



Disaster Law

IFRC Disaster Law Africa Bulletin – First Edition

Dear colleague,

Welcome to the first IFRC Disaster Law Africa Bulletin, a bi-annual update showcasing and sharing disaster law activities and initiatives from National Societies and governments across Africa.

Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its related restrictions, the IFRC Disaster Law Africa team has had a busy start to 2021. We have held a series of training sessions on disaster law for Southern African National Societies, [a regional webinar for African National Societies](#) is taking place throughout the month of August, and an online workshop on International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles in the Indian Ocean Islands Region is planned for September.

We have scaled up disaster law research in the region by finalising [a report on the legal preparedness for international disaster assistance frameworks in Southern Africa](#). We continue to map the legal preparedness for international disaster assistance of states in other sub-regions, with the focus in this first half of 2021 on mapping the IDRL frameworks of five countries in Central Africa. In addition, we are conducting research on a range of other disaster law areas in countries across Africa.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to grip the world, we have launched critical new research that has found an overall lack of legal preparedness or strong legislation for public health emergencies. The report, [Law and Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), examines how law and policy can support preparedness for and response to public health emergencies, and how public health laws relate to wider disaster risk management laws.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity to review law and policy for public health emergencies and to consider what improvements need to be made. As the global leader in disaster law, we stand by to support governments to develop and implement laws and policies for disasters, including public health emergencies.

Take care, and please don't hesitate to share this bulletin with your networks!

María, Stella, Jeanique and Reece

Training: Disaster Law and Legislative Advocacy Webinar Series



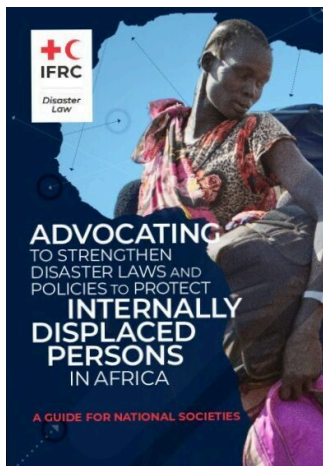
Throughout August, the IFRC Disaster Law Africa team is running a regional webinar series on Disaster Law and Legislative Advocacy for National Societies in the region, to build the capacity of National Societies on disaster law, auxiliary role and humanitarian diplomacy. Please note that registrations for the webinar series have closed, but you can [read more about the series here](#).

Story: Mauritius' National Disaster Risk Management Act leads the way with community engagement



In 2016, the Mauritius Red Cross and IFRC Disaster Law supported the drafting of a disaster risk management bill that was passed into law: the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act. [Read more here](#).

New guide: Advocating to Strengthen Disaster Laws and Policies to Protect Internally Displaced Persons in Africa



We have recently published a new guide, *Advocating to Strengthen Disaster Laws and Policies to Protect Internally Displaced Persons in Africa: A Guide for National Societies*, to support National Societies advocating for access to internally displaced persons in the event of a disaster, as well as for stronger disaster risk management and related laws and policies. The guide is available in English, French and Portuguese. [Read the Guide here](#).

New report: Legal preparedness for International Disaster Assistance in Southern Africa



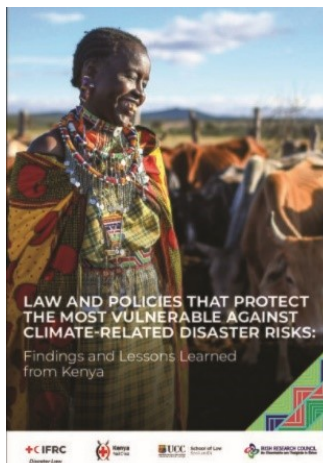
A new report, *Legal Preparedness for International Disaster Assistance in Southern Africa*, developed by IFRC Disaster Law examines the legal frameworks of ten countries in Southern Africa to assess their legal preparedness for international assistance should a disaster exceed national capacities and proposes necessary recommendations to strengthen IDRL in the region. [Read the report here](#).

Story: The Uganda Red Cross Society Bill



recently passed the Uganda Red Cross Society Bill, enhancing its auxiliary role by reflecting the evolved scope of the National Society's role as a key humanitarian and development partner in the country. The Bill now awaits the President's assent before it becomes an Act of Parliament. [Read more here.](#)

New report: Policy Coherence between DRR and CCA in Kenya



This new case study analyses coherence between climate change adaptation (CCA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) in legal and policy frameworks in Kenya. This analysis concludes with a series of recommendations on how coherence between CCA and DRR frameworks can best be achieved. [Read the report here.](#)

New story: Disaster Law in Malawi



Seeing the impact of frequent disasters and the need for a strengthened disaster risk management system to save lives, and to better facilitate the flow of international assistance, Malawi Red Cross identified an opportunity to review and develop its legal framework relating to disaster law. In 2013, through its auxiliary role with government, the Malawi Red Cross began the process of reviewing the legal framework for international disaster response which successfully contributed to the development of the disaster risk management Bill in the country. [Read more here.](#)

Meet the team



María Martínez

María Martínez is the IFRC Disaster Law Coordinator for Africa, currently serving as Head of Delegation a.i., Country Cluster Delegation for the Indian Ocean Islands. Prior to joining the Africa Region, María was the IFRC Legislative Advocacy Coordinator for the Americas where she engaged in various disaster management policy reforms, including the negotiation of key agreements with regional and sub regional organizations on disaster law. María holds an LLB degree in Law and Political Science from Universidad Católica Santa María La Antigua in Panama, and an LLM degree in International Human Rights Law from Northwestern University in the USA.



Stella Ngugi

Stella Ngugi is the Senior Disaster Law Officer for Africa, currently serving as the Disaster Law Coordinator for Africa a.i. at the IFRC Regional Office in Nairobi. She is an experienced legal affairs professional with a demonstrated history of working in government, the private sector as well as the humanitarian sector. She holds an LLB from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa and BA in International Relations from the United States International University - Africa. Stella also holds an LLM in International Law and International Relations from the University of East London, in addition to being an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya.



Jeanique Serradinho

Jeanique Serradinho is the Disaster Law Senior Officer based at the Southern Africa Cluster Delegation in Pretoria. Jeanique holds an LLB, LLM (international law with a specialisation in international humanitarian law and human rights in military operations) and LLD degree from the University of Pretoria, and is an admitted attorney of the High Court of South Africa. Prior to joining the IFRC in 2020, Jeanique worked in private practice at a law firm in Johannesburg.



Reece Da Costa

Reece Da Costa is the Disaster Law Officer based at the Southern Africa Cluster Delegation in Pretoria. He holds an LLB and LLM from the University of Pretoria and is also an admitted advocate of the High Court of South Africa and a student member of the Honourable Society of Lincolns Inn in London, the United Kingdom. He has eight years of experience in legal practice. In addition to that, he has dedicated his academic life to researching international law and specifically the potential criminal liability of children in armed conflict.



We have recently launched our [new website](#) that is home to a huge plethora of disaster law resources, including regional, sub-regional and country profiles from across [Africa](#). The website is also home to the new [Disaster Law Database](#), the world's largest collection of materials on disaster law. Check it out today: disasterlaw.ifrc.org



For regular IFRC Disaster Law updates from Africa and around the world, [please follow us on Twitter](#). If you would like to get in touch with the team, contact us: stella.ngugi@ifrc.org

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