



Kenya Red Cross Volunteers Supporting Drainage Clearing Ahead of the El Nino

Appeal: MDRKE074	DREF Allocated: CHF 80,000	Hazard: Flood	Country: Kenya
Population at risk (if available): 250,000	Operation Start Date: 27-10-2026	Operation End Date: 31-12-2026	
Event Onset: Sudden	Forecasted day of event (or peak): 2026-11-01	Operation Timeframe: 45 days	
Targeted Regions: -			

Scenario analysis

When and where is the hazard expected to happen?

Since the onset of the October-November-December (OND) rainy season, forecasts from the Kenya Meteorological Department have consistently indicated an increased likelihood of above-average rainfall across much of Kenya, with the highest probabilities concentrated in eastern, northeastern, coastal, and several central counties. The monthly outlook highlights enhanced rainfall conditions throughout October and anticipates heavy rainfall events in several parts of the country. The weekly forecast valid 20-26 October similarly indicates widespread rainfall activity across much of the country. These forecasts suggest a continued strengthening of seasonal rainfall towards the end of October. (KMSA Monthly Forecast; KMSA Weekly Forecast 20-26 October).

Sub-seasonal forecast guidance from NOAA GFS further supports this outlook. The Week-1 accumulated rainfall forecast (NOAA GFS Week 1) valid through approximately 2 November indicates widespread moderate to heavy rainfall across central, eastern, northeastern and coastal Kenya, with many areas expected to receive between approximately 60-150 mm of rainfall during the week. The subsequent Week-2 forecast (NOAA GFS Week 2) valid through approximately 9 November continues to show above-normal rainfall across many of the same areas, suggesting persistence of wet conditions beyond the initial rainfall episode. The consecutive weekly forecasts therefore indicate that rainfall is expected to remain elevated into early November rather than being confined to a short-duration event.

Taken together, the monthly, weekly and sub-seasonal forecasts point to late October through the first week of November as the period of greatest hydrological concern, with the highest likelihood of peak impacts occurring during the first week of November (1-9 November) when cumulative rainfall from successive wet periods is likely to result in increased soil saturation, elevated river levels, localized flooding, flash flooding and access disruptions, particularly in eastern, northeastern and coastal counties.

The trigger date has been set at 1 November 2026, based on forecast evidence that rainfall is expected to become both more widespread and sustained across Kenya by the beginning of November. While NOAA forecasts indicate localized heavy rainfall developing over parts of western and northern Kenya around 28 October, the NOAA daily accumulated precipitation forecast (NOAA 24h precipitation model) valid 1 November 2026 shows rainfall extending across much of the country, including western, central, eastern and northeastern Kenya.

This outlook is further supported by global forecasting products, which indicate an increased likelihood of heavy rainfall over western, central, northeastern, and southeastern Kenya in the next two weeks. In western Kenya, persistent rainfall since early October, combined with the forecast for continued rainfall, is expected to significantly increase soil moisture levels and lead to widespread soil saturation. Consequently, river and stream levels are likely to rise, increasing the risk of riverine flooding, particularly in flood-prone, low-lying, and poorly drained areas. In contrast, much of northern Kenya has remained relatively dry in recent weeks. Therefore, intense rainfall events are likely to generate substantial surface runoff and increase the risk of flash flooding, especially in arid and semi-arid areas where infiltration rates are low.

Furthermore, heavy rainfall has persisted over southern Ethiopia for more than a week, increasing river levels. This raises concerns about increased river flows into northeastern Kenya through the transboundary Juba-Shebelle river basin, potentially exacerbating flood risks in downstream areas.

In central Kenya, the flood risk is primarily driven by high levels of urbanization. Persistent or intense short-duration rainfall frequently overwhelms drainage systems, resulting in surface flooding and disruption to transportation and critical infrastructure. Given the forecast for heavy rainfall in the coming weeks, urban flood risks are expected to increase significantly across several major population centres.

Explain the underlying vulnerabilities and risks the hazard poses for at-risk communities?

Given the delayed onset of the OND rains, many communities may have relaxed their preparedness and early action measures in anticipation of a late or weak season. This increases the potential impact of heavy rainfall events, as reduced risk awareness and preparedness can leave communities more vulnerable to flooding and associated hazards. Experience from previous seasons demonstrates this risk.

A similar delayed onset was observed during the 2023 OND season, which ultimately developed into an above-average rainfall season affecting 44 of Kenya's 47 counties. The floods reportedly claimed more than 490 lives, affected approximately 248,653 households (1.49 million people), and displaced about 121,592 households (729,552 people). Most deaths were caused by drowning as rivers overflowed and flash floods swept through homes and people trying to cross flooded roads.



This highlights how a delayed onset can create a false sense of security, only to be followed by severe impacts once the rains become established; hence the need for increased awareness when heavy rains are imminent.

The anticipated El Niño phenomenon is likely to have varied but significant impacts across Western, Central, Coast and Northeastern Kenya due to differences in geography, livelihoods and levels of vulnerability.

Up to 250,000 people affected. Predominantly temporary and localized displacement. Limited damage to housing, livelihoods, and community infrastructure. NDOC Contingency Plan, pg 5, Scenario 1.

In Western Kenya, above-average rainfall is expected to cause riverine flooding, flash floods and landslides, particularly in low-lying areas around the Lake Victoria Basin. These hazards could lead to displacement of households, destruction of crops, disruption of schools and health facilities, damage to roads and bridges, and increased outbreaks of waterborne diseases such as cholera and typhoid.

In Central Kenya is likely to experience intense rainfall events that may trigger flooding in urban and peri-urban areas, including poor drainage zones, while steep slopes in counties such as Murang'a, Nyeri and Kirinyaga may be exposed to landslides and mudslides. The resulting impacts may include loss of livelihoods, destruction of infrastructure, interruption of transport networks and reduced access to essential services.

In Northeastern Kenya and the Coast region, although rainfall can improve pasture and water availability, excessive rains often result in flash floods along seasonal rivers, destruction of shelters, displacement of communities, livestock losses and disruptions to trade routes and humanitarian access. Flooding in these regions may also elevate the risk of disease outbreaks and increase vulnerability among already drought-affected populations. Overall, El Niño is expected to heighten humanitarian needs across these regions through population displacement, livelihood losses, public health risks and increased pressure on response and recovery systems.

This operation will seek to enhance and prioritize early warning mechanisms to enable communities to safeguard movable livelihoods. It will seek to enhance engagement with first-line responders in planning and providing mobile announcements on safe evacuations and support rescue missions.

Early actions under this DREF are therefore expected to reduce humanitarian consequences and protect lives and livelihoods before flood impacts peak.

Source Name	Source Link
1. KENYA METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE AUTHORITY October Forecast	https://meteo.go.ke/our-products/monthly-forecast/october-2026-monthly-weather-forecast/
2. October-November-December (OND) 2026 seasonal forecast	https://meteo.go.ke/our-products/seasonal-forecast/october-november-decemberond-national-climate-outlook-forum-ncof13/
3. Observed Rainfall 10-19th October 2026	https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/international/africa_arc/africa_arc_10day_ea_anom.gif
4. Climate Prediction Center	https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/international/cpci/data/00/gfs_precip_week1_eafrica.html
5. Climate Prediction Center	https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/international/cpci/data/00/gfs_precip_week2_eafrica.html
6. STATE OF THE CLIMATE KENYA 2023	https://meteo.go.ke/documents/105/SoC_Kenya_2023_final.pdf
7. National Disaster Operations Center NDOC CP	https://docs.google.com/document/d/1rgxUxrnlod_Q5Wz4QE80kj1VWnj0D21v7MF-XYNgyVI/edit?tab=t.0
8. NOAA East Africa 24h precipitation model for 27 October to 2 November	https://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/international/cpci/data/00/gfs_precip_24h_eafrica.html



Plan

Which of the expected severe humanitarian impacts of the hazard are your actions addressing? Why were these impacts chosen?

The National Society intends to use lessons learned from 2023/24, using the right data, delivered in time, to the right decision-makers to support the community in addressing the need for timely, reliable, and localized hazard forecasts.

The following have been identified as potential impacts as a result of lessons from past interventions and layering with existing vulnerabilities in the high-risk counties.

1. Human loss of life and displacement.

Loss of life to drowning is the greatest impact of flooding.

2. Displaced Children and adults are being left exposed to the elements as a result of homes being washed away or marooned.

3. Waterborne disease outbreaks

Displaced and host populations are being cut off and exposed to disease from contaminated water.

Provide Hygiene Promotion and distribute in-stock water treatment tablets.

4. Structural destruction of roads and critical infrastructure

The population is being cut off from critical supplies and unable to move.

Support and conduct safe evacuation site assessments.

Support staff and volunteer movement in at-risk counties.

5. Support EOC in monitoring rainfall patterns and events.

Provide early warning through messages, posters, radio and TV shows, and public address systems.

Support with flood safety messaging.

6. Support Urban Search and Rescue teams

[National Society developed contingency plans, or recently carried out PER assessment Document](#)

Proposed Actions

	Sector	Activities	Budget (CHF)
 Early Actions	Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify, map, and publicize safe evacuation routes and temporary evacuation centers in collaboration with the County Government and communities, and disseminate evacuation-related messages to at-risk households.• Mobilization costs for staff/volunteers for implementation of early actions. Clearing drains and riverbanks of trash and debris around houses, villages, and estates. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evacuation of at-risk communities and their properties.	CHF 56,250

	DRR	<p>Produce and distribute Flood Safety Posters. Produce and circulate Flood Safety Videos. Procure 8 PA address systems for regions for mobile flood warning.</p> <p>Coordinate with local authorities to conduct joint live radio/TV shows to disseminate information to the general public on flood risks, early action, and preventive measures across KRCS's 8 regions.</p>	
	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support assessment of at-risk schools • Develop and distribute safe water rescue posters to schools • Provide continuous flood awareness to the public 	
	WASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support community water treatment and safe water storage • Conduct hygiene promotion for communities • Distribute Aqua Tabs to counties at risk 	
	NS Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search and rescue gear • Distribute Search and rescue gear to 8 regions 	
 Early Response	Livelihoods and basic needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support community-level rapid assessments by community responders, staff, and volunteers. • Conduct awareness advisories patrol after rainfall 	CHF 18,750
	NS Strengthening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support staff and volunteer in Urban Search and Rescue (Mombasa) • Distribute in-stock boats to at-risk counties. • Distribute in-stock PPE to at-risk communities. • Support EOC in Monitoring and coordinating flood risks. • Airtime for monitoring and managing operations • Support media/comms coverage in at risk counties. 	
Sub-total			CHF 75,000
Indirect Cost			CHF 5,000
Total			CHF 80,000

Contact Information

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

National Society contact: Venant Ndighila, Head of Disaster Operations, ndighila.venant@redcross.or.ke, +254 703 114 882

IFRC Appeal Manager: Naemi Heita, Head of Delegation, Somalia and Kenya, naemi.heita@ifrc.org, +254796991914

IFRC Project Manager: Gemechissa Mustefa, Operation Manager, gemechissa.mustefa@ifrc.org, +254757468006

IFRC focal point for the emergency: Gemechissa Mustefa, Operation Manager, gemechissa.mustefa@ifrc.org, +254757468006

Media Contact: Timothy Maina, Communications Officer, timothy.maina@ifrc.org

National Societies' Integrity Focal Point: Mwanakheri Ahmed, Head of Risk, idris.mwanakheri@redcross.or.ke, +254 720 854 004

National Society Hotline: 1199

[Click here for the reference](#)

