

Alert note

Kenya Floods, 30 November 2023

Completed by: Susan Ndakalu, ACT Kenya Forum Coordinator

Date completed: 30th November 2023

Forum: ACT Kenya Forum

Type of emergency: Flood

Date of emergency-: Onset of heavy rains 8th November 2023

1. The nature of the emergency
<p>Kenya is experiencing widespread flooding caused by enhanced rains on the third and fourth weeks of October 2023 marking the beginning of the rainy season in Kenya (October – December). The rainy season was characterized by heavy storms that caused flooding , flash floods, and increased river levels (Relief Web, November 2023).</p> <p>The floods are as a result of above normal levels of rainfall caused by El Nino weather conditions and a positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) which are currently present in Pacific Ocean and Indian Ocean respectively (Relief web). The Kenya Meteorological department reported that the rainfall would peak in November (Acaps briefing note 16, Nov 2023 VOA 09/11/2023), and may continue into January 2024.</p> <p>The floods come with a dangerous combination of riverine flooding, flash floods and landslides which is categorically characterized by flush floods, flooding in low-lying plains, rivers bursting, landslides, and mudslides.</p>
2. The impact and scale of the emergency
<p>The Government of Kenya on November 27th, 2023 classified the floods emergency at the Alarm stage in the Kenya disaster management plan up from the alert stage.</p> <p>While acknowledging the floods disaster as a national concern, the President of the Republic of Kenya has acknowledged that this is a large-scale emergency that needs attention and resources (AFP, November 2023).</p> <p>Thirty-eight (38) counties out of the 47 in the country have been affected and the government has established a Command Center for Flood Emergency Response and communication at the National Disaster Operations Center.</p> <p><u>Geographical Areas Affected:</u></p> <p>Some of the worst affected counties include counties in Kenya that border Somalia (Mandera, Wajir and Tana River counties) and counties in the northern Kenya region bordering Ethiopia are also hit hard by flooding (AP News).</p> <p>Other counties affected include Garissa, Isiolo, Marsabit, Samburu, and Wajir counties, as well as Kilifi and Mombasa counties at the coast along the eastern part of Kenya. Currently, the worst affected areas are the coastal cities of Mombasa and Malindi.</p> <p>The worst affected counties are also semi-arid lands where pastoralism is the economic driver for livelihoods. These areas are still recovering from the worst drought in 40 years as well, which drove high rates of malnutrition.</p> <p><u>Numbers and characteristics of people affected:</u></p> <p>According to the Government of Kenya report the storms and flooding have affected nearly 950,000 people across the country, displacing close to 89,000 households (534,000 people). According to the media reports, 120 people have lost their lives, infrastructure worth billions of shillings destroyed, and livelihoods affected(Reuters). The rain and flooding have submerged many homes, endangered livelihoods, and businesses, damaged agricultural land, and livestock especially in the North-Eastern areas</p>

that were recovering from prolonged drought¹. Disease outbreaks are spreading rapidly in Kenya as families grapple with the floods².

Destruction, Displacement, Effect on homes and Livelihoods

Flooding has triggered massive displacement, evacuations, death of livestock, and covered large tracks of submerged croplands.

Currently 7,806 livestock deaths have been reported, 566 acreages of crops destroyed, 26 boreholes flooded, 149 latrines destroyed, 15 items of infrastructure damaged or destroyed ([ReliefWeb, Nov 2023](#)). In addition, local health facilities, schools and other public offices have been submerged in water in most of the affected counties.

In Northern Kenya, bordering Somalia, where communities have long displayed resilience in the face of water scarcity and hunger during droughts, residents now grapple with the challenges posed by rising floodwaters. Crops in large tracts of land have been submerged by the floods posing serious food shortages in the future. Also there is also flooding in urban areas particularly informal settlements where there is uncontrolled building on water ways and lack of drainage infrastructure to relieve flooding ([Relief Web](#)).

The rains have ravaged the Dadaab refugee complex in Kenya, home to some 300,000 refugees who are mostly from Somalia with increasing cases of diarrhoea have doubled in just two weeks (IRC). [According to doctors without borders](#), thousands of people in another one of the Dadaab camps have had to leave their makeshift homes and move into schools³.

Short term consequences

The affected communities have moved to neighbouring homes, schools, and churches on higher ground with Kenya Red Cross also providing emergency shelter. Affected people are being evacuated to safer places and settled in camps.

Immediate impacts of the floods include poor access to safe water as flood waters have contaminated ground water, making water unfit for human consumption. There is also scarcity of food and shelter.

The floods have also posed danger to human life and have caused extensive damage to property, crops, resulted to the loss of livestock and caused infrastructure to be non-functioning. There is also a likelihood of the deterioration of health conditions owing to waterborne diseases and malaria due to stagnant water.

Long-term consequences

With an 80% likelihood that El Niño will continue during the 'long' rainy season that usually runs from April to late May (FEWSNET 09/11/2023), this could prolong displacement and impact livelihoods.

3. Local and national capacity

Affected persons are displaced and living in camps sheltering in churches and schools in camp settings. This vulnerability exposes them to grave risks of violence, exploitation and abuse with critical protection concerns including Gender Based Violence (GBV).

National Government Response

The Kenya national government has also approved the use of civilian and military aircrafts to distribute medical supplies, food, and non-food items to Northern parts of the country. The Kenya national government has activated the National Disaster Operations Center (NDOC) which has shared coordination focal point contacts for various hubs including sector coordination focal persons contacts. Furthermore, in collaboration with other stakeholders, the national government has compiled data on the effect of El Niño in various regions.

Regional Response

Different Regional County governments have established inter-agency preparedness contingency committees comprising of the Kenya Red Cross Society, and the National and County Government to respond to any calamities related to the rains. Respective Counties have developed contingency plans and have set up a command centre to coordinate rescue and relief activities.

¹ UNOCHA, Kenya: Humanitarian impact of heavy rains and flooding - Flash Update #1 (8 November 2023)

² <https://reliefweb.int/report/ethiopia/deadly-climate-induced-flooding-displaces-nearly-16-million-people-across-horn-africa>

³ Kenya: Flood-hit refugees in Dadaab in urgent need of aid

The Kenya Red Cross Society teams are conducting needs assessments in various Counties and their teams have supported the evacuation of affected communities to safer areas. Humanitarian partners are collaborating with authorities to assess the needs, alongside scaling up response to the affected communities.

UN

The UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) activated the Inter-Agency Rapid Assessment Team (IRAT) on November 10, 2023, to assess the situation and needs of the affected population.

The UN cluster system has been activated to coordinate the response to the floods. The following clusters are active:

1. Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC): The FSAC is leading the response to ensure that the affected population has access to food. The FSAC is providing food assistance to over 10,000 people and is working to ensure that the agricultural sector is rehabilitated.
2. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster (WASH Cluster): The WASH Cluster is leading the response to ensure that the affected population has access to clean water and sanitation facilities. The WASH Cluster is providing clean water to over 10,000 people and is working to repair damaged water and sanitation infrastructure.
3. Shelter Cluster: The Shelter Cluster is leading the response to ensure that the affected population has access to safe and adequate shelter. The Shelter Cluster is providing shelter assistance to over 5,000 people and is working to repair damaged homes.
4. Health Cluster: The Health Cluster is leading the response to ensure that the affected population has access to quality healthcare. The Health Cluster is providing medical care to over 10,000 people and is working to prevent the spread of diseases.

The UN cluster system is working in close collaboration with the Government of Kenya and other partners to provide a coordinated and effective response to the floods affected counties.

In addition to the UN cluster system, the following national and international entities are present and doing their best to respond to the crisis.

ACT Kenya Forum

ACT Kenya Forum Members are currently engaged and participating in the respective counties inter-agency preparedness and response coordinating groups including: AKF Working Group, UNOCHA - KHPT, Kenya Cash Working Group and cluster systems, among others.

Following needs assessments conducted by Tana River County government and the National Disaster Management Authority, affected persons require food to be dropped urgently using airdrops as all access roads are covered by flood water (Tana River County El-Nino Updates). Information shared in this alert has been consolidated from various needs assessments conducted by Red Cross, Government and UN bodies. ACT Kenya Forum members plan to conduct more detailed needs assessments once the area is accessible.

4. Key needs and gap

According to various needs assessments conducted reported in ACAPS briefing note of 16th November 2023, affected communities are living with limited access to safe water, Food, WASH facilities, shelter, health, non-food items and rescue services ([ACAPS](#)). Many affected households are relying on family and friends for immediate support.

ACT Kenya Forum are requesting to submit an appeal.

	Indicate your intention with an X below
Rapid Response Fund (<i>intended for small and medium scale emergencies</i>)	
Appeal (<i>intended for large scale emergencies</i>)	X

Capacity details of forum members with the intention to respond in areas they have current projects as follows:

ACT Member	Geographical focus	Sectors of expertise	Support required	Estimated Budget range
National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCKK)	Tana River (Tana North sub county)	- Food - Psychosocial support	Financial support	USD 250,000
Lutheran World Federation	Garissa County Dadaab Refugee Camp	WASH	Financial support	USD 250,000
Church World Service (CWS)	Tana River (Garsen)	Food Cash for Work (Early Recovery)	Financial support	USD 250,000
Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church (KELC)	Tana River (Galole sub county)	Food Psychosocial support	Financial support	USD 250,000

5. Potential responses

ACT Kenya Forum updated their EPRP in June 2023 and identified floods as one of the key hazards and have developed a contingency plan on floods and this information from the contingency plan has been used to inform this alert.

The following forum members are operating in the worst affected regions and planning to respond to the flood emergency. Some have already started providing support to the affected communities.

International members requesting members.

1. Church World Service,
2. Lutheran World Federation - World Service (LWF-WS).

National members requesting members.

1. Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church,
2. National Council Churches of Kenya (NCKK).

Other members of ACT Kenya Forum for example Christian Aid and DKH are also providing support to the affected communities in other affected areas where they operate.