



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

**REMARKS BY
DR. CLEOPA MAILU, CABINET SECRETARY,
DURING THE
FLAGGING OFF OF MEDICAL COMMODITIES AND SUPPLIES
AS PART OF EL NINO MITIGATION**

**KEMSA Embakasi Supply chain Centre, Nairobi,
12TH January 2016**

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the flagging off of various supplies and medical commodities to mitigate the impact of elNiño in several parts of the country. This ceremony highlights the ministry's commitment to supplement and complement the efforts of county governments to counter the impacts of El Niño and ensure health services delivery is sustained in the affected counties.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a country, and indeed the entire region has been experiencing above normal rainfall as a result of the El Nino Phenomenon that started November 2015, and this was forecast to spill over to early 2016. The Ministry of Health has developed a National Health Sector contingency plan to guide the nation in preparing for and responding to the consequences and challenges that may arise in relation to the El Nino phenomenon. With the possibility of prolonged above normal rainfall in virtually the whole of Kenya, this plan provides a guide for the health sector on what needs to be done to ensure a timely, consistent and coordinated preparedness and response across the country.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In the past, Kenya has managed emergencies arising from flood hazards and the health challenges that are usually anticipated during floods. These include but are not limited to disease outbreaks, due to water related diseases, supply chain challenges for medical and non-medical commodities, constraints with routine emergency referral of medical emergencies, prolonged power failures in health facilities, flooding in health facilities, trauma and drowning, disruption of

business continuity in health facilities, communication failures, patient surge, effects of population displacements, and greater risk of aflatoxin poisoning. Various counties have already reported some of these experiences and situations and are actively engaged in response.

Ladies and Gentlemen

My ministry and County departments of health have stepped up disease surveillance throughout the country and also intend to conduct an assessment of public health and medical needs of affected populations in Counties hard hit by El Niño. We are working with partners to provide an all-hazard technical assistance and support to affected counties and the health sector in general.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The larger part of the MoH El-Niño contingency budget was meant for ensuring optimal medical commodity management in order to minimize supply chain challenges during the rains especially of key medical commodities such as laboratory reagents, vaccines and essential drugs. As events unfold, resource mobilization to facilitate provision of logistical support in hardest hit areas will be an important aspect of implementation of the Ministry's national contingency plan for

El Nino. Towards this end, my ministry has worked with treasury and development partners to secure support for alleviating some of the challenges related to sustaining the supply of medical commodities during El Nino.

Ladies and gentlemen

One of the key interventions outlined in the contingency plan is to support county health departments in Arid and Semi-Arid areas with supplies of essential health commodities to help avert supply chain challenges and also create buffer stocks for disease outbreak preparedness. The impact of El-Nino in Kenya is not uniform. The large variability of El-Niño-related impacts in space and time in Kenya are due to the complex nature of the topography and the existence of the large inland water bodies. Indeed, El Niño impacts vary not only from location to location and from season to season, but also from one El Niño event to another.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to acknowledge the enormous support from the World Bank towards realization of these commodities .This support from the World Bank is worth Ksh. 500 million and is primarily destined for the 22 Arid and Semi-Arid (ASAL) counties

targeted by the ongoing World Bank project. 5 other non-ASAL counties that are facing serious challenges due to Niño will also benefit from this support in order to boost health services in the informal settlements of Nairobi, Nakuru, Mombasa and Eldoret. These informal settlements have experienced serious constraints and an increase in the risk factors for illness during above normal rainfall seasons.

Ladies and gentlemen

I would like on behalf of the government and the people of Kenya to convey my appreciation to the World Bank for their financial support. I also thank KEMSA for their dedication to maintaining a supply chain for medical commodities that serves the whole republic. I also wish to thank County departments of health and officers in my Ministry for working together in liaison and joint commitment to during this El Nino season and their continued.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank all of you for taking time to participate in this ceremony. I would like to request that we all re-dedicate ourselves towards this vision of “A Kenya health sector resilient to emergencies and disasters”. We have an important journey

ahead of us and we would like to walk far. So let's walk together.

Finally, I now wish to invite our key partners to join me as I formally flag off the supplies to the various destinations.

Thank you very much.