Operational Context

Kenya, a lower-middle-income economy is transforming rapidly. However, social and economic inequalities persist and more than one third of Kenyans live below the poverty line. Agriculture remains the main economic driver, although 80 percent of the land is either arid or semi-arid. Rapid population growth, climate change, stagnating agricultural production, gender inequalities and underperforming food systems are the most significant challenges to food and nutrition security.

The most severe living conditions exist in the arid north, which is underdeveloped, drought prone and affected by frequent tribal conflicts. The prevalence of wasting among children aged 6-59 months often exceeds the "critical" threshold of 15 percent. Stunting is above 25 percent in some counties. Net enrolment in primary education in the arid counties is still below 50 percent.

Opportunities to address these challenges include increased government investments in agriculture and in the social sectors, the devolution of service delivery to counties, implementation of new technologies and an inclusive and equitable policy base.

Kenya hosts a large population of refugees, mainly in camps located in Garissa and Turkana counties. Unable to work or move freely, refugees are highly dependent on international assistance.

In Numbers

- 7,323 mt of food assistance distributed
- US$ 3.9 m cash-based transfers made
- US$ 77.3 m six months (July–December 2020) net funding requirements
- 702,000 people assisted in June 2020

Operational Updates

The number of new COVID-19 cases in the country in June (6,366) was almost four times the number in May. The number of counties affected by the pandemic rose to 41 out of the 47 counties in Kenya, with Nairobi and Mombasa counties being the worst affected. The cessation of movement in Nairobi, Mombasa, Mandera, Dadaab, and Kakuma, along with the national curfew, were extended for an additional 30 days until 6 July 2020.

WFP continues to complement the Government's efforts in addressing the evolving COVID-19 situation in Kenya. In collaboration with the Government at national and county levels and other UN agencies and partners, WFP is supporting food security and markets analysis, the expansion of national social safety nets and services, and providing logistical support and UNHAS services.

WFP launched its urban response in Nairobi's informal settlements and released the first tranche of cash-based transfers to 1,114 households with each family receiving KES 4,000 (US$ 40) each. This support will continue for three months and will contribute to 50 percent of the minimum food basket. The transfer value is aligned to what the Government is providing in the counties of Nairobi, Kwale, Kilifi and Mombasa. WFP plans to scale this up to reach 70,500 families affected by loss of income and livelihoods due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to address looming nutritional challenges occasioned by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food access and availability, WFP is preparing to expand its management of acute malnutrition support to cover 2,500 children under five, pregnant lactating women, and elderly in 123 facilities in Nairobi informal settlements.

WFP continues to provide food assistance to refugees in Dadaab, Kakuma, and Kalobeyei, in collaboration with UNHCR and in line with the Ministry of Health guidelines. COVID-19 cases continue to increase in the camps among both refugees and humanitarian workers. Mitigation measures have been put in place and plans are underway to begin testing of both refugees and humanitarian workers in July.
WFP supports 390,000 vulnerable people Kenyans to diversify and improve their livelihoods. In-kind distributions were successfully completed in Tana River, Garissa and Wajir counties and will be finalized in Turkana, Marsabit, and Mandera counties in the first week of July in compliance to guidelines on distributions in the context of COVID-19.

Due to the surging demand for utilization of the existing social protection system by non-state actors, WFP is providing ongoing support in acceleration enhancement of the Single Registry, including the development of an application programming interface (API) to enable partners link their support to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.

WFP is supplementing Government relief response to the flash floods by providing food assistance to over 9,000 households affected in four counties; Mandera, Garissa and Tana River and Turkana. Working closely with key stakeholders, including both the national and county governments and partners, WFP successfully finalized food distributions in Turkana and Garissa counties. In Mandera and Tana River food distribution is ongoing and will be finalized in July 2020.

Monitoring
As a member of the Kenya Food Security Steering Group, and part of the Government’s ‘war room’ efforts, WFP is working with the Government of Kenya to monitor the impact of COVID-19, the desert locust invasion and flooding on the food security and nutrition status of the Kenyan population, including refugees and asylum seekers. WFP continues to carry out weekly supply chain and market assessments to monitor the level of food access and availability.

WFP’s complaint and feedback mechanism received 1,073 cases from beneficiaries, traders and the public. Majority of the cases were from the refugee operation regarding SIM card related issues. Fifty-two percent of cases were successfully resolved in the month of June.

WFP commenced market monitoring in Nairobi’s informal settlements in six markets: Kibera (Toi), Mathare, Mukuru, Kangemi, Kawangware and Dandora.

Challenges
The combined effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity, flooding and loss of livelihoods is increasing the vulnerabilities among affected populations in Kenya. WFP requires an additional US$30.7 million to meet needs until the end of the year. Restrictions related to COVID-19 have slowed some of the planned capacity strengthening activities.

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