



“The number of food insecure people has risen by 170 percent since the end of 2008”

Kenya

Background

The intensification of drought conditions throughout 2009 has led to a 170 percent increase in the number of food insecure people in Kenya since the end of 2008. In March, following the Short Rains Assessment, an estimated 3.4 million people were identified as being in need of assistance. Following the Long Rains Assessment in August, this number was increased further to 3.8 million, predominately comprising pastoralists, agropastoralists and farming households. The insufficient rainfall has affected parts of the Rift Valley, which is traditionally an important food-production area.

Approximately 75 percent of Kenya's population depends on agricultural livelihoods, the majority of whom are unable to meet their daily food requirements. These groups have experienced an erosion of their livelihoods as the food security situation has degenerated. Pastoralists in particular, who occupy 80 percent of Kenya's land mass and are considered the custodians of dryland environments, suffer from the highest poverty rates and have the least access to basic services compared with other areas. Furthermore, returning IDPs have struggled to re-establish their livelihoods because of crop failure.

Challenges facing food security and livelihoods

The 2009 long-rain season maize production is estimated to be significantly less than the short-term average. The food security situation is further complicated by continued export bans in neighboring Tanzania and Uganda, which are likely to reduce cross-border maize inflows by 46 percent, while at the same time food prices consistently remain high. Additional issues affecting outputs include inefficient market competition and agricultural extension systems, poor infrastructure and general governance issues.

As a result, terms of trade of pastoralists, agropastoralists and farmers, as well as purchasing power of urban households, have deteriorated significantly. In many pastoral areas, trekking distances have increased to 40 km for cattle and camels and over 25 km for sheep and goats. Available water supplies are increasingly insufficient to meet local demand, thus reducing the watering frequency of animals from daily to once every three days and causing further deterioration in their health. The scarcity of water and pasture has also contributed to frequent outbreaks of conflict between communities; as of September 2009, there were 242 deaths in pastoral areas caused by resource-based conflict and cattle rustling.



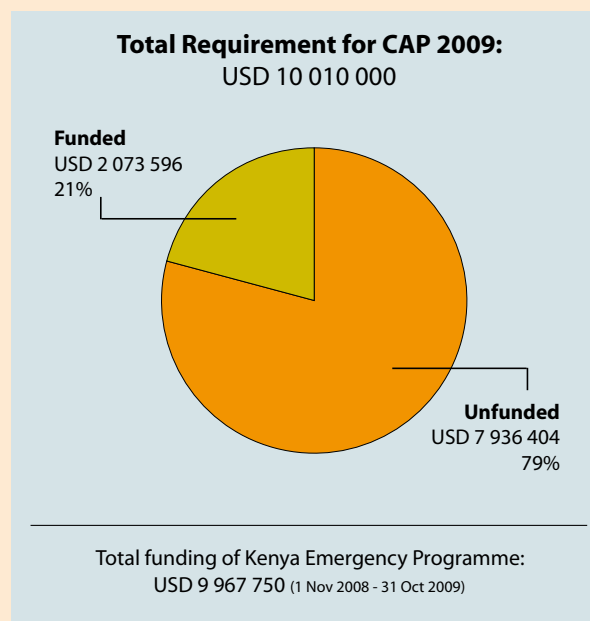
FAO intends to facilitate the restoration of livestock assets of drought-affected communities through disease surveillance and control.

At the same time, a strong likelihood of heightened rainfall as a result of an *El Niño* event is expected to result in flooding in some parts of the country. Cyclical episodes of localized flooding are a constant risk in Kenya. *El Niño* rains are expected to lead to some infrastructural damage and potential disease outbreaks, from which 750 000 people could be affected and require assistance. However, effective planning and coordination would enable vulnerable rural populations to benefit from the increased rainfall, offering some relief in the most drought-affected areas and providing opportunities for crop production, as well as restoring deteriorated pastures.

FAO Response

In 2010, FAO aims to ensure that humanitarian interventions are well-coordinated and that sufficient information on food security and planned activities is available in order to ensure adequate response to needs. Specifically, FAO is appealing for funds to assist vulnerable pastoralist communities and small-scale farmers by supporting the Government of Kenya in the coordination of humanitarian food security interventions, grassroots priority setting, preparedness and response planning. Funds provided would facilitate the restoration of livestock assets of drought-affected communities through disease surveillance and control, fodder production, training and restocking activities. The proposed activities would also prepare beneficiaries to take advantage of the expected upcoming rains through interventions such as the distribution of drought-resistant crop varieties and farm inputs, as well as training in improved technologies. Additional planned activities to increase the resilience of vulnerable communities include improvements in water harvesting and the construction of soil and water conservation structures.

Governmental coordination structures, together with UN agencies and other stakeholders, would have the overall responsibility to plan and follow up on humanitarian food security interventions conducted in Kenya. In the coming year, there will also be an increased focus on sharing experiences among humanitarian partners.



PROPOSALS: FAO EMERGENCY AND REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE

Total funding requested: USD 13 750 000

Coordination of agriculture and livestock sector humanitarian food security and livelihood interventions	
Objectives:	To support the Government in the coordination of humanitarian food security interventions, grassroots-level problem identification, priority setting, preparedness and response planning; and to rebuild the livelihoods and increase the resilience of vulnerable drought-affected populations.
Activities:	Build capacity on information management, problem identification, emergency preparedness, priority setting, rapid assessments, pasture rehabilitation and IPC; conduct training on data analysis; carry out assessments; provide agricultural inputs through fairs and the voucher system; restock livestock; and provide productive assets through food or cash-for-work activities to improve water harvesting.
Beneficiaries:	13 000 000 people.
Implementing partners:	Government of Kenya and NGOs.
Duration:	January – December 2010.
Funds requested:	USD 13 750 000.