

## Kenya Red Cross Floods Response

Evaluation Focused on Nairobi, Taita- Taveta, Turkana and Kwale Counties

Floods (MDRKE037)



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## Abbreviation

<b>CTP</b>	Cash Transfer Programme
<b>EOC</b>	Emergency Operation Centre
<b>EPoA</b>	Emergency Plan of Action
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>INGO</b>	International Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>KIRA</b>	Kenya Interagency Rapid Assessment
<b>KRCS</b>	Kenya Red Cross Society
<b>NDMA</b>	National Drought Management Authority
<b>NFI</b>	Non-Food Items
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>MCI</b>	Mass Causality Incident
<b>RCAT</b>	Red Cross Action Team
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund

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## Executive Summary

The overall objective of this evaluation was to find out the effects of flood preparedness and response to the lives and livelihoods of the targeted communities. Specific objectives were to assess the effectiveness, relevance, efficiency of the response and the extent at which lessons learned and recommendations from previous floods operations were incorporated within this operation. This evaluation covered 4 (Turkana, Nairobi, Kwale, and Taita Taveta) counties which were reached with the responses. The review adopted a qualitative approach and relied mainly on reviewing of existing literature as well as having discussions with the community and different stakeholders through focused group discussions and key informant interviews.

**Findings:** The operation was relevant and appropriate to households whose houses were damaged. Cash was the most appropriate respond tool in Nairobi (targeting those HHs affected by collapse building). The highest expenditure of this cash was on paying house rent, followed by buying of food. Some of the cash was also used in purchasing of school learning materials and household items lost. The operation involved the local leadership and community members. In addition, KRCS's coordination with other implementers was done well and as a result, there was reduction of duplication of roles and responsibilities.

While the affected communities were to some extent involved in needs assessment, involvement in the response design, planning, and monitoring was either limited or not there at all in some areas. While in Nairobi County the response was seen to be timely (partly attributed to the Mass Casualty Incidence), in Turkana and Taveta counties, the response was not seen not to have been timely and this was attributed to rains that hampered the movement of both response teams and items. The community recommended availability of KRCS volunteers within the community level to improve the timeliness of response.

In conclusion, the response targeted households which were affected by floods in Taita Taveta, Kwale, Turkana and Nairobi County and priority was given to affected communities. Affected households were reached with NFIs, cash, psychosocial support and restoring family links intervention. Thus, the operation was relevant and appropriate to households whose houses were damaged.

**Recommendation:** KRCS must ensure that the beneficiaries are involved in needs assessments, exit strategies and design changes. Specific attention should be paid to the involvement of women, children, the elderly, youth and persons with disability

## CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND

The Kenya Meteorological department released an early warning on 25 April 2016, warning of heavy rains and storm surges (80% probability) that were expected to affect different parts of the country in the immediate period. The areas expected to experience heavy rains included Western Kenya, Rift valley, Coast and Central highlands including Nairobi. KRCS response teams in these areas were activated. Early warning messages were sent out through TERA SMS platform to communities living in lowland areas of Garissa, and Tana River warning of a likelihood of floods in these areas. Some of the very first areas to be hit by floods included Vanga in Kwale, Kalokol in Turkana, Moyale in Marsabit County and in Laisamis, Marsabit County. Other areas (Garissa, Bungoma, Baringo, Embu and Murang'a) reported small magnitude incidents.

Kenya Inter agency rapid assessment was conducted in Vanga in Kwale County that highlighted non-food items and seeds as the priority needs for the affected populations. The assessment findings showed that 1800 households were in need of urgent shelter support. Cash transfers were also found to be feasible.

As a result of heavy rains, a 7-storey building that accommodated more than 140 families in Nairobi's Huruma estate also collapsed. During the time of collapse 80% of the building was occupied. Sixteen (16) deaths were confirmed, 135 people treated for multiple types of injuries, and 75 reported missing. In addition, elsewhere in Nairobi, several estates were submerged by floodwaters. Among the areas in Nairobi that were most affected included parts of South C, Mukuru slum, Land Mawe, and Kinyago slums in Eastleigh. A perimeter wall at Department of Defence (DOD) along Lenana Road also collapsed killing four people on the spot. Needs assessment were conducted in the Mukuru and Huruma slum areas within Nairobi.

All in all, by the time of the launch of the DREF appeal, 34,129 people in all targeted areas had been affected. KRCS activated response teams composed of search and rescue, counsellors, relief distribution teams, first aiders, ambulances, Tracing and Psychosocial support teams to support the community members in rescue efforts of people reported to have been trapped under the rubble. 3 EMS Ambulances and approximately 30 KRCS responders were dispatched in the immediate aftermath of the incident. Subsequent joint assessments were later joined by back up teams from KRCS and other agencies including Military, National Youth Service (NYS), National Disaster Management Unit (NDMU), National Disaster Management Operation Centre (NDOC), Nairobi county government, St. John's ambulance, and Sonko rescue team among others.

When reports on dam water levels indicated that the seven folk dams along River Tana basin were operating at full capacity with water in some dams such as Masinga and Kiambere Dams beginning to spill over, KRCS started sending early warnings to communities living downstream as well as advising them to evacuate. The river did break its banks later causing displacements of households and destructions of several farms. In total, as a result of over flooded River Tana, a total of 5755HHs were displaced in some parts of Garissa (670HHs) and Tana River (5085) counties. Further to this, livelihoods were affected in that livestock were lost, crops damaged / destroyed (approximately 1862 acres belonging to 700 farmers in Garissa and Tana

River counties were submerged). The main Mambui - Dagamra road was cut off thus affecting the community's access to food and medical supplies in the nearby market.

In Muranga County, the heavy rains caused two landslides that swept away houses for three families in Rwahe and Mukuria areas in Kandara. In the West Kenya region, the rains caused massive displacements of 1335HHs (6,675 people) in Homabay, Busia, Kakamega (Mumias), and Kisumu (Nyando, Nyakach and Muhoroni) counties. Classrooms and latrines were submerged in floodwaters thus affecting education and posing great dangers of contamination and outbreak of waterborne diseases respectively. Transport and infrastructure was equally affected. A bridge was swept away by heavy rains along the Kisumu – Londiani road paralyzing transport along the road.

Cumulatively the floods emergency due to rains and dam spillages had affected 49,522 people (approximately 13,000 households) countrywide.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW PROCESS

### 2.1 Objective of the evaluation

#### 2.1.1. Purpose of the evaluation

The overall objective of this evaluation was to find out the effects of flood preparedness and response to the lives and livelihoods of the targeted communities. The findings of the evaluation would also provide learning through which future emergency responses would be made more responsive to the needs of the affected community. The main audience for the results of the evaluation are the KRCS and Red Cross/Crescent Movement.

#### 2.1.2 The specific objectives

Specific objectives of the evaluation were:

1. To assess the effectiveness of response
2. To assess the relevance of the response
3. To assess the efficiency of the response
4. To assess the extent at which lessons learned and recommendations from previous floods operations were incorporated within this operation

### 2.3 Scope

This evaluation covered 4 counties which were reached with the intervention. The counties were: Turkana, Nairobi, Kwale, and Taita Taveta Counties. The review adopted a qualitative method approach that covered discussions with community, volunteers, staff and stakeholders

### 2.4 Methodologies

#### 2.4.1 The Design

Descriptive study employed both qualitative and desk review approaches. The primary mode of qualitative data collection was through key Informant interviews, Group interviews (AAR with staff and response team) and focus group discussions with communities. Desk review was also used to triangulate qualitative data collected

#### 2.4.2 Target Respondents and sample size determination

A total of 36 Focused Group Discussions were conducted to participants who included the elderly, women, men, youths, and children were selected among the community which was affected by the floods and who were direct beneficiaries of the interventions.

A total of 10 KIIs were conducted. The key informants were selected based on the roles played during the response such as NDMU, County disaster focal persons, and ward administrators. One group interview was conducted and it included staff and response team who had participated in the operation.

Purposive sampling was used to select participants for FGDs, KII and group interviews

## CHAPTER THREE: EVALUATION RESULTS

### 3.1 Effectiveness of response

The operation was successful in achieving its outcomes and objectives as set out in the Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA). Through the operation, KRCS succeeded in reducing the immediate risks of the populations in flood-affected areas of Kenya through continuous surveillance and reporting on early warning information from Kenya Meteorological Department and KenGen, distribution of early warning messages, and effective search and rescue efforts that resulted in lives saved by KRCS.

KRCS carried out assessments that were used to inform programming options. KIRA assessments were carried out in Kwale, Tana River, Baringo and Garissa counties. These were then used as advocacy tools for fundraising from county government resulting in unified response with county governments. Discussions with beneficiaries established that community members were, to some extent, involved in the assessment process. However, some special groups such as pregnant and lactating women, children, youth, the elderly and people living with disability were not involved and it is not clear if their needs were fully addressed. For example, as a result of the floods children lost their books, pens, shoes and uniforms but KRCS did not supply these items during the interventions. At least, in Nairobi, these costs were factored in the cash transfer value

The community was able to confirm receipt of Non-Food Items and emergency shelter assistance, Cash Transfers, psychosocial support and restoring family links interventions and/services provided by KRCS. While the confirmation was a positive thing, in Taveta and Kwale counties, community members pointed out that the NFIs did not address their needs since most of them had not lost their household items and instead they were more in need of livelihood support such as farm inputs. A similar finding was also established in Turkana County where the community's need was food (as per the needs assessment) but KRCS ended up supplying them with NFIs. Fortunately, the county government provided food in one of the floods affected places in Kalokol but again the one-off distribution rations were too little to meet the needs of the affected community

Men and women, young and elderly, in Kwale, Turkana and Taveta also stressed the need for implementation of long term community based flood prevention and mitigation measures. Some of the examples of proposed long term mitigation strategies included construction of dykes, and clearing of drainages to divert flood waters from community villages.

#### **Coordination**

KII with NDMA reveal that, the county government and the national government was represented by National Drought Management Authority (NDMA). The authority provided leadership during coordination forums and

meetings held to plan for the response. The county government and the national government contributed relief food; NDMA contributed personnel and KRCS carried out the initial assessment, developed a report and presented it to stakeholders consisting of government, local and international NGOs. In addition, KRCS provided personnel and NFIs.

Key informant interviews with Turkana and Kwale county coordinator stated that coordination of stakeholders resulted into roles sharing and coordination of response interventions including NFIs contribution which yielded overall synergy among different stakeholders. Most stakeholders delivered on their commitment.

In Nairobi County, coordination of Mass Casualty Incident in Huruma was well done. Many actors including NDOC and NDMU, hospital, Sonko Rescue team were on the ground responding to the incidence. The MCI protocol was followed to the latter

### 3.2 Relevance of the response

The evaluation revealed majority of the respondent households in Kwale and Taita Taveta County were farming households, dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods. The evaluation revealed that out of the farming households some of the households did not have the resources to cultivate their lands crops which were destroyed by floods. According to the assessment reports, in Turkana, a total of 1,725 livestock such as cattle and goats were lost during the floods. The assessments findings revealed that in Kwale, Turkana, and Taita Taveta County, the communities' first priority need was food. And integrated approach response such as supporting small farmers with agriculture inputs, irrigation farming assistance through cash, livestock support and water and sanitation were part the needs that the community needed to be supported with

In Nairobi, the response was relevant since all the intervention provided were in line with the disaster thus enabling communities who had lost their shelter following the collapse building to alternative shelter and other emergency needs.

A general consensus reached by all the respondents in various villages in Kwale and Taita Taveta County targeted by KRCS suggests that they were not involved in the design, planning, and monitoring and to some extent in needs assessment. Therefore, it is not clear if the assistance provided addressed the needs of the affected population. The evaluation team were made to understand that the community involvement and participation in the assessment was inadequate due to a non-participatory methodology used. The response team relied on information from the villager elders. Discussion with village elders in Kwale and Taveta revealed that focal persons did not have adequate knowledge on how conduct need assessment. The As a lesson learnt, there is need to apply accountability to beneficiaries' principles even in the initial stages of a response including assessment so as to capture the actual needs of the affected community through participatory approaches of conducting an assessment.

**Timeliness-** in Turkana and Taita Taveta counties, the response was not timely. The community recommended that KRCS should have volunteers at the community level to improve the timeliness of

response or enhance response capacities of the community disaster management response units in place. In Turkana for instance, the rains hindered community access as the seasonal river Kalawase swelled up hence hindering movement to the disaster affected area in Kalokol while in some other areas such as Lomello, the roads were cut off by the rains.

In Nairobi, the response was timely and this was attributed to Mass Casualty Incident protocol in place as well as proximity of the disaster area. The response came immediately after the onset of the incident. The community members were the first on site after the survivors raised the alarm. The Kenya Red Cross Society, the police and the sub county disaster committee were first on site, and later joined by the Kenya Defense Force who started professional rescue operation.

In Kwale County, community stated that the response was timely and mainly due to simultaneous needs assessment and distribution of NFIs to the affected communities.

**Targeting of Affected Areas-** Both primary and secondary data collected during the course of evaluation revealed that all the areas targeted under this intervention were affected by the floods. Discussions with the communities during the course of the evaluation suggested that communities in the affected areas in Kwale, Turkana, Nairobi and Taita Taveta County were assisted by KRCS, county and the national government. Some NGOs (UNICEF, Save the Children, Child fund, International Organisation for Migration) in Turkana County also supported the affected communities

### 3.3 Appropriateness of the response

Overall, in Kwale, and Taita Taveta counties, the assistance appeared not to have been appropriate, since it did not look at the needs of the community. In Taita Taveta, Turkana and Kwale counties, affected households whose houses were damaged/ destroyed were able to access shelter support, NFI support (kitchen set, blankets, collapsible jerrycans and bed nets) while in Nairobi, being an MCI, beneficiaries were supported with psychosocial support, restoring family links thus an impression of the appropriateness of the assistance since most of the affected communities had lost their families as a result of the disaster

Cash transfer was used as a response tool for Nairobi's response. Through it, the affected communities were able to meet their needs including renting new houses and replacing some of what they had lost during the disaster. Even with this, the local markets continued functioning well and were accessible to the local communities with the prices of key commodities remaining constant

In view of what was distributed, In Turkana County, community members indicated that all NFIs were beneficial. A few complaints were on the quality of the collapsible jerry cans that were torn after a few days. In Kalokol, they pointed out that tents and mosquito nets were most beneficial, while in Lomelo, blankets and tarpaulins were identified as most beneficial.

***“It’s difficult to point out which items were most beneficial; we thank KRCS for the assistance. However, we appeal for relief food aid, mosquito nets and tents in such difficult times in future, Women FGD, Lomello Turkana***

The distribution of NFIs seemed to have been a ‘blanket distribution’ which never considered the level of destruction/damage/loss of NFIs within the HHs. As revealed during group interviews and FGDs with volunteers, in Kwale, Taita Taveta and Turkana, all households, as long as they were within the flood affected area, whether damaged or not, were also supported with NFIs.

FGDs with children, elderly, youth, disable persons, persons with chronic illness and to some extent women felt that the assistance were not appropriate to them. The non-involvement in the decision making and needs assessment, remains a major obstacle and it will require deliberate efforts to overcome the barriers and ensure the inclusion of these groups in decision making thus making the assistance more appropriate.

To promote dignity of the affected communities, it is important that the response option is in line with their preference

***“They gave our parents blankets but we wanted light beddings” A boy child 1 Kiwegu children FGD, Kwale***

***“We wanted books and pencils since our books were destroyed”, A girl child, children Ngutini FGD, Taita Taveta***

***“If they had asked us on what we wanted, we would have stated that we wanted to be supported to rehabilitate and or construct drainage”, male youth, Kiwegu FGD youth FGD, Kwale***

***“They gave us cooking sets, nets, blankets and yet we needed seeds”, female, elderly Malikiloriti FGD, Taita Taveta***

Overall, there has been evidence of men and women being listened to in the case of Nairobi County where there were occasions where some of the affected beneficiaries were still in need of psycho social support such as counselling and they were given despite of them attending the required sessions.

In flood conditions, there is potential for increased water borne transmission of disease, especially in areas where the population does not have access to clean water and sanitation. According to Water and Sanitation program 2014 report on Kenya County Sanitation profile, Kwale County has latrine coverage of 48.8%, and Turkana 17.9%. This means most of the affected communities have been practicing open defecation. Despite this, the response did not have adequate WASH component except that of distribution of water treatment chemicals. Even so, demonstration to the affected communities on how to treat water was not done. Further discussion revealed the responders did not have knowledge as to what type of water treatment need to be distributed depending the type of water, for example, tablets was distributed to the affected communities instead of PUR were distributed yet the water was turbid.

## **Accountability to Community**

KRCS accountability to beneficiaries' framework identifies four programmatic commitments that the organization will include in all interventions; Community participation, transparent communication, complaints and feedback, and monitoring, evaluation and learning. KRCS involved communities at varying degrees during the floods response

Despite a few good examples of beneficiary participation by village elders in needs assessment and household registration, unfortunately beneficiaries were not involved in key decisions surrounding the interventions. It was noted that the involvement of village elders in needs assessment did not really represent the needs of the affected groups.

KRCS allocated substantial efforts to informing people about the emergency assistance. Often information was made available in communication with the chief, sub chiefs and the village elders so that people could understand what assistance was to be offered.

During the FGDs sessions, beneficiaries stated that KRCS showed up for assessments and distribution and never to return again. Thus, the beneficiaries had a very cautious attitude towards KRCS. They felt that it would be important for KRCS responders to be available all through the response so that as build strong relationship between the communities and KRCS.

This was echoed during FGDs from Taveta and Kwale counties (Men, Women, and Youth FGDs) that established that while communities received information from KRCS during assessment this was not sustained throughout the response. For example, in some cases, communities did not receive prior information on the distribution dates, time and venue.

Exit strategies were often based on completion of the pre-set assistance outcomes. In case of this response, the process of disengagement was not conducted thus the affected communities were still anticipating for more assistance.

Some of the feedback mechanisms used during response include;

- **Telephone line- (mainly 1199 EOC toll free line)**

Beneficiaries used the KRCS Emergency Operations Centre toll free line to give feedback and complaints to KRCS after they received TERA messages from KRCS. The telephone line has proven to be an effective mechanism for collection of feedback and complaints which are then acted on by teams both in the field and HQ. However, this mechanism needs to be complemented with other complaints and feedback mechanism to ensure communities with no access to mobile phones are not left out.

- **Local chiefs and community focal persons**

KRCS also received complaints and feedback through local administration including village elders, chiefs, and ward administrators. The mechanism as per community discussions in Kwale, Turkana, Nairobi and Taita

Taveta, is hampered by the administrators' biases which in some cases acts a barrier to effective engagement between communities and KRCS

- **KRCS volunteers / staff**

Communities also used KRCS staff and volunteers to provide feedback and complaints to KRCS. While this is an effective feedback mechanism, it may be ineffective or inappropriate in cases where a complaint involves a staff, volunteer or the organization.

**Gender equity issues integrated throughout the project cycle-** Humanitarian assistance aims at meeting the needs of people in emergencies. Women, girls, boys, men, young children, adolescents and older people are affected in different ways by crises and emergencies and have different capacities for coping with and preparing for these situations.

In general, all different groups and vulnerable groups were treated equally and not in equity. However, the youths, elderly and children felt that future responses should be designed to address specific needs to each vulnerable group since the effects of floods sometimes cause different needs across different groups especially whether displacements occur or not. Youth emphasized that they should be supported with income generating initiatives such as provision of farm input to improve their capacities to reduce their vulnerability when disasters occur

### 3.4 Efficiency of the response

Despite evidence of key response actions, it was unclear from the KRCS volunteers whether all the activities were in accordance with the agreed and approved budget. It was more likely that the instructions were received from the regional managers which had to be followed regardless of whether they were in line with the budget. According to the ward administrator in Vanga, the responses were well executed and to some extent met the needs of the community, a more likely reason as to why it may have been in line with the approved budget.

From the perspective of the KRCS volunteers and partners, it was not easy to establish whether there were gaps in terms of low or high expenditures during the response. The KRCS staffs regularly updated the response teams on the response plans as well as the organization's commitment to responding in accordance with the agreed budget lines.

Flood response actions aim to cover aspects that are fundamental to minimizing the risks and significantly reducing the number of those affected by the floods, this intervention did not make it necessary to involve the local structures at the design stage

The KRCS volunteers and key county officials did not understand the emergency plan of action since they were only getting to know of it at the response stage. In addition, the bids for requests were not prepared by the project delivery teams and therefore understanding the objectives and outcomes becomes difficult.

***'I expected KRCS officers from HQ to share with us the activities and budget for our response prior to the actual work, but this was not possible, we had to rely on what our teams on the ground (Kwale and Taveta branch KRCS teams) were proposing' – FGD respondent***

While a response plan helps define the needed goals, scheduling, staff and resources allocation, the respondents could not establish whether this existed. Perhaps sharing of the plan at the planning stages would have helped clarify the key response components. The KRCS volunteers had their own projections as to when the interventions were to be completed, these timelines were also not met. Some of the barriers to timely completion of responses as well as failure to comply with the agreed timelines included long distances that had to be covered to deliver aid, logistical challenges especially when a large number of responders needed to be deployed, irregular communication between the focal persons and the team on the ground.

A respondent during the FGD session points out,

***'There were instances when we needed to move swiftly to a place and conduct an assessment. Despite having a big team on standby, circumstances dictated that we reduce the numbers and only have on board only those who would fit the vehicle'. – Respondent 5 - KRCS volunteer FGD session***

Assessment and mapping of affected areas ensured that the affected persons at risk groups were considered first and supported thus minimizing possible flood risks. The two weeks' turnaround time ensured that all the affected households were assessed and assistance delivered. This however was still not the best, according to the community focal person during the responses, proper planning and involvement of all of them at the design stages would significantly reduce the turnaround time.

Whereas it was the desire of KRCS to provide relief items to the affected population thereby allowing them to recover, the inputs were inadequate leaving out other vulnerable households. The proper use of the items however, was a noteworthy since no cases were reported of beneficiaries selling the items received. This is an indication that the utilization was as had been anticipated.

***'As a community, we value any form of relief assistance, since they are scarce and many people are in need of help in other places. Selling of relief items is one thing that has never crossed my minds'. – Respondent 1 (women FGD in Ngutini)***

For cash transfer, funds were transferred between 2 - 3 days after the emergency using the MPESA payment platform which was a result of the pre-existing agreement between KRCS and SAFARICOM mobile phone company hence this meant no set up costs amongst others that would have been incurred if other payment service providers were to be used

### 3.5 Organisation Learning and Good Practices

#### **Application of previous lessons learnt and recommendations in the floods response operation**

Key lessons learnt have been brought forth in the previous reviews, most of which required management responses for them to be actioned. While this has not been forthcoming in new responses, this particular operation attempted to apply some of the good practices that had been cited previously. Many of these lessons seemed broadly applicable but were relevant to flood operations.

### ***Flexibility and incorporation of existing body of knowledge during emergency needs assessments –***

Previous operations noted the importance of needs assessments and the need for such to consider what KRCS and other agencies already knew in terms of context and constraints. This was particularly important to those agencies that regularly dealt with flood risks. To a certain extent, this operation considered several response options even though this was not fully exhausted. For instance, there was a mention of cash grants during the assessment as a possible option but issues related to budget constraints could not permit such an option. There were attempts to apply joint approaches during assessments that included the county or national governments. In some cases, however, this was only limited to the partners mentioned leaving out other key non-state actors such as World Vision, Plan International etc. In the end, it was not exhaustive as had been anticipated. Moreover, the use of common format to collate data was not realised since both county and national government normally have their specific interests as well during such assessment.

### ***Linkage of responses to long term development activities***

**Previous reviews established that** the consequences of the loss of assets, shelter and livelihoods and the deaths of economically active household members endure for many years in the event of flooding. Minimal efforts were made in taking cognizance of this fact and in the end, the response plans and budgets did not take this into consideration. Instead, the response interventions mirrored those that had been previously done. Inadequate resources and lack of involvement of the regional teams at the design stage was cited as the contributing factors.

KRCS interventions focus mainly on emergency response rather than long term recovery and as such, the organization gives little attention to the long-term effect on communities of losing assets, shelter, livelihoods and even loss of active household members following disasters.

***‘Many at times we know what exactly the affected communities require from us, but because whatever we give them is what is normally available, we are never in control’ – Respondent 1 (KRCS volunteers FGD)***

### ***Engagement with local authorities/communities/partners is critical***

The need for engagement with the community and of local authorities has been a recurring lesson learnt from previous KRCS flood operations. This operation identified and observed this as a critical factor in humanitarian action.

***Our engagement with the county government officials from the time information of flooding reached us, assessment and actual response improved our interaction and trust with the local authorities. The county officers felt they needed to be in the forefront and even provided logistical support during the visits to the affected areas. They demanded that the assessment teams share the reports as soon as possible for assistance to be provided.*** – KRCS volunteer (Taveta)

Even though whatever was provided was not adequate for all the affected, the beneficiaries expressed their satisfaction with the manner in which the assessment teams visited them and assessed their conditions. The

assessments teams however, did not put much focus on identifying the needs of specific groups such as Women, man, children, youth, the elderly, and persons with special needs among others. And this can be attributed to how the assessments are conducted. 24hr and 72hr are very limiting whereas KIRA is all inclusive

***'In the past, we would just see a team approaching our villages with blankets, tents, sufurias etc., this time, both KRCS team and those from the county government came on the ground immediately after the flooding and we were able to share our problems. We even mentioned to them that opening up of drainage channels would be a lasting solution to this flooding problem, the fact that they wrote this down and promised to seek further support from the county, to us was a positive move' – Respondent 4 (Women FDG session in Ngutini)***

### ***Beware of possible risks to health/disease outbreaks***

In this operation, the response teams ensured that risk assessment was properly conducted prior to the actual response. The team noted that floods could easily pose other threats to health such as snake bites, crocodile attacks etc. In the case of Nairobi, the responders ensured that they had appropriate personal protective equipment albeit not in adequate quantities for the response teams. In high risk areas, only the teams that were in fully protective equipment were allowed in while others responded in turns.

***'We experienced serious shortages of personal protective equipment. The few that existed were not adequate for the entire response team, we were therefore forced to device coping measures – sharing and in unique circumstances, only allowing those with proper protective equipment to go in like in the case of Ngutini where there were threats of crocodiles that had followed the flood waters' – Respondent 2 – KRCS volunteer FGD session)***

### **Coordination**

This was a multiagency response that was headed by the National Disaster Management Unit. Previously the failure of responses was mainly due to poor interagency coordination and a lack of proper planning. The current operation was an improvement of the previous ones owing to the improved coordination and stakeholder involvement.

Shift from in-kind donations to cash transfer was hailed by the community members as an improvement since it grants the recipients control over what they want to buy.

The establishment of a command system and subsequent allocation of tasks and responsibilities was considered. In Turkana, the county government through ministry of public service, decentralized administration and Disaster Management took lead in coordination of floods response activities in the county. Several meetings were called including the last meeting to review the response and draw lessons learnt.

Through this coordination, partners were able to pull their resources and distribute through KRCS which had been appointed the main responder to the floods emergency red by the respondents as the best practise

## Application of Previous Recommendations

While a number of recommendations have been identified from previous KRCS operations, implementation of the same has not been consistent due to inadequate organizational mechanism for documentation, utilization and follow up on these. In this operation, considerable efforts were put towards implementing the previous measures, some of which included;

- KRCS had become a key member of county coordination committee, a platform in which it was now using to influence key decisions and legislations. In Kwale, Turkana and Taveta counties, KRCS staff regularly attended the county steering group meetings in which planning and reviews with regard to flooding were discussed.
- KRCS volunteers held regular briefings and debriefings on the ongoing operations. This was key in ensuring the operation went on without interruptions and shortages of staff or volunteers deploying themselves.

***'We held morning and evening briefings / debriefings under the guidance of our branch coordinator. Everyone was expected to provide a brief of what they had done in the previous day, pending actions and challenges faced. At the end of the review and planning meetings, the team leader briefed us on what the county government and other partners had planned to do so that we could support them as well. We were also able to review our work plans based on what the team leader planned' – Respondent 6 – (KRCS volunteer FGD session)***

- Although not formal, KRCS staffs and volunteers provided a complaints and feedback mechanism which helped strengthen communication. The community leaders and focal persons were provided with direct phone lines of the branch coordinator which they could use to report cases of dissatisfaction of the beneficiaries as well as households that had been missed during the registration.

## Approaches

- The joint assessment and response between KRCS, county and national government was a plus in the sense that KRCS could complement what the two levels of government had provided. Consequently, cases of duplication of responses were minimized at least to the extent of distribution of NFIs. This approach enabled KRCS to get logistical support from the government and also assisted in resource mobilization from other local partners. The joint assessment was however not done using the approved tools that would see the team begin with the assessment and then base the response on the assessment findings.

- There were no county specific contingency plans for the floods and in cases where these existed, responses were not guided by the plans due to the reactive nature of the response especially in Taveta, Kwale and Turkana. The choice of interventions was not well thought out as a county team and instead relied on what the team from KRCS headquarters proposed. In Nairobi however, response to the floods was effective and was mainly guided by the MCI protocol and the National KRCS contingency plan developed prior to the flooding.

## CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### 4.1 Conclusion

The Emergency Plan of Action MDRKE 037 developed and published on 3rd May 2016 was informed by four Kenya Interagency Rapid Assessments (KIRA). KIRA reports were shared with wider humanitarian community. KIRA were undertaken in Vanga, Tana River, Baringo and Garissa counties. These assessments involved county and national government personnel as well as representatives from INGOs. Rapid Market Assessment and cash feasibility assessments were done alongside needs assessments in Huruma, Mukuru, Tana River and Vanga gave positive results on cash transfer feasibility.

In conclusion, the response targeted households which were affected by floods in Taita Taveta, Kwale, Turkana and Nairobi County and priority was given to affected communities. Affected households were reached with NFIs, cash, psychosocial support and restoring family links intervention. Thus, the operation was relevant and appropriate to households whose houses were damaged. The operation was locally welcome as it involved the local leadership and community members. All necessary measures were taken by the KRCS team to ensure all activities were within the 7 fundamental principles

Affected communities were to some extent involved in needs assessment however, there were no involvement of the affected community in design, planning, and monitoring level.

Turkana and Taveta counties, the response was not timely due to continued rains that hampered movement of both response teams and items, the communities prefer to have KRCS volunteers within at the community level to improve the timeliness of response. In Nairobi, the response was timely and this was attributed to Mass Casualty Incidence. The response came immediately after the onset of the incident.

### 4.2 Recommendation

1. KRCS must ensure utilise its ATC frame work so that the beneficiaries are involved in major decision-making such as assessments, exit strategies and design changes. Most of these decisions are process related and can be anticipated well in advance. Specific attention should be paid to the involvement of women, children, the elderly, youth and persons with disability.
2. Other than the needs assessments, vulnerability and capacity assessments (VCAs) should also be used to inform the development of appeals or DREFs. This will help in identification of community priorities and design of interventions to respond to these.
3. The capacity of volunteers and other first responders in assessment should be strengthened to improve the quality of responders in assessment. This should focus on use of key assessment tools such as the 24 hour and 72-hour assessment tools and KIRA and other MEAL tools.
4. There is need to capture data disaggregated by gender and age
5. Strengthen joint planning between KRCS, other partners and government agencies. Going forward, it will be important for the society to share the work plans with other partners so that areas of complementarity and gaps can be highlighted and support provided
6. There is need for a clear and well communication strategy
7. The need to consider recovery plans for these communities is important for sustainability – consider resilience activities and develop of proposal/concept notes for medium/longer term response to

approach donors. There is also need to create partnership with other organizations working on recovery and resilience.

8. Future operations should consider a livelihood intervention as with the flooding and loss of homes, there was also loss of livestock and planted crops. Most beneficiaries needed support to get their lives back to normal and have livelihood generation opportunities