Government of Japan to deliver urgent COVID response package to Kenyan women and girls

The Government of Japan’s humanitarian response to COVID-19 will see urgent provisions reach some of Kenya’s most vulnerable women, and other groups, empowering them to become active in community recovery plans.

The response is part of a regional response programme in East Africa that aims to reach over 50,000 vulnerable individuals across Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda and South Africa in the next year.

In Kenya, capacity building of local partners and grass roots organisations will play a central role in responding to the rise in gender-based violence and loss in livelihoods which can, in-turn, increase the likelihood of violence and conflict in the community. Priority will be given to prevention and response efforts against gender-based violence (GBV), supporting networks of female and male counsellors and increase availability of online psycho-social support and counselling to women GBV survivors.

Loss of livelihoods, through income insecurity, is one of the most significant socio-economic impacts being faced on a global scale. In Kenya, assistance will target informal settlements and...
the border county of Mandera, where economic challenges will be even greater due to COVID-19, coupled with floods and locust swarms. During crises, economic shocks and restrictions in movement seriously limit the availability of essential services and hygiene products for women and girls. The programme seeks to provide for over 10,000 women and girls with access to shelters and dignity kits in select counties to provide increased protection during the COVID-19 period. They will also be supported to access mental wellness to recover from GBV, especially intimate partner violence that has also been reported to be on the rise. Small loans and grants will also be made available for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to counter the effects COVID-19 has on businesses.

As the world climbs out of the crisis, there will be specific focus in Kenya to capture lessons learned and how gender integration is applied to response and recovery plans. Japan’s response in Kenya are a continuation of its Leadership, Access, Empowerment and Protection (LEAP) programme that has been running since 2018.

**Targets**

- Small loans and grants to over 50 women owned SMEs.
- Capacity Building of at least 4 local NGOs on the ground to monitor, document and provide support to GBV survivors.
- Provision of shelters and dignity kits for 10,000 women and girls in response to increased protection needs.
- 1,800 individuals to be reached via a network of counsellors and associations to provide online psycho-social support and counselling to GBV survivors, care givers and those distressed as a result of COVID-19.
- Partner with women organizations to create awareness and disseminate information on prevention and management of COVID-19, promote social cohesion and prevention of conflict in Mandera county.

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