

PAN AFRICA ZERO HUNGER INITIATIVE

**Key strategic priorities
and intervention areas**



**2021-
2030**

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Contact us:

Requests for commercial reproduction should be directed to the IFRC Secretariat:

Address: Chemin des Crêts 17, Petit-Saconnex, 1209 Geneva, Switzerland

Postal address: P.O. Box 303, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland

T +41 (0)22 730 42 22 | **F** +41 (0)22 730 42 00 | **E** secretariat@ifrc.org | **W** ifrc.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	6
Background and Rationale	8
Federation-wide added value	10
Strategic approaches to address the hunger crisis in Africa.....	12
Key interventions	15
Links with Pan-African commitments and synergies for collective impact	16

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KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND
INTERVENTION AREAS





INTRODUCTION

At the current time, the hunger crisis is the most critical humanitarian issue on the African continent, greatly exacerbated by the impacts of COVID-19, conflict and climate change. All partners involved in this initiative will contribute to making a huge difference to the lives of some of the world's most vulnerable people living in the poorest countries, by saving lives and contributing to ending hunger in Africa, while building sustainable, climate-smart livelihoods that ensure food and nutrition security.

The IFRC, with its 49-member Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies in Africa region, each with its countrywide network of branches and thousands of committed volunteers at community level, is uniquely and best placed to play a critical role in the fight against hunger in Africa. The IFRC is seeking to build a strong partnership of actors/ partners, to work together in support of its Zero Hunger Initiative, to enable African Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies to respond to acute hunger crises across the Africa Region, delivering integrated programmes to fight hunger and contribute to long-term nutrition and food security across the continent.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), on behalf of the Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies in Africa, has launched an ambitious new flagship initiative:





Pan Africa Zero Hunger Initiative 2020 – 2030

The goal is to assist by 2030 up to 25% of Sub-Saharan Africa's food insecure population in leading safe, healthy and dignified lives, free of hunger and poverty and with opportunities to thrive.



BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

About one in five people in Africa were facing hunger¹ in 2020. Of the total number of undernourished people globally, more than one-third live in Africa – 282 million people. This is 46 million more people affected by hunger compared to 2019. The rise in the prevalence of food insecurity in 2020 was equal to the five preceding years combined. Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for almost one-third of the global total, or 724 million people facing moderate or severe food insecurity².

In 2020, 37% of the world's stunted³ children lived in Sub-Saharan Africa, making it the only region in the world where the absolute number of stunted children has increased since 2000. The impact of epidemics, conflict, insecurity and social unrest, recurrent climate crises and other shocks continue to put immense pressure on vulnerable and food-insecure households. The situation affects women disproportionately, with the gender gap in the prevalence of moderate and severe food insecurity being 10% higher among women than men in 2020 (compared to 6% in 2019).

The impact of COVID-19 has affected the projections to end hunger by 2030, by limiting people's movement and possibility to access vital services. Although recovery from COVID-19 related restrictions is possible in most of the regions of the world starting from 2022, the same will not be a reality in Africa since it is very likely that vaccination levels will be behind the rest of the world for a long time to come.

Crisis and food insecurity in Africa are intertwined, creating a vicious cycle of deep poverty and vulnerability. Recurrent climate and environmental crises (droughts, floods, cyclones, deforestation, locusts), socio-economic instability and poor governance, disease outbreaks and the impact of COVID-19 are breeding grounds for conflict, insecurity, civil unrest and political instability, which in turn generate medium to long-term impact on households' food and economic security. They have resulted in population displacements, unplanned and unsafe urbanization, inequality and exclusion which result in violence, extreme poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition and eventually higher rates of morbidity and mortality. Women and girls are over-represented among the poor and more likely to be affected by food insecurity than men.

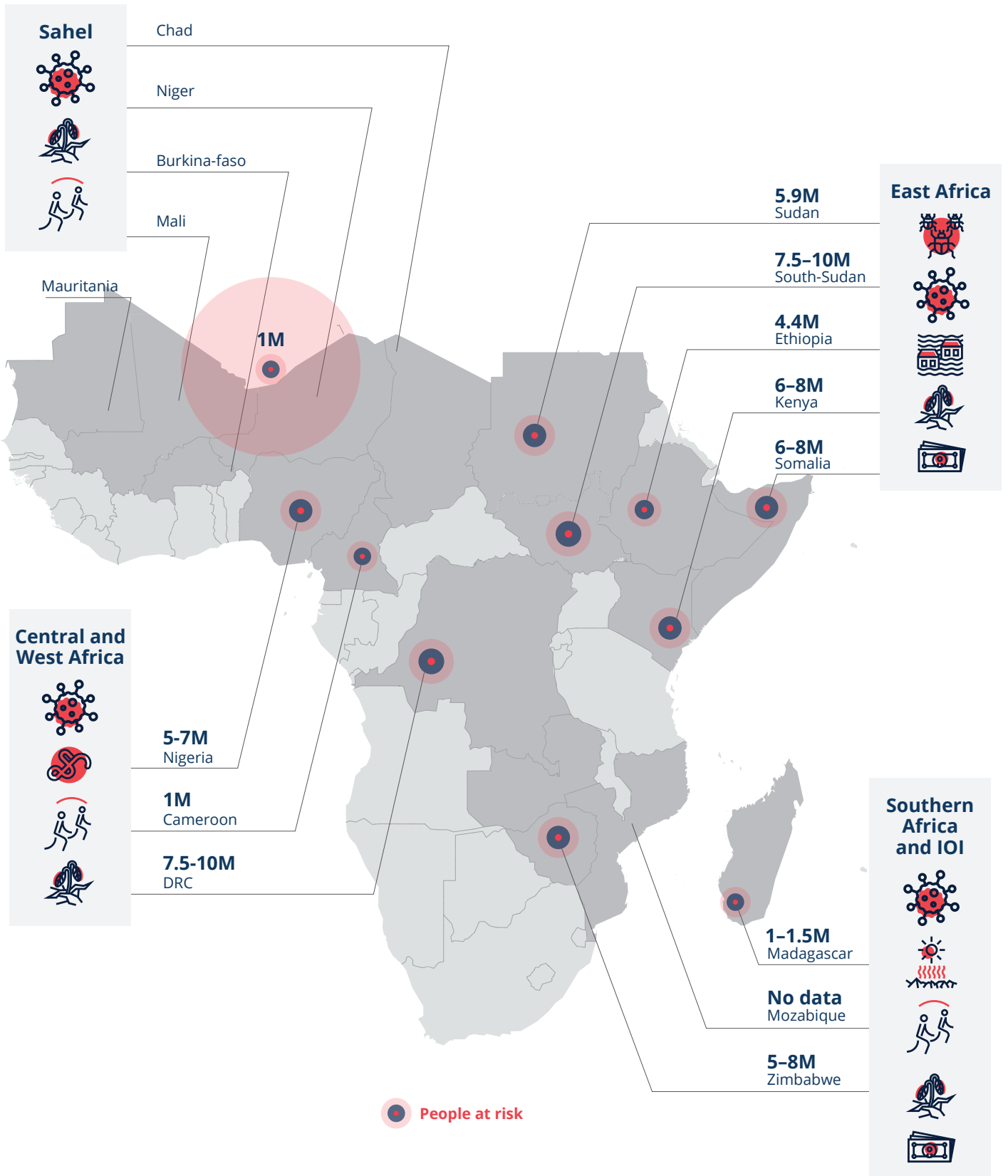
For the IFRC network in Africa, finding sustainable solutions to address the hunger crisis, which is impacting the lives of so many millions of people, is part of a wider strategy to build safer, healthy, and dignified lives, as well as inclusive and peaceful communities. This is aligned to IFRC's Strategy 2030 "Platform for Change: Global reach, local action", the vision of which is "Our global Red Cross and Red Crescent network brings people together for the good of humanity, driving the changes that will create a better future for us all."

¹ "Hunger" is the term used to define periods when populations are experiencing severe food insecurity – meaning they go without eating due to lack of availability and access to food.

² "Food Insecurity" is the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.

³ "Stunting" is the impaired growth and development that children experience from poor nutrition. Countries with a large percentage of stunted children will likely have slower economic development.

Food Insecurity Hotspots November 2021



FEDERATION-WIDE ADDED VALUE



Region Wide operational network and permanent local presence with a total of 1.6 million volunteers working in communities across Africa, African National Societies are in the best position possible to assess the local underlying causes of food insecurity and hunger.



The unique role of National Societies as partner of choice for governments, humanitarian and development organizations and donors. As auxiliaries to their public authorities, National Societies are well-positioned to support the public authorities in meeting their humanitarian obligations and achieving their humanitarian and development goals in terms of poverty reduction, contributing to reducing food insecurity and strengthening livelihoods.



The combination of **direct operational experience at the local level with a regional reach and knowledge** that enables the transfer and sharing of best practices, insights and guidance.



The trusted volunteer network remains a hallmark of National Societies and their unhindered access to communities ensures that the needs of the most vulnerable are identified and addressed, and that community-led approaches under-pin programmes. National Societies, their staff and volunteers, are and will be present for the foreseeable future. Their engagement with their communities is long-term, and they can have a key role in building resilience and promoting local development.

Zimbabwe food distribution supported by Finnish Red Cross. Selected, engaged villagers help Zimbabwe Red Cross Society volunteers to prepare food items.

© Ville Palonen / Finnish Red Cross



STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO ADDRESS THE HUNGER CRISIS IN AFRICA



The goal of IFRC's Zero Hunger Initiative is that by 2030 up to 25% of the people vulnerable to food insecurity in Africa lead safe, healthy and dignified lives, free of hunger and poverty and have opportunities to thrive.

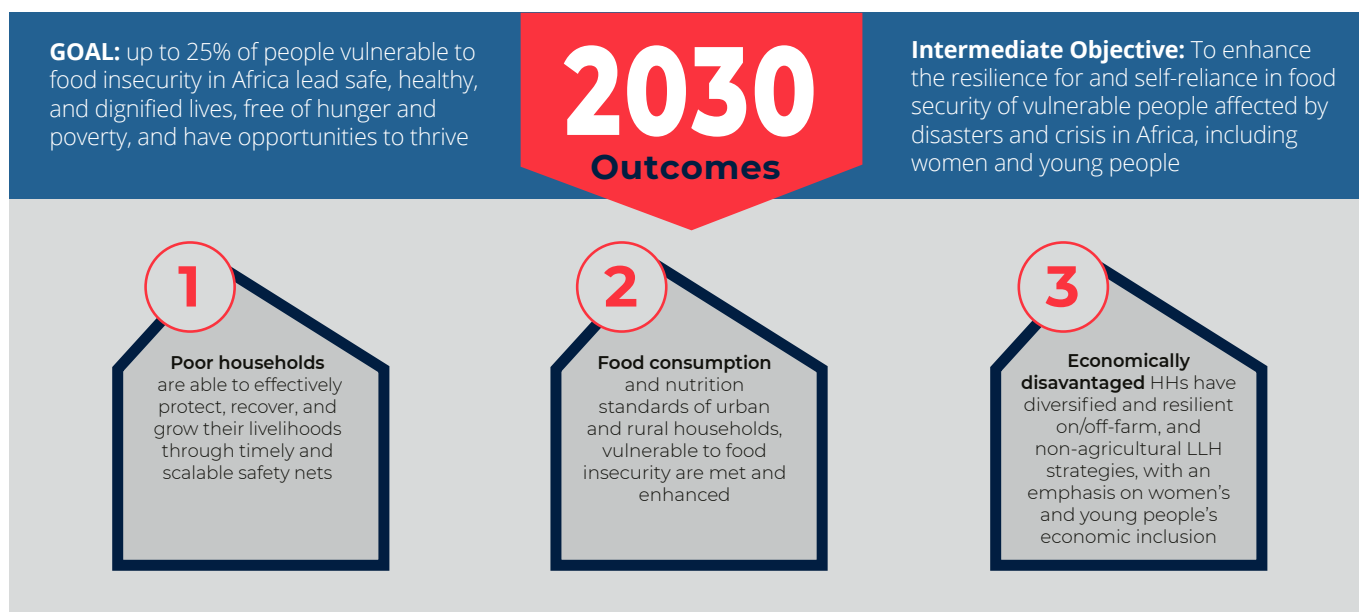
To achieve that goal, it is necessary to enhance the resilience for and self-reliance in food security of 25% of the vulnerable people affected by disasters and crises in Africa, including women and young people.

The IFRC's commitment is to raise levels of nutrition, improve food security and better the livelihoods of most vulnerable populations. This is expected to be achieved through three outcomes and a set of activities that are content specific within the African region. These outcomes mirror the building pillars of the IFRC food security and livelihoods strategy, which recognizes the linkages between emergency, recovery and resilience building, where livelihoods, food security, nutrition and economic inclusion are complementary interventions and mutually necessary to overcome household vulnerability. As such, outcomes are designed around asset recovery, building self-insurance mechanisms, smoothing consumption and income, then expanding household incomes and consumption depending on the vulnerability context.

The hunger, malnutrition and food security matters in Africa are long systemic issues. These profound reoccurring challenges can only be dealt with by a harmonized and at scale sequencing and layering of humanitarian response to a longer-term strategy towards the zero-hunger goal. The Zero Hunger Initiative provides a vision and strategy with localized actions to be undertaken by bridging humanitarian actions to longer-term programming. The Pan Africa Zero Hunger strategic framework 2020-2030 is designed to be focussed, scalable and high impact, with concrete actions that build on the IFRC network's added value and position.

Intermediate Objective: To enhance the resilience for and self-reliance in food security of up to 25% of vulnerable people affected by disasters and crises in Africa, including women and young people.

The intermediate objective is expected to be achieved through three outcomes. Three programme areas are being developed and are expected to deliver towards the ultimate Zero Hunger goal by 2030: Work with National Societies to invest in the diversification of revenue streams.



1

Outcome 1: Vulnerable households are able to effectively protect, recover, and grow their livelihoods through timely and scalable safety nets and social assistance.

Scale-up food security and livelihood safety net and social assistance interventions, coupled with anticipatory action:

Multipurpose cash assistance will be disbursed as part of short-term one-off, recurrent, or seasonal humanitarian or social safety nets. Multipurpose cash transfers as a modality in food security and livelihood interventions will also take the form of reliable and predictable medium to longer-term social transfers to enhance recipients' risk management capacity and planning. Especially when coupled with anticipatory action and other complementary activities (e.g., awareness-raising and trainings, savings and loans, and facilitation of access to basic and market services), medium to longer-term transfers can support households to effectively prepare for and manage production and income risks and losses and economic uncertainty, but also to grow their assets and diversify their livelihood strategies.

2

Outcome 2: Food consumption and nutritional standards of urban and rural households vulnerable to food insecurity are met and enhanced.

Invest in resilient and nutrition-sensitive food solutions:

This outcome aims to accelerate climate-smart food production and balanced nutrition in urban and rural settings through investing in small-scale agricultural production, post-harvest management and processing; and supporting communities and households to grow healthy food and consume a diversified diet. Investing in smallholder farmers is key due to the potential they represent to countries and communities.

3

Outcome 3: Socially and economically disadvantaged rural and urban households have diversified and resilient on-, off-farm, and non-agricultural livelihood strategies, prioritizing women's and young people's economic inclusion.

Foster resilient and sustainable livelihood diversification, through support to viable income-generation and entrepreneurial development in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors:

The IFRC network will invest in youth and women's socioeconomic development by fostering entrepreneurial development through technical support and seed funds, facilitating access to affordable financial and other livelihood enhancing services adapted to their needs, and supporting self-help groups, including savings and loans groups and cooperatives. Value addition in on-farm and off-farm activities will be key to livelihood diversification as well as the facilitation of market linkages and value chain integration.





KEY INTERVENTIONS

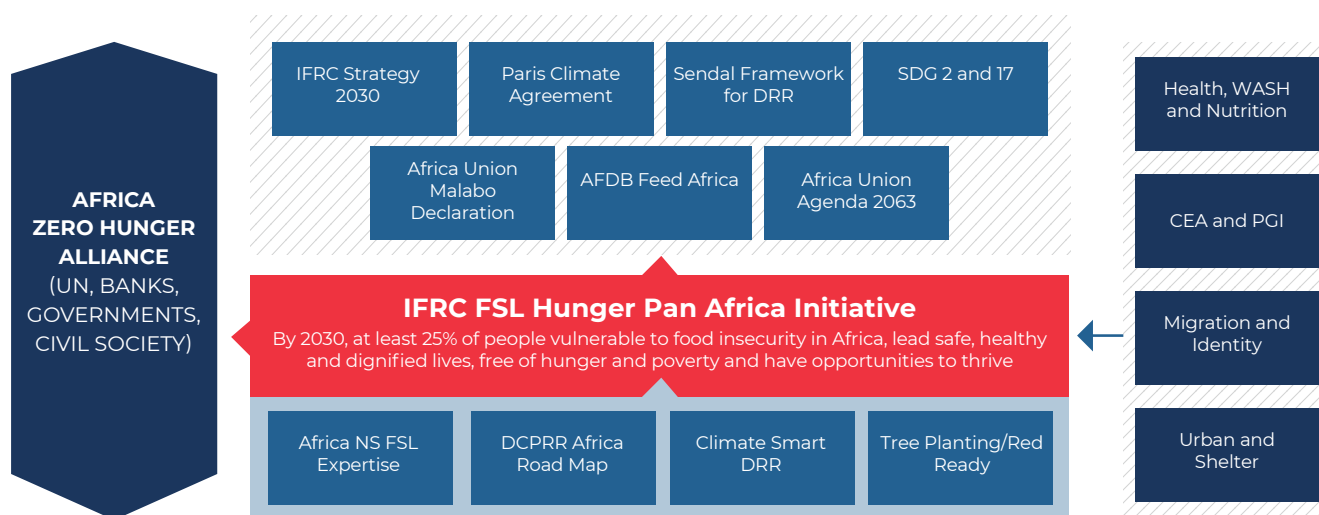
- » Invest in smallholder farmers, through anticipatory climate-smart action, including complimentary technical support
- » Support local governments' capacities on anticipation of food insecurity crises that may impact people's livelihoods (promoting localization)
- » Establish safety nets through multipurpose cash designed around seasonality and provided either longer-term or several times to cover lean periods
- » Increase access to safety nets, financial services (saving groups and financial inclusion e.g., bank or mobile money accounts) and access to micro insurances
- » Reinforce local cooperatives' capacities and women's associations (mothers' clubs)
- » Diversification of food and income sources (support for "non-climate dependent" income-generating activities)
- » Training in small business management for economically disadvantaged households and basic life and employment skills training
- » Provision of basic start-up grants (conditional cash), targeting affected individuals and aimed at the recovery of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises in the communities
- » Support the development of and integration to local market value chains, adding commodity/produce value

LINKS WITH PAN-AFRICAN COMMITMENTS AND SYNERGIES FOR COLLECTIVE IMPACT

This initiative is linked to governments' strategies and plans at local, national and regional levels, and with the African Union's Regional Initiative 'Africa's Commitment to End Hunger by 2025' as per the African Union's Malabo Declaration on "Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods". It is also linked to the African Union's Agenda 2063, African Development Bank's Feed Africa plan, and other programmes and initiatives including those of the African Union Development Agency, African Union Development Agency African Risk Capacity, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Southern African Development Community (SADC). The IFRC's Zero Hunger Initiative contributes to the inter-agency regional efforts to eradicate hunger in Africa.

Guided by these regional commitments, the IFRC network envisions to contribute and strengthen the Africa Zero Hunger alliance. For that, the IFRC is actively coordinating and working in partnership with key players such as WFP, FAO, UNICEF, governmental entities, development banks (African Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, World Bank), the Africa Regional Humanitarian Partnerships Team, Regional Interagency Standing Committee, Regional Economic Commissions, civil society organizations, the private sector and key donor agencies (EU, DG ECHO, USAID, various donor governments, Green Climate Fund etc).

The African National Societies, with support of partner National Societies from around the world, are deeply committed to working together to achieve IFRC's Pan Africa Zero Hunger Initiative. Together, the IFRC network and partners will be a major contributor to reaching wider Pan African objectives.







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.

Contact Information

IFRC Regional Office for Africa:

Adesh Tripathee

Head of Disaster, Climate and
Crisis - Response and Recovery

adesh.tripathee@ifrc.org

Louise Daintrey-Hall

Head of Partnerships
and Resource Development

T +254 110 843978

M +12 987 6543

louise.daintrey@ifrc.org
