



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

PRESS RELEASE: ADVISORY ON HEALTH RISKS AMID ONGOING HEAVY RAINS

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As heavy rains persist, the Ministry of Health emphasizes to the general public especially in the counties that have reported enhanced heavy rains on critical need for being extra vigilant due to the health risks associated with the ongoing weather conditions exacerbated by the heavy rains.

The current situation presents potential health hazards, including:

- High risk of injuries and fatalities due to surface run-off and mudslides, particularly in hilly areas.
- Inaccessibility of health facilities caused by floodwaters and damaged roads among other infrastructure, impacting the delivery of crucial healthcare services.
- Challenges in nutrition due to flooding disrupting food production and submerging crops, potentially leading to reduced food availability and dietary diversity.
- Increase in waterborne diseases and vector-borne illnesses like malaria
- Overcrowding in displacement camps may further elevate the risk of upper respiratory tract infections, vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles due to accessibility barriers and poor disposal of human waste increasing the risk of diarrheal diseases..

The Ministry of Health collaborates with county governments and partners to implement a comprehensive response plan focusing on vulnerable areas within the health system, including:

- Activation of the national Public Health Emergency Operations Centre and prompt activation of County Emergency Operation Centres.
- Preparedness of Health facility capacity

- Addressing vector-borne illnesses such as Rift Valley Hemorrhagic fever, Dengue fever, Chikungunya, Malaria, among others through distribution of insecticide treated nets (ITNS) and provision of insect repellants.
- Emphasizing preventive health measures, including vaccinations against vaccine preventable diseases.
- Providing technical assistance and supporting county Governments through rapid response teams.

Additionally, collaboration with County Governments and Partners to ensure:

- Readiness to establish temporary health facilities in evacuated or inaccessible flood-prone areas.
- Stockpiling health emergency supplies to prevent shortages and ensuring well-stocked health facilities for prompt response.
- The Ministry of Health is a critical sector in the government's broader multi-agency response mechanism. It provides information as the health situation evolves following established incident command system protocols.

Public advisory:

The public is advised to avoid crossing swollen rivers and relocate from high-risk areas prone to landslides and floods. Strict adherence to sanitation and hygiene practices is crucial, including frequent handwashing and proper waste disposal. It's essential to treat drinking water before use and ensure food hygiene to prevent contamination. Immediate medical attention is recommended at the nearest health facility for symptoms of waterborne diseases or any health concerns.

The Ministry urges the public to utilize emergency helplines [719 or 0729471414 or 0732353535] for assistance and stay informed about local vaccination programs to safeguard against preventable diseases.

Thank you

Ms Mary Muthoni Muriuki, HSC

PRINCIPAL SECRETARY

STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS