

Floods Wreak Havoc Across Kenya

Thursday, 19 May 2016, Nairobi: Heavy rains have been experienced in different parts of Kenya over the last few weeks since the onset of the long rains, resulting to fatalities, displacement of families, loss of livestock, and damage to infrastructure, schools and crops.

In the Western Kenya region, 1,335 families have been affected by floods over the last two weeks. The most affected areas are, Homabay, Busia, Kakamega (Mumias), and Kisumu (Nyando, Nyakach and Muhoroni). With continuing rainfall, more people could be displaced in flood prone areas due to the rapidly rising water levels along the major rivers in the region.

Further, in Nyanza region, classrooms in five schools were flooded and latrines submerged, while a bridge was swept away by heavy rains along the Kisumu–Londiani road, paralysing transport along the road.

Increased inflows in the seven folks dams resulted in spillage, leading to flooding in the lowland areas of Garissa and Tana River. This resulted in the displacement of 670 families in Garissa Country and 5,019 families in Tana River County.

In a recent Kenya Red Cross Society assessment in Garissa and Tana River counties, families have lost livestock, and their crops damaged or destroyed, with approximately 1,862 acres belonging to 700 farmers submerged.

In Magarini sub-county, a total of 66 families were affected in Bura, Bate and Kaya sub-locations after River Sabaki broke its banks. Further, following heavy rains, a wall collapsed in Gorogan, Murang'a town.

In Nairobi, two school children from Kanyorosha Primary School in Kangemi, were reportedly swept by flood waters. Heavy flooding was also recorded in other parts of Nairobi, including, South 'C', Forest Road, Ongata Rongai, Karen and parts of the Central Business District.

The Kenya Red Cross has conducted several needs assessments and response initiatives to the affected populations in the floods-affected areas of Tana River/Delta, Malindi, Trans Nzoia, Budalangi and Merti in Isiolo, and distributed relief food and non-food items to affected communities countrywide.

Additional needs resulting from the floods include, provision of water treatment supplies such as aqua tabs to reduce cases of water borne diseases, livelihood support through the distribution of seeds, shelter materials, airdrops of food aid and essential supplies to marooned or inaccessible areas, and mosquito nets for displaced families. Hygiene and sanitation promotion activities will also be conducted in communities and affected schools.

According to the Kenya Meteorological Department, the month of May marks the peak of the long rains season, with near-normal rainfall to highly enhanced rainfall expected across the country. The rains are likely to continue through to June, especially in the Western Kenya region.

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