

Alert

Kenya

Drought in Kenya

Nairobi, 8 November 2016

1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

Kenya is currently experiencing drought due to the adverse effects of the weather phenomenon La Nina¹. This is evidenced by the country experiencing generally sunny and dry weather conditions in the months of June, July, August and September. Moreover, the forecast by the Kenya Meteorological Services for the October-November-December 2016 'Short Rains Season' projects that most parts of the country will experience generally depressed rainfall with sunny and dry weather conditions prevailing. The onset is also expected to be late in most parts of the country.

Reports from the national government and stakeholders indicate 1.25 million people in Arid and Semi-Arid counties are facing starvation that poses the risk of malnutrition as households have reduced the frequency and the quantities of food intake. In October 2016, The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) declared Kilifi County to be at alarm drought phase while the following counties are in the alert phase: Tana River, Garissa, Taita Taveta, Narok, Meru (North), Mandera, Makueni, Lamu, Wajir, Marsabit, Kwale, and Kajiado. Turkana, Isiolo, Tharaka Nithi, Nyeri and Samburu counties have their drought status classified as normal though it is predicted that this situation will worsen in the coming months. The above information has been corroborated by the several reports on Kenyan media.

2. Why is an ACT response needed?

In view of the current scale of the drought emergency and the likelihood of the drought spreading to other areas and persisting into early 2017, there are gaps in offering assistance to those affected by the drought. The support from ACT Alliance through an appeal will complement the existing efforts and help to save human lives.

3. National and international response

The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) in collaboration with county governments and other stakeholders have activated drought contingency plans in seven counties and is supporting all counties to coordinate their responses and plans for future responses now that the drought may persist until early 2017. NDMA has disbursed Kshs. 53 million from the Drought Contingency Fund (DCF) to seven counties: Garissa (11M), Kilifi (11.6), Kitui (7.8M), Kwale (6.5M), Makueni (5.1M), Taita Taveta (7.7M) and Tana River (3.3M). The sectors funded under the disbursements include education, health and nutrition, livestock, security, water and coordination.

¹ La Nina is a coupled ocean-atmosphere phenomenon that is the counterpart of El Nino.

Several county governments have responded by providing food aid to the vulnerable populations, disease surveillance and control, as well as water trucking. The National Government has the Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) running in Turkana, Marsabit, Wajir and Mandera counties but this has not been scaled up to include other affected counties. Other interventions include prepositioning nutritional supplement supplies in the ASAL counties by UNICEF/Kenya Red Cross and implementation of the Food for Assets/Cash for Assets programme in 13 ASAL counties by NDMA/WFP.

4. ACT Alliance response

Anglican Development Service (ADS) humanitarian and development arm of Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) has been participating in the Kajiado County Steering group meetings to plan for coordinated response. ACK has mobilized its local congregations in Kajiado County to support affected members within their congregations.

Other ACT Kenya Forum members intending to respond have been participating in coordination meetings in the affected counties and have local implementing members providing updates on the current drought situation as well as ongoing interventions.

5. Planned activities

The ACT Kenya Forum through the following members are planning to participate in the response through a joint ACT appeal: Anglican Church of Kenya, World Renew, Christian Aid, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, National Council of Churches of Kenya and Church World Service. The members will intervene in Tana River (2,000 HHs), Kilifi (4,000 HHs), Kajiado, Kwale, Samburu and Marsabit counties targeting of 11,000 households (with average HH size of 6) with a focus on the following activities:

- Provision of water trucking facilities in schools, hospitals, animal watering points and for domestic use
- Sensitization on possible conflicts over resources such as water and pasture
- Cash or food for assets to the affected populations
- Food aid to affected populations.
- Provision of hay for livestock

6. Constraint

The major constraint envisaged is difficulty in accessing some of the targeted beneficiaries due to poor road infrastructure. The delivery of humanitarian assistance is likely to be interfered with by political leaders as Kenya prepares for general elections in 2017.

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