

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



JOINT PRESS BRIEFING DROUGHT AND FOOD SECURITY SITUATION IN ASAL COUNTIES

Good morning Members of the press and thank you for attending this briefing.

- As you may be aware, parts of the country are experiencing drought due to poor rain performance. The government is fully aware and well apprised of the situation.
- Yesterday, with my counterparts from the National Treasury, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries and Ministry of Water and irrigation.
- We held a consultative meeting to review the drought and food security situation in the country, with a view to assessing the interventions we have been taking, and gaps that need immediate and medium term interventions.
- During the meeting, we noted that the performance of long rains **(March to May, 2016)** was below normal in most of the ASAL Counties. The most affected are Kilifi, Kwale, Tana River and Taita Taveta. Other affected counties include Garissa, Wajir, Mandera, Isiolo, Marsabit, Makueni, Kitui and Samburu.
- As a result, the drought and food security situation in these counties range from moderate to severe. This has resulted in reduced forage and water for livestock, deterioration in livestock body condition, poor crop harvest especially at the Coast and lower Eastern regions.

- Further, there is water shortage and increased risk of malnutrition. As a result **1.3 million** people in ASAL counties are in need of relief food.
- The interventions are by both the National and County Governments and include; provision of relief food, cash transfers, water related interventions, health and nutrition and livestock disease control.

On the part of the National Government:

- a) In August 2016 the National Treasury released ksh250million to the State department of Special programmes for emergency relief food.
- b) The Ministry of Devolution and Planning through the National Drought Management Authority has, since July released to the affected counties Kshs. 54 million to support intervention gaps in livestock, education, water, health and nutrition and conflict management.
- c) In this month of October alone, the Ministry dispatched the following food stuffs to ASAL counties:
 - 3,500 (90Kg) bags of maize
 - 2,700 (50Kg) bags of beans
 - 10,000 (50 Kg) bags rice
 - 1,000 cartons of vegetable oil

This is in addition to the foodstuff sent to these counties in the last 4 months.

- d) The Ministry of water has mobilized 20 extra water bowsers for emergency water supply in the most affected areas.
- We recognize and appreciate the complementary interventions by County Governments in the food, livestock, water, health and nutrition sectors.
 - Going forward both National and County Governments will monitor the situation and take appropriate interventions, meanwhile should there

be deterioration, the government has decided to take the following urgent measures:

- 1) Constitute an inter-ministerial joint team to determine and further identify any gaps in interventions to enable comprehensive response.
 - 2) To meet again in a week's time to take appropriate action following the recommendations of the joint team. The relevant ministries that will be involved in this joint operation are; the National Treasury, Interior and National Coordination, Devolution and Planning, Health, Education, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, and Environment and Natural Resources and Ministry of Water and Irrigation.
 - 3) To identify and scale up investment in the medium and long term resilience building interventions to avoid recurrence of food insecurity and loss of livelihood as a result of drought. The National Government will quickly reach-out to County Governments to take up similar initiatives.
- Ladies and Gentlemen, we would like to assure all Kenyans that the Government is on top of this situation and shall ensure that the necessary help reaches the most needy on time.
 - Our monitoring teams on the ground are alert and we invite you to work constructively with them to forward information that will ensure that not single Kenyan suffers the ravages of drought.

We thank you very much.