



February 2003

Kenya

Humanitarian Update

Overview

The government has continued with its war against corruption and plunderers of the national economy by announcing that it was investigating past misdeeds and would soon net those implicated in running down the national economy.

In order to stem a tide of industrial unrest, the government directed investors operating at the Export Processing Zones (EPZs) to raise their minimum wages to levels set out by the government with immediate effect.

Some schools are having to cope with a 100 % or more increase after more than one million out of school children enrolled in various schools after introduction of free and compulsory primary education. In many schools, teachers were forced to do shift work with separate groups of children in the mornings and afternoons to accommodate the extra pupils.

A International Organisation for Migration (IOM) project to help Uganda ex-combatants return home has identified a total of 230 ex-combatants and 126 dependants for return assistance. Registration took place from January 20 to February 7, and IOM interviewed a total of 588 persons including 12 child soldiers who responded to an amnesty granted by the Uganda government to exiled former rebels. In total, the number of persons registered was 930 which included dependants.

Close to 30,000 people have been affected by a malaria upsurge in Kitui and Kisii districts in January and February. The disease killed 68 people in Kitui District. The affected were treated at different medical centres. It was feared that the number could be higher as some deaths had occurred at home without being reported. Most of the health centres and dispensaries are ill-equipped and lack personnel to cope with the increased numbers of patients. The reported cases are higher than the usual figures for the month. Medics working in the area said the upsurge was due to higher rainfall in the month of December creating conducive environment for breeding of mosquitoes that spread the disease.

At the expiry of a one month amnesty granted to proscribed Mungiki sect followers, a total of 957 Mungiki suspects had been arrested and charged in court. In the last two months, the police have handled 1,124 Mungiki related cases. Most of the arrests were done in Nairobi, Rift Valley and Central provinces.

The Government had allowed the sect followers an amnesty until February 13th but only 167 adherents surrendered to the police. Those

that surrendered were interrogated and recorded statements. Those arrested were charged with murder and other offences. The government announced it was setting up a special transport task force to look into the matatu business so as to stop interference from Mungiki and other groups. The group seems to have been surviving on money taxed from matatu owners. The arrest of Mungiki followers also stretched the capacity of jails that are already overcrowded.

The United Nations Development Fund Kenya Country Office has donated US\$100,000 towards reconstruction of a weir on River Perkerra in Baringo, destroyed by floods on December 21, last year. This was in response to an appeal launched by members of Kenya Food Security Meeting (KFSM) in January.

The flood destroyed 300 houses and submerged another 1,700 in water. Pit latrines were swept away raising fears of an outbreak of water borne diseases. The livelihoods of 4,000 was threatened following the destruction of the irrigation scheme. It is estimated that the scheme generates between Ksh50-60 million per year.

Consultations between the Kenya Government and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) are at an advanced stage on a possible review of encampment policy practised in Kenya. UNHCR has been talking with the ministries of Home Affairs and Internal Security and that of Planning and National Development.

UNHCR said indications are that refugees in Kenya could soon be allowed to work and interact freely with Kenyans. Also the National Rainbow Coalition Government has indicated that it would enact a fresh refugee legislation that will spell out roles and responsibility of various actors in this area.

Meanwhile, illicit arms that have been collected over a period of time will be destroyed at the Uhuru Gardens (Langata) in Nairobi to mark the 3rd Anniversary of the Nairobi Declaration on Small Arms and Illicit Light Weapons.

On Consolidation of initiatives of IGAD-CEWARN Community Policing, Steering Committee on Conflict Management and others, a secretariat dealing with peace building and conflict management has been established under the Office of the President and is based at KICC's 28th floor. All the initiatives shall be under the National Focal Point (NFP) which will be acting as an umbrella body. A Coordinator has already been appointed to work on the administrative issues of consolidating the above.

The second phase of capacity building on disaster preparedness will start in March. The trainings will be held throughout the republic in the eight provinces.

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Mungiki remains a security threat

SECURITY

Mungiki sect followers continue to pose a security threat in various parts of the country. Despite strict measures adopted by the new government, the problem has refused to go away. Matatu (taxi) owners in the Kayole-Gikomba route refused to operate for one day on February 18, to protest against harassment by Mungiki members and police.

They accused the police of conniving with the illegal sect members to extort money from their vehicles. The money was collected through four 'toll stations' where each *mat* is required to pay Sh200 daily in addition to Sh50 per trip (approx US\$3.2). The police were accused of being accomplices after they failed to intervene despite numerous complaints from operators.

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The government announced it was setting up a special transport task force to look into the matatu business so as to stop interference from Mungiki and other groups. The group seems to have been surviving on money taxed from matatu owners. The arrest of Mungiki followers also stretched the capacity of jails that are already overcrowded.

As the Government was calling on Mungiki sect followers to surrender, they attacked Dandora Estate, Nairobi, and killed two policemen on February 5. They also shot and injured three people in a matatu. This was the first time the gang was said to have used a gun in an attack. They then moved on to a bus where they robbed the passengers, forced them to disembark and set it alight.

They then attacked police under cover killing two of them before they could get sufficient reinforcements to quell the chaos. Some uniformed policemen ran for their lives and changed into civilian clothes offered by the locals so as to avoid detection by the gang.

A police helicopter later appeared on the scene and the gang fled into the nearby forests. In the ensuing gunfire fight with the police two members were shot dead close to where one policeman was killed and two more shot dead in the Kangundo Road. The police arrested 71 people in connection with the violence.

On February 5th, 42 members of the Mungiki and Kamjesh were charged in court and answered charges of being members of unlawful sects, preparing to cause chaos and commit crimes in the Dandora Estate on January 30th. They were also accused of carrying traditional weapons. Each was

fined Sh5,000 or serve three months in jail.

Elsewhere, a Swede was shot dead in the Kakuma area in Turkana on February 4, when travelling between Kakuma and Lokichokio. He was in a team of four. Their landrover was sprayed with gunfire. A school teacher was shot dead on the same day by gangsters.

In West Pokot, four workers of an international NGO were held at gunpoint for six hours by a lone Pokot herdsman who stopped them after his animals fled from a field they were grazing in upon the approach of their vehicle. The representatives were forced to lie on the ground for several hours as he questioned them about the purpose of their mission. They were eventually freed when the gunman walked away.

On February 9th, an agricultural expert who worked for the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in Kenya was shot dead outside his home in the evening in a failed robbery attempt. As he waited for the gate to be opened, two men approached the drivers side which had the window down and asked the driver in Kiswahili to give them his mobile phone and cash.

Two Kenyan passengers in the car began translating what the robbers had demanded. The driver turned to the men and pointing at them asked them what they wanted. At this point they drew a gun and shot him. The man had worked in Kenya since 1995.

The provincial administration has ordered a crack down on perpetrators of violence on the border of Migori and Gucha districts. The order followed reports of an alleged planned attack. Border residents had been distracted from development activities by the recurrent skirmishes dating back to 1997. Most residents of Ochodororo, Chamgiwadu and Kitembe areas were fled their homes in the first week of February in anticipation of attacks.

Regular and administration police were deployed to the area to restore calm. One house and a sugarcane plantation were burnt during an attack. Elders from both sides were asked to identify the perpetrators of the clashes and report them to the police.

On February 18, a farmhouse and five acres of wattle woodland belonging to former minister Nicholas Biwott was torched and destroyed by arsonists. The attack was carried out by a group of close to 500 people.

A public transport vehicle was attacked by four armed bandits when travelling from Kakuma to Lokichoggio about 3 kilometres south of Lokichoggio Town. Two passengers on board were killed while several others sustained serious injuries.

The bandits wore face veils to conceal their identity. The attack occurred at the same spot where a Swede was killed early this month. The police have been requested to intensify regular

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Nutrition survey for drought prone zone

NUTRITION

The Kenya Food Security Steering Group has commissioned nutritional surveys in the Arid and Semi Arid Districts most affected by a persistent drought since 1999.

support

UNICEF has been involved in the planning of the surveys and will be involved in the implementation of the surveys through provision of technical, material and financial support to all implementing partners. The Ministry of Health and Arid Lands Resource Management Project staff will take part.

World Vision, Christian Children Fund and Oxfam GB will be carrying out their survey in Turkana.

They are expected to start from 17-28th of March. In Mandera, the nutrition survey will be undertaken by Oxfam Quebec

in three zones: Mandera East (Zone 1), Mandera West (Zone 2), and Rhamu and Ashabito (Zone 3) while MSF-S will survey Mandera Town.

Action Against Hunger (AAH-UK) cannot participate in the survey this year. If no other partner is identified to survey the AAH Elwak survey zone, this area might not be covered.

Tentative date for Mandera survey is from 17th March to April 4th.

drought

Mandera and Turkana have been particularly affected by consecutive droughts in the past decade.

Since 1999, the districts have experienced successive droughts. The short rains assessment carried out in November 2001 indicated that Mandera dis-

trict was, unlike many other districts, had not recovered from the drought.

Surveys were conducted in February and March 2001 by Action Against Hunger-UK (AAH-UK), Médecins Sans Frontières-Spain (MSF-S) and UNICEF.

malnutrition

Generally, all these surveys reported high global acute malnutrition rates of between 20% and 30% (in z-scores). In March 2002, with the support of UNICEF-KCO, Oxfam-Quebec carried out two anthropometric surveys in Mandera in March 2002, in collaboration with MSF-Spain and AAH-UK. The results indicated high rates of malnutrition. Oxfam-Quebec will work with AAH-UK and MSF-Spain in Mandera.

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patrols along this road and preferably, physically position officers at the hot spot.

Eight people were killed in the third week of February after Pokot and Turkana clashed in a cattle raid that resulted in the loss of 300 heads of cattle stolen in Turkana District. The attack involved about 100 armed cattle rustlers from West Pokot who pounced on Turkana herdsmen as they grazed their animals in Katilu on February 17. A fierce gunfight ensued, leaving eight people dead and many others injured.

Elsewhere, herdsmen from Turkana and West Pokot districts have formed a joint vigilante group to curb insecurity on their common border. The 300 youths pledged to assist Representatives from Turkana and Pokot resolved this during a peace meeting held at Lochakula water point on the border.

They pledged to end the hostilities, saying traditional ways

of communication will be used besides patrolling the border. The youths accused some chiefs in both communities of abetting raids and asked the government to discipline them.

Herdsmen from Hamalel Masol, Lochakula, Kalosia, Lokwamusing and Lokorie attended the meeting which was sponsored by Community Animals and Participatory Epidemiology Unit from the Inter African Union Bureau for Animal Resources.

In another development, more than 500 sheep and goats stolen from the Turkana community on their border with West Pokot District have been recovered. The animals were handed over to the owners by the West Pokot security team led by District Commissioner.

The DC said the government was planning a major security operation to disarm both communities to restore lasting peace in the region. The DC accused leaders in the two districts of encouraging cattle raids, leading to loss

of life and property.

Turkana DC said the government would set up police posts in Nakwomoru to beef up security on the border. He said the number of security personnel will be increased in border areas to enable pastoralists exploit pasture and water resources.

An official of the Peace Unit of the African Union Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (AUIBAR) said the organisation will assist the government to restore peace among the border communities in order to stop transfer of animal diseases across the borders during raids.

Meanwhile, Turkana MP has asked the government to disarm pastoral communities in the North Rift. He said increasing incidents of cattle rustling and banditry were caused by illegal guns.

He said the number of illegal arms in the hands of civilians, especially in towns like Lodwar was alarming.

Food for assets project takes off

FOOD SECURITY

Office of the President's Food for Assets project has taken off with 11 projects starting this month. The programme aims at helping vulnerable communities build structures that will improve food security and is known as Disaster Preparedness Fund.

The project is being implemented with the assistance of World Food Programme and other partners at the district level. In Isiolo District, work has started in seven irrigation and agriculture schemes and four water projects.

begin

In Turkana and Mandera districts, projects are expected to begin in March. Agreements have been signed with implementing partners and the food monitors were trained in February. Training in the four other districts under the Fund - Marsabit, Garissa, Ijara and Wajir - was to start at the end of this month. The Implementing Partners (IP) have already been identified by the District Steering Groups (DSGs), except for Ijara and Wajir where nominees for the IP are yet to be received.

Maize supplies have been low because the short-rains harvest has not started yet, and inflows from the neighbouring countries have been minimal. Some producers and traders have

also been withholding maize in anticipation of better prices in the second quarter of the year. There is little activity in the markets with only NCPB and a few traders purchasing stocks. Most millers are now processing stocks purchased earlier.

Although the cumulative short-rains maize harvest is close to average, this total masks localized shortfalls, such as the mediocre production in the lowland districts of the Coast Province, parts of Mwingi, Makueni and Machakos Districts. Several of these areas overwhelmingly depend on short-rains output and will suffer significant food security consequences as a result

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD) anticipates that cumulative national maize stocks will be sufficient to meet the country's needs only through June 2003. This heightens the importance of a favorable long-rains season: national stocks will deplete at the same time as the new harvest from the early season areas begin to come into the market.

fund

The World Bank has agreed to fund food security programmes in the country at a cost of about Sh40 billion, the Govern-

ment has said. The programme is to be spread over the next six years with the country getting Sh6.6 billion to ensure food sustainability annually.

Kenya requires about Sh4 billion to replenish its strategic food reserves, including the target of about 3 million bags of maize. The money would meet the shortfall of about a million bags even with the forthcoming harvest, which is expected to produce 500,000 bags of maize to top up the existing reserve of 1.5 million bags.

The Minister for Internal Security thanked World Food Programme saying it's school feeding programme had helped increase enrolment in primary schools in various districts and urged the organisation to make the scheme "a permanent feature as a way of supporting the National Rainbow Coalition (Narc) Government's pledge for a universal free and quality primary education."

The school Enhanced Feeding Programme benefits 1.1 million children. In the past two years World Food Programme brought in foodstuff worth about Sh24 billion for the programme.

Wajir sanitation workshop this April

SANITATION

The United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF) is sponsoring a workshop on sanitation in Wajir Town in April.

selected

The town was selected because of its unique sanitation situation. The town depends on bucket latrines for the majority of the population's sanitation requirements.

This system coupled with poor hygiene and sanitation practices, a proliferation of unprotected shallow wells as a result of the high water table found in the area and a burgeoning population, leave its

residents vulnerable to cholera and other communicable disease outbreaks.

Currently as in the past, the local government, communities and NGOs have worked to address a large number of sanitation-related issues: cholera outbreak response and prevention, improvement to the bucket latrine system, improved quality of water and greater community awareness and hygiene education.

success

Despite the success of some programs, further work, collaboration and partnership is re-

quired in order to develop a coherent sanitation strategy for Wajir Town.

strategy

UNICEF is working with the Public Health Office and Merlin to sponsoring a workshop to develop a long-term based strategy on the sanitation situation in the Town. The workshop, planned for early April 2003, will bring together local stakeholders, technical experts and donors. (For more information contact Gabrielle on 444-5370/0498 or gabrielle@merlin.org.uk.)

The town depends on bucket latrines for the majority of the population's sanitation requirements.

No respite for drought prone arid zones

LIVESTOCK

The Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ALRMP) reported that pasture, browse and water conditions were much better this season compared to the same period in the previous four years.

However, there are still areas of serious concern, including West Pokot, Baringo, and parts of Mandera, Samburu, Koibatek, Marakwet, and Kajiado Districts.

loss

These particular pastoral communities have had little respite from the drought that begun in 1999. Although West Pokot pastoralists have used their clan relationships to keep a large proportion of their livestock in Uganda, most of them have in addition to suffering livestock losses, also had their coping mechanisms such as selling firewood and charcoal, consuming the doum plant and basket weaving largely eroded.

Both the camel and goat/cattle keeping pastoralists migrated to the dry season grazing

areas confined within the district during January. Movement into neighboring Eastern Province's dry season grazing areas by the goat/cattle keeping pastoralists has been limited by insecurity in that region.

The Kenya Food Security Meeting sent out teams to assess short rains food security in Turkana South, West Pokot, Baringo and Kerio Valley and Lowland Ukambani areas (Machakos south, Mwingi, and Kitui). West Pokot and Baringo have been in the news lately due to the extent of the famine. The current famine is a result of a prolonged drought that has hit the area over the past years.

favourable

Although this year's favorable conditions have clearly benefited pastoralists, the 2003 long-rains season is viewed as critical in consolidating the food security gains attained since 2002.

It will take several good seasons for pastoral communities to recover a viable asset base after

the losses experienced in the past few years.

seven

Seven districts in the arid zone in Kenya are to benefit from a project that is expected to open up markets for livestock.

So far an auction yard and a loading ramp have been built in the project jointly undertaken by the Arid Lands Resource Management Project and the Isiolo County Council.

It will cost a total of Sh1.5 million. The funds will also cover grading and murraming the road leading to the market.

The market facility will have a livestock holding ground and a yard to be used by livestock producers from Isiolo, Marsabit, Moyale, Laikipia, Samburu, Meru North and Wajir districts. It is hoped that the project will boost earnings from livestock sale and raise living standards of the pastoralists.

West Pokot and Baringo have been in the news lately due to the extent of the famine.

UNDP donation saves Perkerra Scheme

DONATION

The United Nations Development Programme Kenya Country Office has donated US \$100,000 towards reconstruction of a weir on River Perkerra in Baringo, destroyed by floods on December 21, last year. This was in response to an appeal launched by members of Kenya Food Security Meeting (KFSM) last month.

The flood destroyed 300 houses and submerged another 1,700 in water. Pit latrines were swept away raising fears of an outbreak of water borne diseases. The livelihoods of 4,000 was threatened following the destruction of the irrigation scheme. It is estimated that the scheme generates between Ksh.50-60 million per year.

The Perkerra Irrigation Scheme is located in Marigat

Division of Baringo District which is largely semi-arid. The water that serves the scheme is diverted from the river to the scheme by gravity through a weir constructed across the river. It was built in 1954 and has undergone periodic maintenance.

The funds will be used to repair the causeway and barrier, as well as the banks and dykes. Destruction of the weir created fears that agricultural activities would cease leading to food insecurity. Crops grown in the scheme include maize, onions, chillies, watermelons, paw paws, vegetables and orchards for domestic and commercial use. Due to its location in a semi-arid region it depends solely on irrigation. Since the floods, water supply to Marigat Town and the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) had

been disrupted. Temporary reconstruction work cost Sh500,000 but there were fears that it could not survive heavy inflows of water expected during the long rains.

The Kenya Food Security Meeting (KFSM) had been urged to mobilize resources in order to save crops by reconstructing the weir because the livelihood of thousands of people in Marigat is directly or indirectly dependent on the irrigation scheme. It was also feared that the temporary works already done may not survive the long rains expected to begin in March this year. The disaster committee that was coordinating the activities has also requested for construction of a permanent dyke and control of river-bank erosion upstream.

Refugees to have freedom of movement

REFUGEES

Consultations between the Kenya Government and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) are at an advanced stage on a possible review of encampment policy. UNHCR has been talking with the ministries of Home Affairs and Internal Security and that of Planning and National Development.

UNHCR said indications are that refugees in Kenya could soon be allowed to work and interact freely with Kenyans. Also the National Rainbow Coalition Government has indicated that it would enact a fresh refugee legislation that will spell out roles and responsibility of various actors in this area.

The refugees agency hopes that the Government will be more active in reception, registration, determination of status and management of asylum seekers and refugee cases in the country. Most of the responsibilities have been taken up by the UNHCR with the Government supplying security at the camps.

The move towards more integration was sparked off by a food crisis that has affected the refugee population nutrition status. Due to the encampment policy, refugees rely 100% on various agencies to meet all their requirements. The much-criticised encampment policy has placed about 200,000 people in two camps in the extremely arid regions of Kakuma (Turkana) and Dadaab (Garissa). They are denied the right to own cattle or cultivate, move freely, work, or integrate with local people, thus rendering them entirely dependent on humanitarian hand-outs.

As part of the anticipated changes, the

Government and UNHCR are working on a joint ID card for refugees.

An anticipated break in the refugee food pipeline has been stemmed by a donation of 6,280 mt of food for refugees by the US through World Food Programme. The food is expected arrive at the Mombasa port in May, and in the meantime WFP would borrow against this pledge.

This month, the average food ration given to each refugee was 1,878 kilocalories and rations were set to fall further unless urgent food donations were received. In January, rations in both camps were cut from 2,120 kilocalories per day to about 1,600.

UNHCR expressed fears that if the refugees were unable to receive adequate food, it could spark off conflict as they compete for limited sources with the local communities as well as other refugees. Also there could be increased insecurity because of a rise in theft cases among refugees. The agency also feared that there could be more cases of school drop outs among the refugee population as they abandon school in search of food as well as an increase in malnutrition cases.

An appeal launched this month by an umbrella of church-affiliated groups, Action by Churches Together (ACT), reported that almost 45 % of families were eating only one meal per day in Kakuma. Firewood supplied by UNHCR met only 30 % of cooking needs, which meant that some families were unable to eat even when they had food, the report said. Water was also in short supply, due to disrepair of water storage facilities and taps, in a region where temperatures averaged 35 degrees Celsius.

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Ugandan ex-combatants to leave in March

EX-COMBATANTS

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has identified a total of 230 ex-combatants and 126 dependants for return assistance to Uganda.

During the registration period from Jan 20 to February 7, IOM interviewed a total of 588 persons including 12 child soldiers who responded to an amnesty granted by the Uganda government to exiled former rebels.

In total, the number of persons registered was 930 which included dependants.

In order to arrive at genuine cases, the IOM set a criteria for selection. The criteria used to select those who would be assisted under the programme included ; one should have denounced rebellion and should have belonged to an identifiable

rebel movement after the current government took office.

The cut off date established by the Amnesty Commission was from 1986. The criteria eliminated economic migrants or those who migrated to Kenya for various reasons before the current government took power.

In total, the number of persons registered was 930 which included dependants.

In order to facilitate the caseload's movement across the border, the Uganda High Commission in Kenya will issue them with emergency travel documents.

Those eligible will receive medical screening before travelling. This is IOM's standard procedure to determine fitness to travel for all migrants moving

across borders. It is hoped that the first caseload will travel in early March. Once in Uganda, they will be handed over to the Amnesty Commission and will receive rehabilitation and reintegration support from IOM and some NGOs. SOS has offered to support children falling within their mandate.

The Ugandan Amnesty Act provides for an amnesty for Ugandan nationals involved in "acts of a warlike nature", and covers any Ugandan residing within or outside the country who has been engaged in armed rebellion or war against the government since 1986.

There are about 1,000 former rebels based in Kenya, who arrived from bases in southern Sudan when the terms of the amnesty were announced.

Malaria upsurge affects about 30,000 people

HEALTH

Partners who responded to the upsurge established a District Malaria Intersectoral Committee that would coordinate essential activities against future cases.

A malaria upsurge killed 68 people in Kitui District in January and February. The disease had affected 11,800 people who were treated at different medical centres. It was feared that the number could be higher as some deaths had occurred at home without being reported. Most of the health centres and dispensaries are ill-equipped and lack personnel to cope with the increased numbers of patients.

Kisii too was affected by an upsurge of Malaria affecting some 18,564 outpatient malaria cases. This was 6,000 higher than the average of 12,000 cases in January. The figures were put together by Merlin which had predicted higher number of cases owing to higher rainfall in the month of December creating conducive environment for breeding of mosquitoes that spread the disease.

Partners who responded to the upsurge established a District Malaria Intersectoral Committee that would coordinate essential activities against future cases. These include epidemic preparedness and response plan with regular surveillance, supply of essential drugs and in-door residual spraying amongst others.

The Ministry of Health in the last quarter of 2002 put in place preparedness plans to control an upsurge of malaria expected to occur towards the end of 2002, the beginning of 2003 and later in the

year, around the month of June 2003. National stakeholders closely followed progress on preparedness through meetings, with some pledging to support the ministry. DFID agreed to support the ministry through WHO with commodities for epidemic preparedness and response including.

Between January and February 2003, the Ministry of Health, with support from WHO, commenced the implementation of malaria preventive measures. The major thrust was provision of spray pumps and sachets of insecticide all worth US \$98,205.

In addition, District Health Management Teams in 25 highland malaria epidemic-prone districts have been trained on establishment of community spray teams to conduct Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS). The districts will be supported to establish the community spray teams. Malaria updates on management of cases were given to health staff from 25 malaria epidemic-prone districts in preparation for response to malaria epidemic.

Elsewhere, a secondary school in Bomet District [western Kenya] was yesterday closed down indefinitely following a Malaria outbreak that has claimed three lives. Two students and a middle-aged man died in Longisa District Hospital when undergoing treatment. Thirty-four other students of Mullet Secondary School

are admitted at the hospital and 19 were transferred to Tenwek Mission Hospital for further treatment.

The Government has received about Sh160 million (\$2.1 million) from a group of donors for a health survey. The 2003 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) is expected to be completed by June 2004.

It will provide programme managers, policy makers and planners with information on health, family planning and HIV/AIDS programmes to help them effectively plan and implement future interventions. Kenya has conducted three surveys under the DHS programme in 1989, 1993 and 1998.

Unlike the previous DHS surveys, the 2003 DHS will mainly be implemented by the CBS with technical and logistical assistance from the National Council of Population Development, Ministry of Health and Macro International.

The funding came barely a week after Kenya's request for Sh13.9 billion from the UN Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria was approved. HIV/AIDS will take up US\$129m (about Shs 10bn) with malaria taking US\$33.6m (about shs 2.7bn) and TB is expected to take up US\$11.2m (about shs 874m).

Livestock prices depressed in pastoral areas

FOOD ASSESSMENT REPORT

A short rains food security assessment has established that market prices for livestock are depressed while cereals and pulses are fetching high prices. The assessment missions to West Pokot, Turkana, Keiyo, Baringo, Markwet and Ukambani established that some of the areas are facing acute food stress while the situation in some of the areas is less severe than what was projected in the media reports.

In West Pokot, the area experienced a total crop failure in the pastoral and agro pastoral areas while the mixed farming livelihood zone had a 70 per cent of the expected yields. The district maize requirements for a year is 47,250

MT while the yield realised in 2002 was 21,366 MT meeting only 45 % of the total needs of the population. Due to the poor yields in the other livelihood zones, the prices of maize have been increasing steadily from Sh14.50 in September to Sh18.60 in January for a 2kg container. Beans have shown a similar trend rising from Sh24 per a kilo to sh38 per a kilo during the same period. Prices in areas with a poor road network prices were higher because there were fewer traders supplying the commodities.

Livestock value has failed to keep pace with the increase in cost of cereals and pulses. The pastoralists purchasing

power has been compromised by increase in value of all non-meat foods. Their purchasing power has been compromised by the fact that middlemen purchase their livestock at low prices while they sell to them cereals and pulses at high prices. It was recommended that food allocated for distribution by the government should be distributed immediately to areas identified to be under food stress. Where possible, the commodities should be used in a food for work programme.

The team recommended removal of quarantine to improve livestock markets, conducting of nutritional surveys to assist in identifying areas under food stress

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and monitoring of the long rains in order to plan interventions in a timely manner.

The situation is better in Turkana because the rains were better and by December, the district had received fairly good showers. However, the water catchment areas of Uasin Gishu received low rainfall making the volume of the two rivers that serve the area to go down. The farmers planted expecting the water volume to increase but this did not happen and crop output has been poor.

The pastoralist purchasing power has been lessened by the few available items for trade. Families whose livestock was lost through rustling or death during the last drought have resorted to collection of berries from plants which require a lot of time and water to cook. This is a coping mechanism usually utilised by poor household during hunger stress period. The situation is made worse by continued raids along border with the Pokots and at the Ethiopian border to the north.

It was recommended that the District Steering Committee should identify vulnerability and target the areas with resources from the government. Also food stocks from Government and WFP should be distributed in a co-ordinated manner.

In Baringo, Markwet and Keiyo, the team that visited the area recommended food aid for three to five months in 13 divisions. Baringo had the highest number of affected people with 93,653 people requiring a total of 5,845 MT of maize and 1,948 MT of beans. Markwet needs 1,700 MT of maize and 566 MT of beans while Keiyo requires 1,049 MT of maize and 349 Mt of beans.

In Mwingi, the rain was fairly adequate but it was erratic and unevenly distributed in different livelihood zones. The Ministry of Agriculture projects a 75% yield in upper zone and a 50 per cent production in the lower areas resulting in food 2003. The team recommended another assessment in September.

In Makueni, the major threat is the Larger Grain Borer that attacks maize when it is about to be harvested. The current food stocks can last up to July. The National Cereals and Produce Board has set aside Sh15 million to purchase maize and beans from farmers.

Upcoming Events

UN Days

8 March: International Women's Day

21 March: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

22 March: World Water Day

23 March: World Meteorological Day

24 March: World Tuberculosis Day

7 April: World Health Day

KFSM: March 6th at KICC

KFSSG: March 4, KICC

Health & Nutrition: March 24 at Unicef KCO

WESCOORD: 12TH MARCH 2003 – FAIRVIEW HOTEL

Disaster Management: March 26 at KICC

Disaster Capacity training: March 17 to 20, Mombasa

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The purpose of the UN Disaster Prevention, Management and Co-ordination Unit (DPMCU) is to enhance, support, and service a coordinated and coherent response amongst all partners to any kind of emergency situation, natural or man made (disasters or conflicts) in Kenya; improve the early warning mechanisms and information management systems; participate in regular monitoring of vulnerability and strengthen preparedness and response capacities amongst all partners. It also facilitates mobilisation of national and international resources.

CONTRIBUTORS: UNICEF (K), KFSM, KFSSG, Health and Nutrition Coordination Committee, WESCOORD, WFP (K), DMC, FEWSNET, UNHCR, ALRMP, FAO, IRIN, RC (Kenya), AAH-K, WV, Refugee Consortium of Kenya, IOM, UNHCR, UN Security Update., Daily Nation and East African Standard newspapers

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