flooding. The focus of the operation is on shelter, health, WASH, livelihoods, and basic needs. The fundraising efforts and operation implementation will continue simultaneously.
- **Niger:** Floods DREF Operation ([MDRCI012](#)) launched on 26 August 2020 to assist 1,000 households or 7,000 people affected by the floods in the regions of Dosso, Maradi and Tahoua through the provision of shelter, household items, livelihood and basic needs support and WASH. The IFRC Country Office team in Niger is providing support to Red Cross Society of Niger in implementing response operation in close coordination with RC/RC Movement partners and other key stakeholders.
- **Côte d'Ivoire:** DREF operation ([MDRCI012](#)) was launched to assist floods affected 6,000 people in 2 regions with shelter, household items, livelihoods and basic needs, health and care, and WASH interventions.
- **Chad:** Red Cross of Chad is in the process of submitting a DREF request to respond to current floods. The National Society is in the field carrying out an assessment with UN OCHA on the flooding situation in Douala.
- **Uganda:** IFRC continues to support Uganda Red Cross Society through ongoing operations focused on disaster preparedness and response, epidemic preparedness, and response through capacity building, pre-positioning of relief items, development of multi-hazard plans at district level and coordination.
- **Madagascar:** Preparedness activities are included in community-based mobilisation in flood-prone areas. The National Society has reviewed its Contingency Plan for Cyclones and other associated disasters. In collaboration with French Red Cross / PIROI - Plateforme d'intervention régionale de l'océan Indien, the emergency relief items warehouse is prepositioned in the capital; however, other stocks are set up at the branch level.

- **Nigeria:** Flood Preparedness activities funded by the British Red Cross are being initiated in September focusing on developing flood Contingency Plans, developing Preparedness for Effective Response, developing additional standby agreements for non-food items and Financial Service Providers, reviewing floods needs assessment tools and processes to strengthen National Society preparedness.
- **Botswana:** The IFRC delegate based in Botswana will support the National Society with the development of its Contingency Plan in preparation for the rainy season.
- **Lesotho:** The IFRC Pretoria Country Cluster Support Team (CCST) office will support the National Society to develop its Contingency Plan and carry out refresher training for its National Disaster Response Team (NDRT).
- **Namibia:** The Pretoria CSST office will support the National Society to develop its Contingency Plan and carry out refresher training for its National Disaster Response Team (NDRT). The IFRC relief stock in the National Society warehouse was used for the fire incident last month. Replenishment through the DREF is underway.
- **South Africa:** The National Society has drafted its Contingency Plan, and the CCST will prioritise its support to finalise it. The IFRC has a delegate based in South Africa supporting the COVID-19 Operation, who could be used as a resource for preparedness interventions.
- **Zimbabwe:** The National Society has a Contingency Plan, and the CSST will support its review and refresher trainings for its response teams.
- **Preparedness for Effective Response:** Thirteen African National Societies (ANS) are engaged in strengthening their response capacities using the Preparedness for Effective Response (PER) approach. They include Burundi, CAR, DRC, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Guinea, Mali, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. The ongoing PER efforts will be very useful for flood response.
- **Forecast-based Financing (FbF)/Forecast-based Action (FbA):** Twelve African National Societies are engaging in the FbF mechanism focusing on floods. The mechanism supports readiness and early action activities geared towards reducing flood impacts in these countries. So far two countries have their Early Action Protocol (EAP) approved, providing access to funding amounting to CHF 250,000. FbF/FbA readiness will increase response capabilities significantly.
- **Early Warning Early Actions:** Malawi and Tanzania Red Cross have been supported by the IFRC together with World Meteorological Organisation to implement the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) project to support disaster-prone communities to build their resilience to climate-related disasters using climate information products and services.
- **IFRC Africa Regional Office:** The Regional Director is providing strategic directions and leadership for augmenting IFRC's preparedness and response efforts. The Africa Disaster and Climate Crisis Prevention Response and Recovery (DCPRR) Team and other respective operational support teams are in high alert. They are closely monitoring the floods risks (risk watch), response mobilization strategic, internal and external coordination. Africa DCPRR team is organising floods focus meeting on 7 September 2020 and working closely with Geneva Operations team. Subsequently, Africa Operations Coordination meeting being will be held on 11 September 2020. The ongoing response operations including COVID-19 related interventions will also be harmonized as per the evolving floods. In addition, pre-disaster planning and readiness meeting will be held with IFRC Regional Leadership team and with other key stakeholders.
- [Africa Surge Desk](#) is ready for coordinating any potential deployments. Africa Sure roaster has more than 500 registered members from African RC/RC National Societies for potential deployments. However, the deployments should also be adapted as per the new situation due to COVID-19.
- The DRR/CCA focal person and Operations team are monitoring the weather forecast weekly and this information is disseminated to respective National Societies.

- The Africa Regional Operational Logistics, Procurement and Supply Chain team is also supporting readiness to respond measures by prepositioning of humanitarian response start-up items in various strategic locations in Africa. These items include community oral rehydration points kits for cholera (58 kits), emergency shelter support items (775 kits), tarpaulins (1550 pics), households' items (13,200 kits) and Safe and Dignified Burial (SDB) kits. The preposition of such items has been done in close collaboration with the partner National Societies. In addition, the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are prepositioned given the COVID-19 situation. The regional IFRC's Logistics, Procurement and supply chain system is well linked with the global system.

Coordination:

- IFRC Africa Regional Office and Geneva Secretariat teams are closely working to ensure readiness and effective response. An Operation coordination call was held on 4 September 2020. A Joint Task Force (JTF) will also be organized in the near future. The Africa Regional Head of DCPRR Unit is ensuring coordination and collaboration with ADMAG members and other key stakeholders. The ADMAG members are continuing exercises on multi-hazard response approach and will also discuss the flood preparedness and response efforts in the upcoming monthly ADMAG's meeting which will be held on 24 September 2020. The IFRC DCPRR Unit is also in close contact with ICRC's regional team.
- Africa DCPRR team is closely coordinating with Africa Regional Humanitarian Partnerships Team (RHPT), UN agencies and regional governmental bodies regarding humanitarian response coordination efforts.
- Sahel RCRC National Societies have worked with and continue to work closely with Civil Protection and National Agency for Disaster Management in term of preparedness, response, and coordination during disasters.
- In Indian Ocean Islands (IOI) countries the RC/RC National Societies have organised coordination meetings among government structures, humanitarian actors, and the communities.
- West Coast RCRC National Societies work closely with the National Disaster Management Agency with regards to preparing for and responding to floods disasters. In addition, they coordinate with other humanitarian actors to minimize duplication of efforts and ensure strong coordination.

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How we work

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

maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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**.
