

AFRICA **RED READY**



**Effective Humanitarian
Response delivered by Local
Actors – National Red Cross
and Red Crescent Societies
and their branches.**

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AFRICA
RED READY





CONTEXT

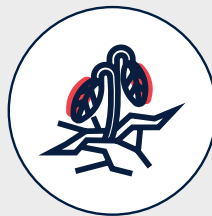
Africa humanitarian overview

Every year Africa is impacted by numerous disasters. Since the year 2000, 1143 events (approx. 57 a year) have been recorded, affecting an estimated 337 million people on the continent¹. Over the past 20 years, the share of global events, deaths, and people affected in Africa has risen. This trend will likely continue as Africa's population is projected to double in the coming 30 years, and the frequency and impact of climate extremes will continue to intensify².

The Challenge



Floods: were responsible for 64% of the disaster events in Africa.



Droughts: In terms of people affected, droughts make up by far the largest share of disasters in Africa (approx. 270 million people affected).



Migration: Africa also hosts over one-third of the global forcefully displaced persons, with armed conflict, communal violence and extremism causing millions of people to leave their homes.



Infectious disease: Africa region carries the heaviest burden globally with high rates of ebola, cholera, measles and yellow fever among others. The disease burden not only affects people's physical health as witnessed by the COVID-19 pandemic, it also leads to economic upheaval and disruption to livelihoods due to border closures, movement restrictions within borders and the disruption of informal markets.



Climate change: extreme climatic conditions are compounding existing stressors, such as water shortage and food insecurity, making migration from affected areas more likely. At the same time, climate change may further push many into more vulnerable situations, making their ability to migrate less possible due to a lack of resources.

¹ OFDA-Cred International Disaster Database



The Growing Role of Africa National Societies in Disaster Preparedness and Response

African Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies and their branches across sub-Saharan Africa provide humanitarian and recovery services to people and hard-to-reach communities in nearly every country, province and locality through a network of local volunteers. African National Society branches, their staff and volunteers, are often the first responders to disasters. To prepare for and respond to disasters and crises, branches need trained and protected human resources including volunteers, and effective management systems that embrace all support services essential for efficient and effective delivery of operations. Branch operations need the capacity to scale up and scale down rapidly and to be transparent and accountable. Unfortunately, many National Society branches in Africa still operate with minimum resources, inappropriate management tools, and outdated or no technology. While investment has been made in National Societies Development, this has frequently remained centralized, with insufficient focus on the branch level.

As the humanitarian and development community strives to deliver the global Grand Bargain commitments on localization, it is essential to recognize the indispensable role of Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies, and thus extend support to strengthen the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the essential services they provide. Africa Red Ready contributes to this endeavour by providing an opportunity to National Societies (especially their branches) to deliver quality services efficiency, and closer to communities.

By extending resources and sharing expertise, the Red Cross Red Crescent network offers a platform for African National Societies to thrive as leaders in delivering services to the people. Through the unparalleled wide reach of African National Societies, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement is uniquely placed to support people and communities before, during, and after disasters and crises. This dimension towards localized action is a cornerstone of IFRC's Strategy 2030, particularly by supporting and developing National Societies as strong and effective local actors (transformation 1), and by working effectively as a distribution network (transformation 4).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION



Organisational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC)

OCAC is a complex process comprised of two distinct assessments, one a self-assessment, the other a peer-review, each time followed by a comprehensive set of organisational development interventions that are tailor-made to address specific capacity deficits that were identified during the assessments. The self-assessment focuses on capacities that **critically affect our capacity to exist and survive, to organise ourselves, to relate and mobilize, to perform and to adapt and grow**. The peer-review rather looks at our relevance to beneficiaries and our potential for impact. At the end of the whole process, success is formally acknowledged by the Federation's Governing Board through what is called "certification".

Problem Definition and Needs

Despite being on the frontline of response to disasters, many National Societies' branches in Africa have not benefited from sufficient investment in preparedness and operational capacity. This may result in delayed or incomplete responses that are cumbersome to those involved, and do not realize the full potential of the operation to those who need it most. The reality of branches varies from context to context but, in general terms, below are the gaps that National Societies' branches may encounter:

Lack of analysis, preparedness, and planning Indicators

Branches often lack systems and resources to collect and analyze disaster-related information and associated risks that would allow adequate planning of the response. They also often lack disaster procedures and tools that would enable swift mobilization of material and human resources, and business continuity throughout.

Absence of appropriate internal structures and disaster response tools

The operational capacity of branches may also be undermined by the lack of internal structures, poor information management, including reduced capacity to conduct comprehensive and inclusive needs assessments to position the branch at the epicentre of the response. Disaster response tools such as Early Action Protocols, Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) or Emergency Alert Systems (EAS), may not be accessed due to lack of preparedness or knowledge. The quality of the response may be compromised due to reduced community engagement, protection and gender safeguards, climate adaptation considerations, and lack of coordination with the different actors.

Lack of branch support structures

It is important to establish and maintain branch support structures to enable timely, sustainable and accountable responses. This includes the capacity to manage funds appropriately and transparently to maintain and protect the reputation of the branches and the National Societies, to follow the set procurement procedures, establish logistics and supply chains, the use of information and communication technology (ICT), and manage and protect volunteers.

Proposed Solution and Methodology

It is important to recognise the untapped potential of the network of 49 Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies in Africa, their 1.61 million volunteers and over 12,000 local branches. These are unparalleled capabilities to deal with the humanitarian challenges in the African continent, by African organisations. In 2020, African National Societies coordinated 45 emergency response operations, including 11 emergency appeals and 31 Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREFs), from large scale to slow-onset crisis, including compounding drivers and a complexity of vulnerabilities, reaching over 4,700,000 people (through the IFRC supported actions alone).

Branches are the "last mile" structure of National Societies and their staff and volunteers the first in responding to disasters. Nevertheless, Branch capacity is currently an underinvested area. Africa Red Ready will boost focus and investment in branches, focussing on the priorities identified by the National Societies using the PER – Preparedness for Effective Response Approach, considering any previous and/or ongoing development initiatives.

Africa Red Ready will support the National Society Branches with the process of needs identification, prioritisation, and planning and promote the use of assessment processes such as PER – Preparedness for Effective Response and BOCA – Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment when relevant. To create a conducive environment for partnership, this may include supporting the development of the country National Society Development plan (if there is not one already) at country level and supporting the National Society to coordinate all cooperation.

Africa Red Ready will support the implementation of a plan of action, developed and led by the National Society with the support of the IFRC Secretariat and other interested Movement partners, and based on findings from assessment such as PER – Preparedness for Effective Response and BOCA – Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment. Such plan will be informed by the National Societies strategic development plans, and will include clear milestones, responsibilities, timeframe, and financial resources required to achieve each of the identified priorities for effective response. All phases and objectives will be agreed upon with the National Societies leadership to ensure ownership and commitment.

Acknowledging the diversity of the realities of each branch, the Africa Red Ready will achieve the objectives set out in assessments through a practical, adaptable, and phased approach, that can be progressively assimilated by the local branches. In case other movement partners are involved in these respective branches, they will be invited to participate at all stages of the process, from the preliminary discussions and orientation to the assessments as well as work-plans, implementation and monitoring of the program.


Outcome and outputs

Outcome

Participating **National Societies will have stronger branches, better prepared to provide timely, effective, appropriate, and accountable response** to localised crises and disasters in line with their auxiliary role.

Outputs

- 1 National Societies and Branches are aware of their gaps**, and what is required to strengthen their preparedness and operational capacity.
- 2 National Societies' Branches strengthen their processes, tools, systems, and resources** including Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER), Finance and Administration, Logistics, Information and Communication Technology, Communications and Resource Mobilisation
- 3 National Societies and Branches have strengthened volunteer management tools, and mechanisms** to extend support, coordinate and foster the capacity of its volunteers.



Red Cross Uganda Volunteer
Akasa Adiges dig a channel
by one of the water collecting
points to minimize the risk
of flooding.

© Rose+Sjölander/IFRC

Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment (BOCA)

BOCA is a self-assessment tool developed for branches of Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies to identify and assess their strengths, limitations and challenges in relation to a wide range of organisational capacities. It can be used as the first step in a branch development process since it is focusing on basic capacities, structures and conditions that are widely understood as being the core of what a branch needs to be able to function and perform well.

Kavira Immaculee is a volunteer with the DRC Red Cross and is helping to construct the emergency shelter for the displaced people who lost their homes in the Nyiragongo volcano eruption. 120 volunteers have been trained to construct shelter for displaced people.

© Anette Selmer-Andresen/IFRC



Volunteer Management and Development

As the Africa Red Ready seeks to strengthen National Society branch response capacity, there will be deliberate efforts to reinforce volunteering development as it cuts across all service delivery initiatives. It is through these empowered and developed volunteer networks in local branches that National Societies will be supported to not only deliver services, but develop social cohesion and help strengthening of community resilience and preparedness to disasters, crises, and emergencies. The mantra “No one will be left behind” will be prioritized to ensure gender, diversity, and inclusion are embraced in building a strong volunteer base for the National Societies in Africa Region.

Identification of Development priorities & Sustainability

The IFRC aim of developing and strengthening its member National Societies is employed through carefully designed tools such as the OCAC – Organisational Capacity Assessment and Certification; and BOCA – Branch Organisational Capacity Assessment; SAF – Safer Access Framework; and the PER – Preparedness for Effective Response Approach (including its component – Considerations for epidemic preparedness) among others. Each of these tools and approaches should be used in complementarity and build on each other towards holistic National Society capacity development, and lead to the development of one, all-encompassing development plan for the National Society. This requires a joint analysis and reflection of where the National Society is and wants to be vis-à-vis the gaps, risks, and challenges to deliver quality programmes, services, and fulfilment of its auxiliary role. For these reasons, National Society African Red Ready actions and development priorities should be based on and support the overall National Society Development plan, and not constitute a separate plan that is being developed and implemented in parallel to other National Society Development plans and efforts.

Africa Red Ready program is rooted in these tools, maintaining the integrity of the National Society Development objectives. This contributes to National Society sustainability by strengthening its capacity and by positioning branches at the centre of their auxiliary role in disaster response. This will eventually translate into greater accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency, which in turn will lead to resource mobilization.

The geographic expansion of the program will be gradual. The first phase will start with a reduced number of National Societies and demonstrating the value of the approach with concrete results attained.

“African National Societies must continuously strengthen and increase their capabilities if they are to deliver on their essential role to assist people and their communities’ facing disasters and crisis, as well as addressing the longer-term secondary impacts. The task of African National Societies is therefore both challenging in scale and paramount in nature and support is needed to achieve these aims.”

TARGETING AND SELECTION CRITERIA

The objective of Africa Red Ready fits within the larger objective of having a set of strong and sustainable branches that are effective and accountable in fulfilling their auxiliary role as humanitarian providers in times of crisis, as well as promoting the post-disaster recovery and increasing community resilience. Nevertheless, not all countries face the same challenges and are impacted in the same proportion, nor is the support provided to National Societies equal across the continent. Furthermore, there are National Societies that require a higher level of structured support to achieve its objectives.

Therefore, the criteria defined for Africa Red Ready will investigate the following aspects to prioritise National Societies:

- **Country Risk Index**
- **National Societies with less/no resources to implement their PoA – Plan of Action**
- **National Society leadership endorsement and commitment at all levels**

After applying this criteria, 25 National Societies that rank highest in the list will be pre-selected and invited to express interest in the program through submitting a brief Africa Red Ready Plan. The quality of the plans and the engagement of National Societies leadership will be a key determining factor for selection.



Africa Red Ready will be launched in 2021 and the first cycle will run for 5 years. It is envisaged that the programme will expand and evolve in the coming years attracting additional National Societies upon demonstration of successful implementation and impact. During Year 1, 21 National Societies will be selected, with flexibility for supporting those National Societies expressing interest and meeting the set criteria in Year 2 and Year 3 to a maximum of 25 National Societies for the first 5-year cycle with each National Society being supported for a minimum period of 2 years.

	Number of National Societies engaging	Milestones
Year 1	21 National Societies	21 National Societies have integrated Red Ready outputs in their country operational plans
Year 2	25 National Societies	Targeted National Societies have established contextualized Red Ready Plans
Year 3	25 National Societies	Implementation of Red Ready plans is operationalised with mid-term evaluation carried out across the 25 National Societies
Year 4 and 5	-	Red Ready implementation completed, and end term evaluation undertaken

BUDGET

(ESTIMATED COST FOR 25 NATIONAL SOCIETIES)

Budget	Year 1-2 (CHF)	Year 3-4 (CHF)	Year 5 (CHF)
National Society – Africa Red Ready Programme Costs	7,500,000	5,000,000	-
IFRC and Partner National Society Technical Support	750,000	500,000	250,000
Evaluation and Auditing Costs	-	150,000	150,000
Coordination (meetings, workshops)	112,500	225,000	225,000
TOTAL	8,362,500	5,875,000	625,000
Grand TOTAL	CHF 15,000,000		



The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) is the world's largest humanitarian network, with 192 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and around 14 million volunteers. Our volunteers are present in communities before, during and after a crisis or disaster. We work in the most hard to reach and complex settings in the world, saving lives and promoting human dignity. We support communities to become stronger and more resilient places where people can live safe and healthy lives, and have opportunities to thrive.

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