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Kenya Cash Consortium provides 4,711KES/37EUR a month to support over 15,000 households affected by food and nutrition insecurity following recent floods and desert locust infestation

Nairobi, Kenya, August 21, 2020

By the end of August, it is possible that 3.5 million Kenyans (almost 7% of the population) will be severely food insecure. This is the result of a triple threat of locusts, floods and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. These climatic and environmental impacts have affected livelihoods and supply chain throughout the country, as well as increasing prices of basic commodities. The Kenya Cash Consortium is providing cash assistance to support over 15,000 households facing food and nutrition insecurity following the recent floods and desert locust infestation.

In an urgent response to address the growing humanitarian needs across Kenya, the European Commission Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) has released 4 million Euros to the Kenya Cash Consortium.

The Kenya Cash Consortium is providing cash assistance of KES 4,711/EUR 37 a month to respond to food and basic needs of 4,163 households affected by recent floods in Garissa and Tana River, and 11,018 households affected by the recent desert locust infestation in the most hard-hit counties of Isiolo, Mandera, Marsabit, Samburu, Turkana and Wajir, working in close coordination with local authorities.

As of February 2020, 29 counties in Kenya had been affected by desert locust infestation. Thanks to aerial and ground surveillance and control operations, only two counties currently have locust swarms. However, the threat remains as food security has already been critically impacted and a potential re-infestation could occur at the end of this year. Ongoing and upcoming food security assessments and IPC analyses point towards food insecurity in the levels of 3.5 million for Kenya alone. Regionally, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has estimated that up to 25 million people are becoming severely food insecure in the IGAD region¹ as a direct consequence of the desert locusts.

In addition to the impact of desert locust, the Kenya Red Cross Society and the National Disaster Operations Centre reported that the recent floods displaced approximately 18,000 households and affected 160,000 households across 30 Kenyan counties. 7,000 people were displaced in Tana River and Garissa counties when river Tana burst its banks due to heavy rains upstream. The flooding has also increased the risk of outbreaks of infectious diseases in addition to destroying swaths of land under crop production.

COVID-19 is also severely impacting Kenya. Households are facing increased food prices, a slowdown in trade, and losses of incomes due to restrictions put in place to control the spread of the virus, such as border closures, social distancing, movement restrictions and a nationwide, nightly curfew. This has particularly impacted poor households that faced reduced income opportunities as a result. Households, with many members struggling to afford to feed their families, buy basic goods such as soap, and afford

¹ Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda



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rent. A study on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics conducted in May 2020 reported that 43.2 percent of the surveyed population was out of work.

The compounded crises are also putting unprecedented pressure on women and girls. As men move in search of pastureland or work, women are left behind with the sole responsibility of child care and providing food for the family. Moreover, expected market disruptions, food shocks, pressure on land and water resources, and increases in malnutrition will be particularly difficult for women, who often eat last and the least.

Seasonal forecasts by the Kenya Meteorological Department also suggest that a “below-average” short rains season is likely for October to December 2020, which would cause the deterioration of precious pasture and vegetation across much of the country.

The current situation has the potential to severely impact millions of poor households, particularly pastoral and agro-pastoral population, across the country. Urgent assistance is thus required to meet the immediate needs and improve the livelihoods of households severely impacted by the current triple threat of events.

The Kenya Cash Consortium is led by ACTED in partnership with IMPACT Initiative, Oxfam, Concern Worldwide, and members of the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) Humanitarian Network including: Arid Land Development Focus (ALDEF), Merti Integrated Development Programme (MIDP), Pastoralist Community Initiatives Development and Assistance (PACIDA), Pastoralist Girl Initiative (PGI), Rural Agency for Community Development and Assistance (RACIDA), Sustainable Approaches to Community Empowerment (SAPCONE) and Wajir South Development Association (WASDA).

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