Operational Context

Kenya, a lower-middle-income economy is transforming rapidly. Social and economic inequalities persist, and more than one third of Kenyans live below the poverty line. Agriculture Sector remains central to Kenya’s economy and provides livelihoods to more than 80 percent of the population especially in rural areas. However, 80 percent of the Kenya landmass is either arid or semi-arid. Rapid population growth, climate change, underperforming food systems, gender inequalities and insecurity are the most significant challenges to food and nutrition security.

The most severe living conditions exist in the nine ASAL counties: Marsabit, Turkana, Baringo, Isiolo, Samburu, Garissa, Wajir, Tana River and Mandera, which are underdeveloped, drought prone and affected by frequent tribal and resource-based conflicts. The number of people in need of food assistance is 4.4 million people and expected to rise to 5.4 million from March to June 2023 with a sharp increase in the number of people experiencing high levels of hunger and malnutrition. Women are most affected as they tend to earn less and with fewer assets.

A growing body of evidence shows that investing in mitigation and adaptation measures including anticipatory-action, early response, community-based disaster risk reduction and resilience-building can greatly reduce the need for humanitarian assistance when crises hit.

WFP has field offices across the ASALs and in urban settings, providing assistance, transformative interventions to build resilience to shocks, improve diets and strengthen food systems, and capacity strengthening support to national and county governments to support long term food security and sustainable supply chains and markets.

In Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11,768 MT of food distributed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD 4.32 million cash-based transfer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USD 107.6 million net funding requirements for</td>
<td>1.2 million people assisted in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the next six months (May-October 2023)</td>
<td>April 2023</td>
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Food Security Situation

The May National Drought Early Warning Bulletin reveals that the ongoing March to May rainfall season positively impacted livelihoods in most Arid and Semi-Arid counties (ASALs), indicating a recovery from the drought phase. However, despite this recovery, the food security situation has not improved. According to the February 2022 Short Rains Food Security Assessment, the number of people requiring assistance remains at 4.4 million. This is because of the time lag between the arrival of rains and food availability: vulnerable communities will continue to need support until the next harvest. Three counties, namely Wajir, Taita Taveta, and Lamu, continue to face alert drought conditions.

Operational Updates

Refugee operations

The progressive Refugee Act 2021 holds potential to open financial services and socio-economic space for refugees. It provides for transitioning refugees to settlements, which will favor self-reliance initiatives. WFP, is preparing a Transition Strategy in line with emerging developments, including input from the SDG Leadership Lab, progress made by county governments towards establishing municipalities in refugee hosting areas, and the national government in advancing the development of the refugee ‘Marshall Plan.’ UNHCR and WFP are collaborating with the Social Protection Secretariat to advocate for the inclusion of refugees in the Kenya Enhanced Social Registry (ESR). For WFP, this undertaking serves as a crucial foundation for the transition strategy and the precise targeting of refugee populations.

In April, WFP provided unconditional cash-based transfers and in-kind food assistance to 605,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps and Kalobeyei settlement. This assistance enabled people reached to meet their minimum food and nutrition needs. Some 33,862 pregnant and breastfeeding women and girls (PBWG) and 27,513 children aged 6 to 59 months who were malnourished or at risk of becoming malnourished also received nutrition prevention or treatment support. Additionally, WFP provided hot meals to 81,000 boys and girls in schools. As part of self-reliance support 1,600 refugees and host communities engaged in vegetable and groundnuts production.

Emergency food assistance and nutrition support to drought-affected Kenyans

Thanks to generous contributions from donors, WFP has expanded its relief food assistance programme in ten ASAL counties under Lisha Jamii second phase. WFP will target 943,300 people with life-
saving assistance for six months (March-August 2023). This is an increase from 543,300 previously assisted since August 2022. WFP will continue to provide nutrition support to 365,436 children under five years old and 170,596 PBWG in 15 counties. In April, 137,421 children and 106,197 PBWGs received specialized nutritious foods to prevent and treat moderate acute malnutrition in 15 ASAL counties.

WFP also undertook targeting and registration of beneficiaries for Lisha Jamii Phase II in all ten counties with plans to start CBT and food distribution in May.

**Country Capacity Strengthening**

Kenya's National Nutrition Symposium, themed, “Eradicating malnutrition in all its forms: step up political, multisector, and interdisciplinary actions toward nutrition resilience” was held in April. The symposium facilitated knowledge sharing and dissemination of evidence-based methods and best practices. It emphasized the need for multi-sector collaboration including with legislators as one of the steps in eradicating malnutrition in Kenya. In addition, policy papers, guidelines, and strategy documents addressing malnutrition were launched during the symposium. Notable among these were the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Strategy and the Positive Deviance Hearths (PDH) training manual which was developed by WFP in partnership with the Government. The PDH is a community-based approach, utilizing locally sourced nutrient-rich food, which aims to prevent and treat child malnutrition as part of the overarching WFP's approach to “changing lives to save lives”. The programme started in Wajir County and has been expanded to Nairobi and Baringo Counties.

**Resilience and food systems**

WFP has partnered with the Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organization, the FAO, and the private sector to promote the production of safe groundnut products to limit aflatoxin contamination. WFP supports the capacity of smallholder farmers to produce safe products for profitable and reliable markets. Off-takers of these products include WFP and UNICEF for use in malnutrition programs.

Further, WFP through its partnership with International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre has invested in the decontamination of aflatoxins including through the process of nixtamalization – a process in which the grain is soaked in alkaline solution. WFP is also supporting county public health officers to set up laboratories for aflatoxin testing.

To support smallholder farmers’ safeguard investments towards resilience building, WFP provided critical support to 351,000 people in vulnerable communities in the ASALs through food and cash assistance. The seasonal safety nets were provided alongside resilience-building interventions to bolster their climate adaptive capacities, emphasizing the importance of sustainable solutions to address long-term food insecurity in the face of climate change, and working closely with county governments.

**Government Donors (in alphabetical order):**

Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United Nations CERF, and United States of America.