

NDMA disburses funds to mitigate effects of drought

The National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) has so far (as at October 3, 2016) disbursed a total of Ksh53,012,873 to various drought affected counties. The funds will support various drought response activities, especially in supply of water and livestock production.

The NDMA runs the national drought Early Warning System (EWS), which started to signal some drought stress in a few sub-counties in June 2016. As the situation deteriorated, it triggered disbursement of finances from the Drought Contingency Fund (DCF) at the beginning of August, a €10m fund supported by the European Union for quick action before slide into disaster.

The current dry spell experienced in parts of the country is attributed to the below-average performance of the March-April-May 2016 long rains, during which some arid and semi-arid (ASAL) counties experienced poor temporal and uneven spatial rainfall distribution. In addition, the rains ended earlier than normal in many areas.

Generally, the long rains were erratic and poorly distributed in time and space. Although the rains picked up across the country in April and early May, they were depressed especially in Tana River, Garissa, Kilifi, Kwale and Taita Taveta, with a reduction of 50 to 75 percent recorded in Tana River and the north western parts of Garissa County (Balambala and Sankuli), when compared to the long-term average for these areas.

Most affected areas

Normally, most ASAL areas experience dry conditions during the period between June and September. However, areas that received depressed rainfall during March-April-May long rains season are currently facing significant water and pasture shortage. The most affected counties include Kilifi, Garissa (especially in Fafi and Ijara sub-counties), parts of Tana River, Kinango and Lunga Lunga sub counties in Kwale, Lamu West, Mwatate sub county of Taita Taveta, Kitui South, Kibwezi East and Kibwezi West sub counties in Makueni and Moyale sub county of Marsabit. Consequently, NDMA has disbursed funds from the DCF kitty as follows;

- **Garissa County** - initial **Kshs11,024,800** to support water, Livestock and Health & Nutrition sectors.
- **Kilifi County** - **Ksh11,594,050** to support Security, Water and Livestock sectors, including livestock off-take for slaughter in Kayafungo, Bamba, Mariakani.
- **Kwale County** - **Ksh6,539,043** for support to Livestock, Health & Nutrition, Security and Water sectors.
- **Tana River County** - **Ksh3,298,400** to support livestock, Health & Nutrition, security, Education and Water sectors.
- **Taita Taveta County** - **Ksh 7,732,980** to support Livestock, Health & Nutrition, Security and Water sectors.
- **Kitui County** - **Ksh7,767,200** to support Livestock, Health & Nutrition and water sectors.
- **Makueni County** - **Ksh 5,056,400** to support Livestock, Health & Nutrition and Water sectors

All the 23 ASAL counties are eligible for funding under DCF based on drought severity as signalled by the early warning system. Various ASAL counties are also implementing DCF funded projects aimed at building resilience of communities to drought

Possible La Niña condition

According to the short rains (October-November-December 2016) forecast, many parts of the country will experience depressed rainfall that will also be poorly distributed both in time and space. The expected depressed rainfall will be mainly driven by the evolving La Niña condition. The

occurrence of a La Niña event could significantly worsen the current drought situation since pasture condition in the ASAL areas of north eastern, north western, south eastern and coast region of Kenya is expected to further deteriorate during the next dry season (Jan-March 2017) if the short rains will be poor. A La Niña occurrence will have negative effects on availability of water and pasture that will lead to;

- Poor livestock body condition
- Decrease in milk availability
- Increase in human-wildlife conflicts
- Livestock migration
- Insecurity and resource-based conflicts
- Death of large numbers of weak animals
- Poor sanitation and hygiene conditions
- Likely reduction in food availability and access due to declined purchasing power.

This underscores the need for the country to prepare for a possible La Niña event. The NDMA is currently supporting various counties to prepare for a possible La Nina occurrence.