

# Tsunami two-year progress report: Eastern Africa



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

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## Executive summary

Although the effect of the tsunami in the Eastern Africa region was comparatively small, the impact of the disaster on communities, combined with pre-existing vulnerabilities, exacerbated the situation. In the region, Somalia and the Seychelles were the worst affected, while limited effects were felt in Kenya, Tanzania, Madagascar, La Reunion and Mauritius.

From the onset of the disaster, the Federation regional delegation in Nairobi established a tsunami task force, maintaining a close liaison with all National Societies (NS) throughout the region as well as with the Geneva Secretariat. It ensured a smooth coordination within the Movement and with UN agencies including OCHA, WFP, UNICEF and UNHCR. The delegation provided logistics support to concerned National Societies. It organized a tsunami review meeting in January 2005, attended by all relevant stakeholders including the ICRC, which resulted in the adoption of the *Nairobi Initiative*, a ten-point disaster management commitment across three intervention phases. The regional delegation also facilitated the participation of a delegation from six African national societies and regional delegation staff in the Hong Kong tsunami response forum in March 2005. Based on the *Nairobi Initiative* and outcomes of the Hong Kong conference, a plan of action was developed aimed at reinforcing existing strategic plans and annual appeals.

The regional delegation also supported fundraising initiatives by African national societies to respond to global Federation appeal. Fifteen African NSs raised CHF 2.9 million.

Following the global review that led to the shift in focus strictly to the worst affected countries, a tsunami review

meeting for Eastern Africa was held in July 2006. A recommendation was reached that programmes initially included under the tsunami programme be incorporated in the regular annual appeals and plans, with a view to securing other funding sources and managing them under the regular structures. From 2007, the activities are therefore incorporated in the regular annual appeals where resource mobilization and management will be incorporated in the regional, sub-regional and country delegations management structures and systems.

Details on the tsunami programme in Somalia and Seychelles can be found in the [specific country reports](#).

## Background/Operational context

In the Eastern Africa region, the countries most affected by the tsunami were **Somalia** and the **Seychelles**. The tsunami hit **Somalia** with no warning approximately seven hours after the devastating earthquake struck Asia. Due to the remoteness of the region and difficulty in establishing population figures, inter-agency assessments are still triangulating the data on numbers killed and affected. Earlier estimates suggested around 298 dead but many more fishermen and children are missing along the Puntland coast. Some 15,000 people were affected, many losing property that included houses, fishing boats and nets. Hardest hit were the north eastern regions of Bender Beila, Hafun, Eyl, and Gara'ad.

In the **Seychelles**, 3 persons were killed, 57 injured and 500 left homeless on Mahé, Praslin and La Digue islands. The tsunami was followed by heavy rains that destroyed three bridges and forced the evacuation of 75 families. Boats, fishing equipment and personal belongings were destroyed by the tidal waves. Most affected areas include

the northern, central and south-western coast lines of Mahé Island.

In **Kenya** thanks to an early tsunami alert issued by authorities and the Red Cross Red Crescent, only one person died in the coastal town of Malindi. The property of some 200 fishermen was reportedly damaged. No deaths or injuries were registered in **Madagascar** where nearly 1,200 people were affected by tidal waves in the south of the country. Ten people were killed by the tsunami in **Tanzania** where the National Society and authorities were taken by surprise. In **La Reunion** and **Mauritius**, only some fishing boats were reportedly damaged.

The cumulative impact of a series of disasters that have affected East Africa in recent years has greatly increased the vulnerability of the majority of the NS in the region. Severe droughts have destroyed the livelihood of a large number of people who depend on agriculture. Moreover, lack of agricultural inputs has further reduced the agricultural harvests, making the population even more vulnerable. The humanitarian needs are enormous and assistance from the international community, though substantial, falls far short of meeting those needs.

The tsunami review meeting held in July 2006 reached a recommendation that programmes initially included under the tsunami programme will henceforth be incorporated in the regular annual appeals and plans. Partner National Societies (PNS) were also encouraged to directly support the affected NS through funding received from the tsunami programme, as part of their regular capacity building programmes with the NSs in the region.

## Achievements and challenges

### Health and Care

The health and care programme aims to prepare national societies and communities for disasters, to prevent epidemics, to provide an immediate response to emergencies and to mitigate the impact of such events.

Over the last two years, the regional programme has achieved the following:-

- Targeted NSs to finalize their health and care plans and budgets. This was achieved through three regional planning forums held in Kenya, Uganda and Sudan bringing together countries within the Eastern Africa, and Horn of Africa regions. Plans focused on national societies' preparatory steps to position themselves in addressing key challenges in emergency health mapping, improving access to adequate water and sanitation facilities (for the prevention of vector borne disease), control of malaria, cholera, vaccine preventable diseases, HIV and AIDS, reproductive health and care for orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC).

- Joint field assessments and training activities with disaster management on emergency stocks and vulnerability capacity assessments (VCA's) were mapped out and a concept paper on how best to achieve this through a community-based risk reduction (CBRR) approach was developed and shared with national societies. An RC-NET (Red Cross Red Crescent Networking of East Africa region national societies) health and care workshop was organized, bringing together all health and care staff at RDN and health coordinators from 14 national societies. The workshop reviewed challenges and areas requiring support. Fourteen participants drawn from 11 NS from the Eastern Africa region were trained on PHASTER (PHAST in emergencies) at a workshop held in Kenya. (PHAST stands for Participatory Hygiene and Sanitation Transformation - an innovative approach designed to promote hygiene behaviour, sanitation improvements and community management of water and sanitation facilities using specifically developed participatory techniques).
- National-level training of volunteers and staff followed, enabling them to respond to hygiene related issues during emergencies in Sudan, Kenya, and Ethiopia. The meeting also reviewed the progress of PHASTER implementation in their respective national societies. The regional delegation will assist the national societies in the development of the PHASTER toolkit with the aim of standardizing the approach while taking into account differences in individual national societies. During the workshop the concerns on low volunteer motivation and the need to equip volunteers during disasters were raised. The forum recommended that each national society strives to have a strong organizational development (OD) department and a volunteer policy which will serve as a guide to better manage the volunteer resource. A review of the status of this recommendation is planned for early 2007.
- An assessment was made to assist the Somali delegation to integrate water and sanitation (watsan) activities into the ongoing health programme. During this training mission 35 SRCS health staff and volunteers drawn from the three branches of SRCS were trained on PHAST. The trainees were expected to conduct similar trainings at the branch level and thereafter at community level. Training on how to conduct baseline surveys was also done with the actual survey to be undertaken in early 2007. The results of the survey will be used to guide subsequent planning for watsan related activities.
- A regional workshop on sexual and reproductive health and HIV and AIDS in humanitarian emergencies was organized. The goal of the workshop was to improve access to quality sexual and reproductive health including HIV and AIDS prevention, control and management services in humanitarian emergencies. Thirty-five participants agreed upon action points on strategies for the continuity and sustainability of the interventions after the emergency through existing tools in ARCHI (Africa RCRC Health Initiative) and CBFA

(community-based first aid) to implement interventions and integration of interventions in on-going programmes. As a result, Kenya Red Cross has begun sexual and reproductive health interventions (safe motherhood) in the North Eastern part of the country. Red Cross Society of Eritrea, supported by the RDN, has also undertaken training for staff towards integrating campaigns against harmful practices e.g. female genital mutilation (FGM) in their on-going programmes.

- Follow up activities at community level will be undertaken during 2007, together with a number of workshops for national society staff mainly in the area of health emergency stocks management, PHASTER and epidemic response training to further consolidate skills and ensure better response mechanisms in health related emergencies.

### Disaster Management

Over the 24-month period the disaster management (DM) tsunami programme achieved the following:

From the onset of the tsunami, the regional delegation DM programme took the leadership in providing technical support to the affected NS in the provision of relief, planning and implementation of the post-emergency phase of the disaster.

Following the regional meeting that developed the *Nairobi Initiative* in January 2005, the programme organized a team of Red Cross Red Crescent staff from the region to be deployed to Somalia to conduct an operation review one month after the disaster. A forum was held attended by consultants undertaking the humanitarian response review of humanitarian response capacities in 2005, commissioned by the UN emergency relief coordinator. During this consultation the key role of national RCRC societies at community level was recognized along with the extensive work of the Federation in disaster preparedness. Meetings were held with UNOCHA and UNDP to discuss support for DM planning in Somalia and Seychelles. A meeting was held with UNDP and UNOCHA to plan a regional interagency contingency planning exercise based on an East Africa tsunami scenario that was to be hosted by the regional delegation.

The department undertook a mission to Comoros in 2005 to review and provide technical support to the risk reduction project implementation. During this mission contacts were established with national early warning system institutions and the civil protection management unit, to establish institutionalized relations between these two important disaster management structures and the NS. Priority actions for 2006 were also discussed, particularly the integration of National Society DM plans into national plans.

A meeting on early warning systems was jointly organized by UN/ISDR (International Strategy for Disaster Reduction) and the DM programme in 2006. Seychelles, Mauritius, Comoros, Djibouti, Kenya and Tanzania government focal points and national societies were invited along with others from Southern and West Africa. The purpose of the meeting was to increase the skills of participants in disaster management and reduction strategies, to enhance cooperation between national platforms, UN/ISDR and the Federation, and introducing disaster reduction concepts in schools.

A humanitarian reform workshop was organized in 2006 in Nairobi to review, harmonize and devise ways of improving coordination of humanitarian response to disaster situations in the region, as well as the establishment of a food security and nutrition working group (FSNWG).

The department also participated in the training of PIRO<sup>1</sup> focal points in Reunion Island and provided training sessions on community approaches to disaster preparedness.

### Organizational Development

The OD programme aims at establishing and reinforcing branch development systems in national societies in the region with emphasis on improving headquarters capacity to monitor and support branch activities.

General administrative, human resources and IT improvement costs of the regional delegation that were required to effectively support the national societies hit by the tsunami and its devastating effects were supported. During 2005 and the first half of 2006 tsunami funding supported various trainings such as a negotiation skills workshop, tsunami coordination meetings both at regional and country level, participation in the Hong Kong meeting and upgrading services and utilities of the regional delegation. During the tsunami operation, upgrading the communication systems in order to monitor and ensure effective and timely action were found to be essential and necessary.

During 2006, the regional delegation disseminated the International Federation's policies, rules and procedures as well as change processes within the Federation of the Future, the concept of Operational Alliance and accountability. National societies and partner national societies at regional and country level received this information through meetings such as the RC-NET and its sub-working groups. Other forms of support included coordination of national societies' partnership meetings, providing guidance on governance issues, organizational development and capacity building. Numerous other OD-

<sup>1</sup> Plateforme d'Intervention Regionale de l'Océan Indien

related activities are captured under the movement coordination section.

### Constraints

The lack of an OD delegate since May 2005, combined with funding constraints, continued to hamper the effective implementation of the programme. Existing delegates with an OD background, country-specific OD delegates and short-term consultancies were used to implement some of the planned activities.

Countries incorporated some of the planned activities into the regular annual appeals to seek other funding sources.

### Humanitarian Values

The objective of the humanitarian values programme is to develop national societies' communications and advocacy skills and capacity, and assist targeted NSs to initiate and develop external relations with key organizations.

During the 24-months the following have been achieved:

- Networking of the NSs communicators with the regional delegation communication/information unit as well as with peer communicators is enhanced.
- Emergency reporting capacities of NS have increased, profiling Red Cross Red Crescent interventions, and highlighting the vulnerabilities of affected communities
- External relations with key organizations in the region have been initiated and developed.
- NSs are effectively undertaking communications and advocacy activities that promote their NSs and the Federation vis-à-vis key organizations within their respective countries.

### Constraints

The vacancy for an information and communications delegate was not filled until February 2006, delaying the implementation of activities. To address the issue of limited funding, planned activities for the tsunami programme have since been incorporated into the annual appeal.

### Coordination with other partners and stakeholders

Prior to the tsunami, various tools and instruments existed that contributed to the improved movement cooperation and coordination in the form of country assessment survey (CAS) and RC-Net<sup>2</sup>. Periodic partnership meetings encouraged the need to take strategic partnerships to a higher level. The effective coordination between national societies, PNSs, ICRC and the Federation regional and country delegations highlighted at the onset of the disaster and through subsequent tsunami operation

planning and implementation has been lauded by Movement partners.

The appointment of a Movement coordinator as part of the senior management team of the regional delegation during the second quarter of 2005 further enhanced Movement coordination in the region. His position has been instrumental in leading the national societies and partners' dialogue on adapting the framework for movement coordination mechanisms formulated in Asia within the East Africa context, with a view to maximizing the effectiveness of the Movement's support towards beneficiaries.

A team of Red Cross Red Crescent staff from the region was deployed to Somalia to conduct an operation review one month after the disaster. The regional delegation also facilitated the participation of a delegation from six African national societies and regional delegation staff in the Hong Kong tsunami response forum in March 2005.

A number of national societies from the sub-region, PNSs and the Secretariat led by the director for national society and field support attended the second East Africa tsunami meeting held in Nairobi on May 2005. Movement coordination being the main topic, the cooperation and coordination framework in its global and regional forms was presented. The emphasis was on the need for each of the Movement members to commit to working together. The forum identified the development of a cooperation agreement strategy (CAS), the adoption and signing of specific memoranda of understanding, regular meetings and exchange of information as key to smooth Movement coordination.

A regional meeting for the floods and cyclones working group of the regional Red Cross and Red Crescent cooperation network (RC-NET) was held in Mauritius in late November 2005.

Meetings have been held with various UN agencies including UNDP risk reduction programme, UNEP and International strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). The regional delegation continues to chair the inter-agency working group (IAWG) for emergency preparedness and contingency planning.

An international coordination meeting for the development of a tsunami warning and mitigation system for the Indian Ocean assessment mission, to cover Kenya and Somalia, took place in Nairobi in June 2005, attended by Federation staff from Nairobi regional delegation, Indian Ocean islands sub-regional delegation office and Somalia delegation.

### Outlook

From 2007, activities will be incorporated in the regular annual appeals where resource mobilisation and

<sup>2</sup> RC-Net – Red Cross/Red Crescent Networking (of East Africa region national societies)

management will be incorporated into the regional, sub-regional and country delegations management structures and systems.

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