



## National Drought Management Authority

Email: [info@ndma.go.ke](mailto:info@ndma.go.ke)  
Fax No.: 254 (20) 2227982  
Telephone: 254 (20) 2227496/2227168  
254 722200656/ 734652220  
When replying please quote:

P.O. Box 53547 - 00200  
NAIROBI  
KENYA

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### PRESS RELEASE

#### Drought continues to deteriorate in Kenya, Horn of Africa

**Nairobi, 11th July 2022:** The early termination of the March to May 2022 long rains season has worsened the drought situation in the country, with 19 of the 23 arid and semi-arid (ASAL) counties affected.

**Six** counties namely Laikipia, Mandera, Marsabit, Wajir, Isiolo and Samburu are classified in **Alarm** drought phase while **13**, including Kilifi, Turkana, West Pokot, Kwale, Meru North, Embu (Mbeere), Garissa, Kajiado, Kitui, Nyeri (Kieni), Taita Taveta, Tharaka Nithi and Tana River, are in **Alert** drought phase. **Four** counties - Baringo, Lamu, Narok and Makueni - are in **Normal** drought phase.

Below average performance of the rains has negatively impacted crop and livestock production across the ASALs. This is the fourth consecutive poor rainfall season since 2020. The deteriorating drought situation has increased the number of people in need of relief assistance to 4.1 million in June from 3.5 million in May.

Child malnutrition rates remain high, with Garissa, Isiolo, Mandera, Marsabit, Samburu, Tana River, Turkana and Wajir being worst affected. The malnutrition trend in these counties is mostly due to decline in milk production, hence reduced milk consumption at household level. It is aggravated by poor dietary diversity, poor child feeding practices and reduced food intake.

*"After four consecutive under-performing rainfall seasons, conditions across Kenya continue to deteriorate rapidly, with significant impacts on pasture and milk production and livelihoods across the ASALs. The Government is scaling up relief assistance to affected communities with the help of our development partners, led by UN Agencies," said Lt Col. (Rtd) Hared Hassan, National Drought Management Authority Chief Executive Officer.*

Kenya is among Horn of Africa countries affected by the current severe drought in the region that has left millions across the country, Somalia and Ethiopia facing acute food insecurity and malnutrition.

Decline in livestock prices, increase in cereal prices and the general increase in prices of most consumer goods continues to undermine the purchasing power of households, exacerbating food insecurity.

The Government has enhanced drought interventions in the affected sectors, including provision of food and safety nets, livestock offtake, water trucking and provision of livestock feeds and supplements.

*"Last week, the Government released KSh 667 million for cash transfers under the Hunger Safety Net Programme targeting about 100,000 households," said Lt. Col. (Rtd) Hassan.*

The state of pasture and browse in most ASAL counties ranges from fair to poor. A slight improvement was recorded due to slight showers received in May, leading to minimal regeneration. However, this is not expected to last long due to high concentration of livestock in grazing areas.

Livestock mortality as at May 2022 stands at more than 2.4 million across all species, with the most affected counties being Samburu, Mandera, Isiolo, Lamu, Marsabit and Garissa. This calls for immediate support to both commercial and on-site livestock off take across the ASALs in the face of the deteriorating drought situation and elevated risk of a crisis situation following the forecast of a poor October to December season.

UN agencies, international and local NGOs as well as the private sector continue to support and complement Government drought mitigation efforts.

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**For more information, please contact:**

Abiya Ochola  
Communications Officer  
Tel: 0722405876  
Email: peter.abiya@ndma.go.ke