



Kenya: El Niño Preparedness & Response

In numbers



Up to **2 million people** may get affected countrywide (not all will require assistance)

411,000 flood-people expected to be assisted by WFP

65,000 people already affected and in need of food assistance in two counties

Funding Update

USD 2.3 million received to preposition food in the refugee camps

USD 5.7 million received from internal advance mechanisms for preparedness actions in the ASAL



World Food Programme

Kenya:

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Highlights

- Wetter-than-normal conditions, particularly in November, have provided prime conditions for crops and livestock in most of the country.
- Flooding caused localised population displacements, deaths, inaccessible roads and crop damage.
- The rainfall season is forecast to cease in December in northern Kenya, but continue in January for the rest of the country.
- WFP is responding to 11,000 flood-affected households in Garissa and Tana River counties identified to be in need of emergency food assistance. WFP's other food assistance operations in Kenya have continued with minor disruptions.
- WFP is supporting five counties with additional logistics capacity.

Situation Update

The ongoing short rains have seen wetter-than-average conditions in Kenya because of the El Niño phenomenon. This has led to prime conditions for agriculture in most of the country but also the risk of large-scale flooding. So far, wetter-than-normal condition levels are close to the average for El Niño seasons and, if rainfall forecasts to late-December are correct, a repeat of the 1997 event is ruled out. However, there have been modest but locally significant flash floods, landslides and localized flooding, as is typical of El Niño seasons. The Kenya Meteorological Department reported that rainfall distribution, both in time and space, was generally good over most parts of the country in November.

Vegetation cover is well above average across most of the country, leading to a recovery of previously drought-affected areas and very good prospects for pastoralists. However, vegetation conditions remain poor in parts of northcentral and northeastern Kenya, due to localized, drier-than-average conditions. As the season comes to an end, these areas may remain a point of concern. The rainfall is however, likely to extend into January 2016 over parts of western, central and southeastern Kenya.

In Tana River and Garissa counties, displaced families are settled in temporary shelters on higher ground as the heavy rainfall in the central highlands has caused seasonal rivers to overflow downstream. The level of water in the River Tana has been rising, as water at Kiambere - one of the hydro-electric power generation

dams - has overflowed.

The main highway from Garissa to Mandera through Wajir remains accessible but with difficulties, especially on Wajir south, and between Kotulo and Elwak. Accessibility to remote markets and distribution centres that were cut off last week is improving.

Government & Other Actors' Response



The Government at national and county levels will be the first line of response for the potential El Niño emergency, and it has made efforts to prepare for the expected El Niño impacts. The Government has taken a lead in El Niño contingency planning, with the Deputy President chairing the El Niño Task Force and coordination through the National Disaster Operations Centre. Humanitarian partners are supporting the preparedness efforts through the sector working groups. The Government informed United Nations partners and donors that the anticipated magnitude of the expected emergency is beyond its capacity to respond alone.

In late-October, the Government's Hunger Safety Net Programme (HSNP) transferred KES 478 million (USD4.7 million) to 187,000 vulnerable households in parts of Marsabit, Wajir, Mandera and Turkana. This was a one-off payment to households to HSNP households with active bank accounts but not receiving regular payments.

The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) has disbursed KES 52.8 million to 23 counties from the Drought Contingency Fund. These have been used to disseminate early warning information on flooding to communities, support coordination at county level, and vaccinate livestock against Rift Valley fever.

The Kenya Red Cross Society has taken a lead in monitoring the humanitarian situation countrywide. They are assisting the Government in moving people to higher grounds, carrying out rapid assessments where needed, and distributing non-food items. Other non-governmental organizations (international and national) are also assisting with localized responses.

In Mandera, the River Daua burst its banks, resulting in flooding and destruction of crops. The county government intends to provide relief food to farming communities in three wards that have lost their harvests, as the farmland remains flooded. In Wajir, 2,600 families who were previously displaced by inter-clan conflicts along the Eldas-Wajir north border are in precarious conditions as the rainfall has destroyed their houses and livelihoods. The county government is currently assisting them to return to their homes, but it is expected that more assistance will be needed as they resettle.

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WFP Preparedness & Response



With the USD5.7 million that WFP in Kenya received from the corporate advance financing mechanism, WFP has purchased food and is prepared for cash transfers for the flood response.

WFP started emergency food distributions for flood-affected populations in Garissa and Tana River counties on 8 December. A Kenya Initial Rapid Assessment (KIRA) has confirmed that 6,170 households (37,000 people) in Tana River need emergency food assistance. In Garissa, a meeting held on 6 December approved emergency food assistance for 4,620 households (27,700 people). Accessibility to some of the sites where the displaced people have been relocated remains a challenge. The Government has committed to provide tractors to help pull out food trucks if they get stuck. WFP is working with the Kenya Red Cross Society to implement the distributions in Garissa and Tana River counties.

In Isiolo, Mandera and Wajir, WFP's general food distributions for the November cycle (part of the response to the August long rains assessment) have cushioned the impact of flooding for some of the flood-affected families.

WFP's logisticians remain on ground, supporting five hot-spot counties i.e. Baringo, Garissa, Samburu, Marsabit, Tana River and Wajir.

Resourcing Update

WFP received some additional donor funding to pre-position food in the refugee camps, ahead of the rains. However, so far, no donor has committed additional funds to WFP for the impact of El Niño flooding. The advance financing of USD5.7 million is meeting the initial anticipated requirements but this loan will need to be repaid from future contributions from donors. WFP is responding to El Niño flooding through the relief component of the protracted relief and recovery operation 200736: *"Bridging Relief and Resilience in arid and semi-arid areas of Kenya"*.

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