

EPR BULLETIN

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE



World Health
Organization

Kenya

DECEMBER 2023 - FEBRUARY 2024



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Cover Photo: Child receives a polio vaccine in Wajir East.

MESSAGE FROM THE WHO KENYA REPRESENTATIVE

Welcome to our first edition of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Bulletin in 2024.

We closed 2023 on a high note with many outbreaks taking place around the country. The El Nino phenomenon was upon us, and many communities were affected by the massive floods.

The silver lining is that we were prepared and able to pre-position critical medicines, and equipment in 23 counties namely: Lamu, Garissa, Mandera, Tana River, Marsabit, Nairobi, Kiambu, Kilifi, West Pokot, Turkana, Isiolo, Kajiado, Busia, Bungoma, Kwale, Siaya, Kisumu, Nyandarua, Homabay, Kitui, Migori, Mombasa, and Trans Nzoia.

We did this in partnership with the Government and the Kenya Red Cross. This preparedness enabled the government to respond effectively and avoid the initially anticipated worst case scenario.

The government in collaboration with WHO Kenya and partner agencies carried out several refresher trainings for healthcare workers to strengthen surveillance, case detection, case management, laboratory testing, and community engagement during the rainy season. So, preparedness matters, and the actions taken to prepare for El Nino season were a good example of that.



In late January, a commendable effort saw a total of 1.2 million children receiving another round of the Polio Virus vaccine across Wajir, Garissa, and Mandera counties.

And in February 2024, WHO Kenya supported the launch of a One Health Unit in Kajiado County, marking a significant milestone for the region.

We thank all our donors, partners and staff who participated in this process in 2023, despite the limited resources and the implementation challenges.

As we stretch towards 2024 with its potential challenges, we look forward to another year of great collaboration with all stakeholders.

Dr Abdourahmane Diallo

WHO Team, UK High Commission, US CDC go on Mission to Kajiado



February, 2024



WHO Team, UK Embassy and CDC.

The WHO country representative, Dr Abdourahmane Diallo, accompanied by Leigh Stubblefield and Dr Daniel Wako, respectively British Deputy High Commissioner to Kenya and emergency coordinator of the Centre for Disease Control in Kenya, visited Kajiado County on Friday February 9, 2024.

The mission was received by the County Governor H.E. Joseph Ole Lenku and his senior leadership team.

Kajiado County is one of WHO Kenya's priority counties due to the many health challenges that

communities face. WHO Kenya has been supporting the county in various ways over the years, which include **strengthening capacities in surveillance, and provision of emergency kits and nutrition commodities during the drought season as well as vaccination campaigns against Cholera and Polio.**

The mission to Kajiado was a follow-up to the visit by the County Governor to the WHO offices in Nairobi in September 2023, where they had an interactive meeting that touched on several program areas.



HIGHLIGHT

5 million Ksh of medicines and equipment was handed over by Dr Diallo to H.E The Governor.



“We are very happy to be here and to collaborate as we pursue these important areas of health and well-being for the people of Kajiado.

WHO wishes to sustain its commitment in supporting better health for all” - Dr. Diallo

Alongside this visit, Dr Diallo also handed over to the Governor, a consignment of medicines and equipment valued at Ksh 5 million. The consignment includes medicines, equipment, and nutritional commodities. The mission also visited the new county Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), put up with the support of the US CDC.

Governor Joseph Ole Lenku welcomed the partnership, acknowledging its potential to enhance healthcare delivery in the county.

“We embrace this partnership and support, which will go a long way to complement the health needs of our county. I thank our international partners who are helping us to push forward our story of effective service delivery in the health sector,” he remarked.

With a population exceeding 1.2 million, Kajiado County faces unique healthcare challenges, particularly among its pastoralist communities, which comprise over 50% of the population and are often underserved. Through collaborative efforts such as this mission, strides are being made toward addressing these challenges and ensuring better health outcomes for all residents of Kajiado County.

Kenya Conducts International Health Regulations - State Party Self-Assessment Report



February, 2024



Government in collaboration with WHO, USAID, AFNET, FAO

The government of Kenya, through a multisectoral One Health team, completed its 2023 State Party Self-Assessment Annual Report (SPAR) on the International Health Regulations (IHR) capacities.

SPAR serves as a vital self-assessment tool aiding States Parties in fulfilling their obligations under Article 54 of the IHR, which pertains to reporting and review for the World Health Assembly.

The IHR mandates States Parties to

establish and maintain capacities to detect, assess, notify, and respond to public health risks and acute events.

The country exhibited strengths in Risk Communication, Surveillance, Health Emergency Response, Laboratory, and Community Engagement.

Yet, there is a pressing need to enhance capacities for Points of Entry, Human Resources for emergency response, Zoonoses, and legislation for IHR compliance.



The tool assesses each country's progress using:

35 & **15**
Indicators Essential IHR capacities



The information gathered will be used by the WHO Secretariat for **strategic planning & efficient technical support delivery.**

Kenya improved from:

45% 2022 Assessment
52% 2023 Assessment



However, there remains a need to strengthen capacities in alignment with regional and global thresholds.

WHO Responds to **Nairobi Fire Incident** with Emergency Supplies for Hospitals



February, 2024



WHO Team



H.E. Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua with Dr Diallo during a visit to the site of the gas explosion.

In response to the tragic gas explosion in Embakasi, eastern Nairobi, WHO Kenya with the support of the Regional Emergency Hub swiftly acted by donating trauma kits valued at US\$40,000 for the treatment of victims.

The kits are capable of aiding 500 burn victims as well as meeting the surgical needs of individuals requiring intensive care unit admissions.

The devastating incident, which occurred during the night in a residential area, resulted in the loss of two lives, while over 300 individuals sustained severe burns and were admitted to various hospitals.

Dr. Abdourahmane Diallo, the WHO Kenya Representative, joined Kenya's Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua at the site of the explosion, accompanied by Mary Muthoni, Principal Secretary for Public Health, and WHO Kenya senior leadership.

Expressing condolences, Dr. Diallo stated, "It is a sad day, and we deeply sympathize with the people of Kenya and the affected families in the unfortunate gas explosion."

The fire left hundreds of families homeless and caused significant damage to apartments, and business premises.



1.2 Million Children Vaccinated Against Polio in Three Counties



Jan - Feb 2024



Government with support from WHO, UNICEF & other partners.



In late January 2024, a commendable effort saw a total of 1.2 million children receiving another round of the Polio Virus vaccine across Wajir, Garissa and Mandera counties.

This campaign, initially delayed due to the El Niño rains that inundated the region late last year, was aimed at curbing the spread of the disease, particularly after new infections surfaced in the Dadaab refugee camps in Garissa.

The campaign targeted children under the age of 5 in Wajir and Mandera, while in Garissa, vaccination was extended to ages 0 to 15 years.

Reflecting on the significance of this initiative, Fatuma Yussuf, a Polio Vaccination Champion from Wajir County, expressed heartfelt satisfaction:

I am so happy to see children being vaccinated against polio. They will not suffer like me. I was infected at an early age in a village where health services were poor and vaccines were not available.

Accompanying this update is a photo capturing a child in Wajir East receiving the Polio Virus vaccine, symbolic of the joint efforts to halt the disease's spread in the wake of new infections detected in Dadaab refugee camps.

A town crier in Wajir Town urging families to children for Polio vaccination. Credit: WHO/John Kisimir



Counties Receive Supplies Ahead of El Niño



December 2023

In preparation for the onset of El Niño rains in December 2023, 25 at-risk counties in Kenya received vital medicines, medical supplies, and equipment from WHO-Kenya.

These essential supplies were transported to the counties by The Red Cross, ensuring timely access to resources critical for addressing the anticipated challenges posed by flooding. Among the provisions are cholera kits, indispensable for managing outbreaks in flood-affected areas.

The prepositioning of these resources empowered the counties to promptly respond to the needs of communities impacted by flooding, bolstering their capacity to provide essential healthcare services during times of crisis.

The 25 beneficiary counties encompass a diverse geographical spread, including Lamu, Garissa, Mandera, Tana River, Marsabit, Nairobi, Kiambu, Kilifi, West Pokot, Turkana, Isiolo, Kajiado, Busia, Bungoma, Kwale, Siaya, Kisumu, Nyandarua, Homabay, Kitui, Migori, Mombasa, and Trans Nzoia.



A truckload of medical supplies is being dispatched from the Regional Emergency Hub depot to the counties



Medical supplies being offloaded from an aircraft in Wajir County.



Ministry of Health staff receiving the consignment in Garissa County from the Kenya Red Cross.

Tablets Provided to Ministry of Health Leadership



February, 2024



Ministry of Health and WHO Kenya

In a bid to enhance the coordination of health and related technical work, eleven tablets were provided to the top leadership of the Ministry of Health.

This allocation supplements 940 other tablets that will be donated by WHO to the ministry, facilitating data collection, analysis, and the strengthening of surveillance systems nationwide.

Dr. Abdourahmane Diallo, WHO Kenya Representative, conveyed his satisfaction as he handed over the 11 tablets to the Cabinet Secretary, stating, "We are pleased to support the Ministry of Health's strategic plan, of which we have been an integral part, and

we remain committed to its success." In addition Dr Diallo informed the CS about the additional 940 tablets being ready for delivery to strengthen the surveillance system.

Expressing gratitude for the tablets, Health Cabinet Secretary Susan Nakhumicha noted the timely nature of WHO's gesture in alignment with the ministry's agenda to pursue digitalization for the efficient and effective delivery of services.

"You have been a great support in our efforts for Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and all related programs," she acknowledged.



WHO Kenya Rep, Dr Diallo handing over the 11 tables to the Cabinet Secretary Susan Nakhumicha.



Kajiado Launches One Health Unit



February, 2024



Government in collaboration with WHO Kenya

The launch of the One Health Unit in Kajiado County, in collaboration with WHO Kenya, marks a significant milestone for the region.

This initiative follows the county's finalization of a strategic plan aimed at enhancing surveillance at the human-animal-environment interface.

The Ministry of Health's Zoonotic Diseases Unit will continue to extend technical support to this newly established unit.

Experts at the County One Health Unit have identified key zoonotic diseases, including Brucellosis, Anthrax, Rift Valley fever, Q fever, and Antimicrobial Resistance, as top priorities. Additionally, the unit will address challenges related to Snake Bites, Climate Change, and Food Safety.

Kajiado County, renowned for its pastoralist communities, boasts a diverse ecosystem with thousands of livestock and wildlife coexisting among its populace.



Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response Training for 200 Healthcare Workers



February, 2024



Ministry of Health in collaboration with WHO Kenya



In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, WHO Kenya conducted training sessions aimed at cascading Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR) based on the 3rd Generation IDSR Technical Guidelines.

The training initiative specifically targeted 200 core Sub-County Health Management Teams across Kajiado, Migori, Kisumu, and Busia counties. Notably, these four counties have previously encountered cholera outbreaks.

This endeavor forms a crucial component of ongoing efforts to strengthen Public Health Emergency Response, including cross-

border surveillance. Given the history of cholera outbreaks and the identification of these counties as El Niño/Flood-prone areas, there exists a heightened risk of water-borne and vector-borne disease outbreaks.

The training sessions have yielded tangible outcomes, including an augmented pool of trained personnel at decentralized levels.

This enhanced capacity is expected to translate into improved disease reporting, early detection, and timely response to public health events, thereby contributing to a reduction in morbidity and mortality rates.

Thank you!

TO ALL OUR PARTNERS AND DONORS





**We champion
health and a better
future for all.**

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