Kenya

Humanitarian Update

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Overview

Election fever is heating up in Kenya with more than seven people declaring their candidature for president. This general election is of particular importance to Kenyans because the country will have a new president after 24 years of President Moi at the Helm.

The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) has predicted a recurrence of *el niño* type of rainfall starting in September. WMO headquarters in Geneva indicated that the sea temperature in Pacific Ocean is warmer than normal, by about 1 degree Celcius, thereby setting the conditions for a recurrence of *el niño*. However, it is likely to be weak and may not cause as much devastation the 1997 one. Kenyan Meteorological Department said short rains, which normally fall between October and December, are likely to be prolonged to February almost merging with the long rains season that starts in March.

On food security, analysts are predicting a 15 to 20 per cent shortfall of maize and a 30 per cent shortfall of beans this season due to inadequate rainfall (FEWS NET). The pastoralists are the only group that is doing well with increase in browse and pasture following last season average to above average rainfall in some parts of the country. World Food Programme emergency operation (EMOP) has wound up in most parts of the country. The districts that suffer chronic food shortages will continue to receive food aid through Food For Work programmes.

In response to the various disasters that have befallen the country in the last decade, the Kenya Government has developed a national policy on disaster. The policy is to be presented to Parliament for debate and ratification. Once adopted, it will be used to set up and strengthen community disaster preparedness and effective response. Its overall goal is to provide a basis for the development of pro-active and preventive strategic initiatives addressing disaster in the country in a more co-ordinated, coherent and consistent manner.

The policy is to be implemented through a National Disaster Management Authority under the Office of the President. The authority’s role will be to provide the necessary leadership and coordination in response to any disaster affecting any part of the country. It will work through local committees made up of technical and leadership at the grassroots level.

The policy paper sets out strategies to manage the increasing incidences of slow and rapid on-set disasters in order to mitigate against loss of life, human distress and suffering, destruction of property and infrastructure as well as disruption of the environment and overall welfare of the society.

Last month, East African leaders met in Kenya to discuss possibilities of establishing a regional centre for disaster management. The meeting explored a suggestion of hosting the centre in an existing regional body such as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and East African Community. Aids pandemic was singled out as the most important disaster facing the continent today. Kenyans want the Industrial Property Act re-amended to allow importation of generic anti-retroviral medicines (ARVs) into the country. The law was first amended on June 7, making it mandatory to seek the “express consent” of the original patent holders of the drugs before importing. (Daily Nation July 25)

Donor Contribution

The German Government has contributed 3 million Euros for Tana River flood victims through the German Red Cross. The US Government gave US$5,143,681; WFP/ Ira US$2 million; Eriteria US$17,710 and Denmark US$660,262 for EMOP
UNHCR Completes Kakuma Refugee Head Count

Refugees

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has completed a head count of refugees in the Kakuma camp in Northern Kenya. The exercise reveals that the camp has a total of 67,762 refugees. The agency will be carrying out a similar exercise in Dadaab in the next three months to determine the exact number of refugees.

Firewood wrangle resolved

Meanwhile, UNHCR has resolved a firewood controversy in Kakuma and Dadaab camps. Local MPs had demanded relocation of refugees to other sites claiming that the refugees had contributed to environmental degradation.

They demanded projects to improve the living standards of host communities and employment opportunities in the camps. UNHCR said almost half of its workforce in both camps was recruited from the local communities.

On environment, UNHCR has caused more than one million trees to be planted in and around the Dadaab and Kakuma camps since 1993. The agency has rehabilitated degraded areas by setting up greenbelts, afforested all areas of the camp by encouraging refugees to plant live thorn fences and fast-growing trees. As a result, over 415 hectares of land has been rehabilitated around the two camps.

The Dadaab camps, for example, are greener today than they were nearly 10 years ago when they were established. By December 2001, UNHCR had spent more than $3.5 million on environmental activities in both camps.

Bantu Somalis translocation

Translocation of Somali refugees from a temporary camp near Mandera border town to Dadaab is almost complete. The agency transferred 2,989 Somalis out of about 10,000 refugees camping near the town. The rest went back into Somalia and camped some 500 metres from the border.

UNHCR said they kept crossing into Kenya and the agency would maintain an office in the area in case they wished to be registered as refugees. The Kenya Government has allowed two official refugee camps; Kakuma and Dadaab.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has transferred a total of 3,286 Somali Bantus from Dadaab to the Kakuma camp in Northern Kenya. The exercise started in June and aims to relocate 11,800 Somali Bantus.

The transfer comes ahead of their resettlement in the US. The US Government requested the transfer so that the whole operation could be conducted in one location with appropriate logistical arrangements. (Source UNHCR)
Kenya’s food security uncertain

Kenya’s food security is uncertain following early withdrawal of rain at a period when the crops were still in a water dependent development stage.

The shortened rainy season had been especially detrimental to crop production prospects in the Rift Valley which is a key area for cereals.

Farmers who had planted their crop at the start of the rainy season in April have been advised to expect "significant yield losses" due to the erratic rainfall pattern.

Food analysts, Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS Net), expressed concern over a possible crop failure due to the erratic rainfall pattern. The rains were unseasonably early followed by an unusual dry spell and capped by heavy rains in April that tapered off in May and June.

The pattern was similar in most cropping areas except Western and Nyanza provinces.

In the affected areas, yields will be far lower than initially anticipated, unless the rains resume.

It is projected that maize production will fall by about 15 to 20 per cent with a yield of 1.89 mt while beans are expected to fall by 30 per cent with a 180,000 mt harvest.

The overall maize supply at national level is likely to remain favourable and can sustain the country up to the start of the main maize harvesting period of November.

This is due to carry-over stock of about 450,000 metric tonnes into July 2002 and the early crop being harvested.

Areas that had received "exceptionally poor" long rains (roughly from March to June) included all the southeastern coastal marginal agricultural districts, as well as the Kitui, Makueni and Machakos districts of Eastern Province and West Pokot.

The reduction in anticipated amounts of rainfall is related to the northward shift in rains associated with the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone resulting in equatorial area of the Greater Horn of Africa experiencing declining rainfall.

Emergency Operation winds up

Emergency Operation (EMOP) made a general food distribution for drought-affected populations in June, when some 12,250 mt of food were distributed across ten districts benefiting 1,039,042 recipients.

The programme is winding up following relatively good rainfall in most parts of the country. Assessment missions by the KFSM members has determined that the programme winds up at the end of September.

Mandera, North Horr and Loyangalani Divisions of Marsabit and West Pokot will continue receiving food aid. They will receive two distributions at fifty per cent ration.

Ijara, Tana River and Turkana will receive one general distribution at 50 per cent ration.

Those districts that have chronic food shortage, WFP will work in a long term strategy including Food for Work. (Source WFP).

To determine levels of food security, the following districts were visited; Turkana, Mandera, West Pokot, Taita Taveta and Marsabit. The assessment report will be discussed at a special KFSSG meeting on August 9th.

Second term Expanded School Feeding Programme was successfully executed in 4,413 schools throughout the country with a total of 1,337,874 beneficiaries receiving a total of 9,428 mt of commodities.

The food distributions included cereals, vegetable oil and CSB from the EMOP food basket.
Greater Grain Borer force farmers to sell all

Farmers in the drier areas of Eastern province have had to sell much of their food and seed harvest due to widespread infestation with Greater Grain borer that threatens all on-farm storage especially of maize.

Future

The needs of these farms should be assessed in the immediate future since the forthcoming rains in October are their main growing season. They also need support to introduce better post-harvest storage of their food and seed grains.

UNDP has offered US $15,000 to FAO for seeds for flood affected farming families in the Lake Victoria basin and on the Tana River. At the same time the German Red Cross will assist the Kenya Red Cross to distribute seeds to 500 families in Tana River District.

FAO has requested UNDP for additional funds to distribute seeds to other families in Tana River and in the Lake Victoria basin.

A visit to the Lake Victoria basin showed that seeds for these areas would best be delivered in time for the planting next March rather than for this October because land has not yet been prepared and some areas are still under water.

In addition the underlying causes of the flooding have not been repaired and there is a possibility of renewed heavy rains associated with the predicted 75% chance of an el niño effect this October.

Good rains benefit pastoralists

Pastoralists on the other hand are enjoying better food security following good rains in the 2002 season. An increase in the number of young goats and lambs has improved availability of milk.

In most districts, livestock were in wet grazing zones. However, early livestock migration to dry grazing zones has been detected in a few areas of West Pokot.

Access

The pastoral districts, which had suffered from five consecutive poor rainy seasons before had better access to water, pasture and browse remaining favourable through June. However the economic recovery of families that lost significant numbers of livestock will require much longer.

The FAO in collaboration with the ALRMP is implementing a project in Mandera and Isiolo to increase the capacity of these districts to cope with drought through improved local fodder production.

Recovery

Despite the recovery recorded in some pastoral areas, other areas are still cause for concern, including the southern parts of Tana River District, as well as Mandera and Moyale because of poor rainfall that threatened to stunt the recovery that began during [the short rains season of] October 2001.

Meeting

The areas are already expressing signs of forage stress. Other areas of concern are the agro-pastoral districts of southern Kajiado, Baringo, Koi batek and Marakwet.

The Agriculture and Livestock Sectoral Group of the Kenya Food Security Meeting will hold a meeting in August to develop guidelines for livestock farmers affected by flooding. (Source FAO)
The WESCOORD sectoral group undertook a one day workshop to define a policy for the sector as well as to develop capacity training materials for the DSGs.

The revised water policy will be used to manage water resources in the country. In addition, it will address water and sewerage development, technology, waste water disposal system, corporation and maintenance issues, institutional frameworks including organizational set up, coordination, legislation, and community participation.

The policy is key in mainstreaming emergency into development. Financing of the water sector will be addressed in the policy document in view of dwindling government allocation against increasing in demand for water.

The traditional perception of water as a service commodity will henceforth be changed with the perception of water as a social good.

Training guidelines for DSGs has been distributed by ITDG and the training committee was waiting for feedback from the districts on training needs. During the past three months the WESCORD group has contributed to building peace amongst communities that have been experiencing conflict which had the genesis in the competition for water and pasture during the prolonged 1998-2001 drought. In Samburu district ITDG has formed Water Users committee comprising of Turkana and Samburu with the objective of building trust and diffusing tensions among the two ethnic groups.

In Tana River District, some 6,000 people and 24,000 livestock will have access to clean and portable water at the completion of a UNICEF sponsored water project in Asa Location, Garsen Division. Caritas floated open bids for the water pan construction on evaluation of the bids, they identified the most suitable contractor to undertake the project. The project is a result of peace talks involving OCHA, Caritas, CRS, Catholic Mission, UNICEF, FAO and VSF-S. Access to the water will cushion them against effects of prolonged and recurrent drought.

The availability of clean water will also help in improving sanitation in the area and promote peace between the agricultural and pastoral communities in the area who have been competing over meagre resources.

In order to learn how to maintain it, the local residents will receive technical assistance to construct two earth dams- one for livestock and another for human use.

The water project will also support hygiene education and training of a water management committee (WMC) and user group, with the view of mitigating the effects of future droughts. A water and environmental survey will be carried out to establish current water situation in Garsen/Kipini divisions of Tana River District. Meanwhile the agreement between Caritas, District Water Officer and UNICEF is being finalized.
Measles vaccination a success

Health

Measles is endemic in all parts of Kenya. In the pre immunization era (before the 1980s) nearly every child in Kenya contracted measles before the age of 2 years. During this time annual epidemics occurred with high mortalities. Kenya has witnessed dramatic declines in measles cases and deaths subsequent to a sustained high immunization coverage over the years. However more recently annual outbreaks have been reported in 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 especially amongst school age children. The National Goal for the accelerated measles control in Kenya is to reduce measles morbidity by 90% and mortality by 95% compared to pre immunization era by the year 2005. As part of its strategy to achieve this goal the country conducted a measles campaign from the 17th - 23rd June targeting 13,582,031 children aged 9 months - 15 years. A total of 13,302,991 children were immunized giving a national average of 97.9%.

In addition to Kenyan children, refugees in the camps were also inoculated. A mop up exercise will be carried out in the next two months. The Kenya Red Cross Society, UNICEF, World Health Organisation, American Red Cross, UN Foundation and Centres for Disease Control and Prevention assisted in the exercise.

The Kenya Government has sounded an alert over likelihood of another malaria outbreak in Kenya after the anticipated el nino rains between October and February next year. Between June and July, some 325 people died of highland malaria in an outbreak that affected western parts of the country.

It is estimated that there are at least 200,000 reported cases of affected people in 11 districts. These are Transamara, Bomet, Bureti, West Pokot, Uasin Gishu, Trans Nzoia, Nandi, Kericho, Gucha, Nyamira, Kisii. The estimated number of persons at risk is 5.7 million. The reporting rate is estimated to be only 50% mostly from hospital records. The outbreak was associated with the long rains that left pools of stagnant water ideal for breeding of mosquitoes that spread the disease. Climatic changes, leading to warming up of highland areas making them more hospitable to the mosquito, was also to blame for the increase of malaria outbreaks in the highlands.

The Government set up a response task force at each district. The overall emergency response to the disease outbreak was co-ordinated by the Ministry of Health. UNICEF, WHO, PSI, Merlin provided medicines and non-medical supplies as well providing logistical support for distribution.

Britain has given Kenya US$7.8 million grant to fight malaria. The grant is spread over four years (June 2002 to June 2006) and will be administered by the World Heath Organisation. It will be disbursed twice a year by the British Department for International Development (DFID). The money is for training health workers, and development of education campaigns to prevent infection.

Seven people died in a Cholera outbreak in Shimoni and Lunga Lunga areas of Kwale District in Coast Province in July. About 200 people had been treated and discharged since the first case was reported in the first week of July. Responding to the crisis, the Kenya Red Cross donated two hospital tents, 45 kg of powder Chlorine and 24,000 chlorination tablets all provided by UNICEF. Danida assisted with providing logistical support. Prompt action by Government medics ensured that the situation was brought under control. Medics on the ground said the outbreak had been caused by consumption of untreated water from River Umba.

The focus of emergency nutrition interventions through targeted feeding programmes, co-ordinated by UNICEF, remain in Turkana, Mandera and Samburu districts. In central division of Mandera, MSF Spain is operating a therapeutic feeding centre (TFC) which saw over 200 admissions at its peak in early July. In addition two wet feeding centres, run by MSF/Spain and Action against Hunger, support those who are released from the TFC and also those that are moderately malnourished. A dry feeding programme (providing a pre-mix every two weeks) targeting malnourished under-fives and pregnant and lactating women is run concurrently by Oxfam Quebec and a local NGO, EPAG. The dry feeding sites are located strategically to gain wider coverage of malnourished individuals. These interventions are supported by ECHO, UNHCR and UNICEF (with grant from OFDA). In Turkana UNICEF is supporting targeted nutrition and health programmes through the Diocese of Lodwar and Kakuma Mission Hospital, both of which have static and mobile facilities. Promotion of immunization, micronutrient supplementation and training on proper CARE practices for children and women are incorporated in the programmes.

Through field level co-ordination by International Medical Corps, UNICEF is providing supplementary food to 10 institutions in Samburu that serve some 2,000 malnourished beneficiaries.

(Source UNICEF, IRIN and KWALE MOH)
Banditry activities linked to ethnic clashes

Security

Two Democratic Party legislators have linked increased banditry in Laikipia District to a resurgence of tribal clashes. The MPs said at least 10 people had died recently in banditry activities that were a prelude to tribal clashes meant to prevent an unnamed community from participating in the forthcoming general elections.

The MPs said the area had witnessed several shooting incidents by gunmen dressed in military uniform during cattle rustling incidents.

Meanwhile, the Kenya Government has asked the Court of Appeal to reverse a decision by the High Court compelling it to release a report on tribal clashes that coincided with the 1992 and 1997 general elections. The case was supposed to be heard on August 1, but was postponed to August 19.

Elsewhere, a 13 year old boy was seriously injured when struck by a bullet fired by police battling Mungiki sect followers who were attempting to take over a bus stop in Thika, near Nairobi.

Mungiki is a sect that advocates a return to Kikuyu customary practices and has been battling police and transport operators in a bid to control the transport system in various parts of the country.

A woman and a baby were shot dead by Kenyan Police near the Kakuma Refugee Camp in the North of the country. She was part of a group that tried to stop a convoy delivering firewood to the camp. The group was demonstrating against UNHCR’s decision to withdraw a firewood tender from a local group known as Turkana Environmental Rehabilitation Association (TERA). After discussions, TERA was allowed to join 41 other groups in supplying the camp with firewood.

In Mandera, local authorities encouraged Somali refugees in a temporary camp on the Kenyan side to return to Bula Hawa in Somalia after a man was shot dead and another seriously injured on the night of July 16th in a house next to a new mosque. The reason for the attack was not immediately known but it was said to be linked to a dispute among the Marahan sub-clans. By the 28th all refugess in Mandera were reported to have crossed the border into.

A WFP vehicle travelling from Kakuma to Lokichokkio was fired upon by gunmen about five Kilometres from Lokichokkio on 26th of July. The vehicle under EMOP escort was hit twice on the bumper.

Another banditry attack was reported on Saturday the 13th when a lorry travelling along the main Isiolo/Marsabit road was attacked by armed bandits around the Wamba Hill area. The bandits fired at the truck wounding one passenger in the chest who was later taken to Marsabit General Hospital. The escort travelling on the truck returned fire and the bandits fled into the bush.
The Kenya Revenue Authority has been asking a number of international non-governmental organisations working in Kenya to remit taxes, which were in some cases backdated seven years ago.

**action**

The action could have been prompted by the Bretton Woods institutions request that the Kenya Government control the categories of people who enjoy tax exemption on goods and services in the country.

Some NGOs expressed fear that they would be forced to scale down their operations in order to set aside some money for the taxes because they had not factored in such an eventuality in their budgets.

**principle**

Most of the NGOs have been operating on the principle that the core salary was tax free while they were to be taxed on benefits.

At the moment, some NGOs have complied with the Government orders while some are still negotiating. Others may be forced to close down if the KRA freezes their bank accounts.

The purpose of the UN Disaster Prevention, Management and Coordination 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 mobilization of national and international resources.

**CONTRIBUTORS TO JULY ISSUE:** UNICEF, KFSM, FEWSNET, UNHCR, WFP, ARLMP, WHO, FAO, IRIN, CARITAS AND RCK.

The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations. To subscribe and contribute to this report please contact DPMCU email: lilian.nduta@undp.org.