



## COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

15<sup>TH</sup> July, 2020

### PRESS STATEMENT ON PREPAREDNESS OF COUNTY GOVERNMENTS ON COVID-19 – WEEK 19

In the last few days we have unfortunately lost three of our frontline health workers in this battle. As a Council, we condole with the families deeply and our hearts go out to them. I emphasize that the insurance package which the President himself recommended should be operationalized so that it can benefit the families of the three health workers and those who are still in the battle front.

The number of new COVID-19 cases recorded in the past few days has been over **1, 400 cases**, representing 14% of all cases reported in the Country so far. This reflects an exponential infection rate which has been attributed to local transmissions.

In the last week also we recorded the highest number of deaths with 12 lives lost to the virus in one day. It was further reported that three of these were community deaths. This should get all Kenyans alert and awake because the disease has begun to claim people in the community. The Country has only been opened for one week and yet these are the statistics we are beginning to see. As a Council, we are acting with caution and alertness to stem the spread from one county to the other. In the event that the situation gets dire, individual County

Governments will have no choice but in consultation with H.E the President, seek to lock down the affected County to contain the rapid spread and protect lives.

It is saddening to see in the media and also on the streets, the ignorance displayed by Kenyans that the virus is not real and take this as child play. Please note that we are our brother's keepers and hence we are encouraged to wear masks properly by covering our nose and mouth and not wearing the same on our chin. We should also observe social distancing to respect our neighbor's space.

As County Governments, we have continued to enhance our response towards COVID-19. A number of County Governments have put in efforts and taken the initiative of creating awareness on COVID-19 situation. Once again, I appeal to the vernacular FM stations in the entire country to take up the issue of awareness on a continuous basis by hosting interactive sessions with Wananchi. It would be unfortunate for Kenyans to perish for lack of information hence there is need for concerted effort to create awareness as this is a war which we have to fight together for the sake of our Country Kenya.

In the past week, the 47 County Governments have addressed themselves to the following:-

### **1. Inspection and Gazettement of isolation facilities in Counties**

47 County Governments have cumulatively set aside **271 isolation** health facilities with a total of **12,034 beds**. Additionally, there are **447 ICU beds** and **437 ventilators** dedicated for COVID-19 treatment.

The identified Isolation facilities shall be jointly inspected by both levels of Government and subsequently gazetted by the Ministry of Health.

## **2. Testing capacity in the Counties**

Last week I reported on the issue of testing, today I still want to urge the Ministry of Health in collaboration with County Governments to work towards improving the testing capacity within the County clusters to ensure shorter turnaround time for results. Currently, the turnaround for results is increasingly being delayed from the initial 24 hours to 7 days. This is not good enough in this war.

We urge the National Government and partners to support the Counties by cascading the testing capacity to enhance response measures and fast-track contact tracing so that we stem the spread of this virus.

## **3. Establishment of Infection Prevention Committees**

County Governments have set up Infection Prevention Committees to ensure compliance of the health protocols issued by the Ministry of Health. This is aimed at ensuring that infections are contained in the health facilities.

## **4. Support to County Emergency Operations**

All the 47 counties continue to finance the Emergency Operations Committees to ensure COVID-19 response activities are well coordinated from the community to the County level.

Counties have also invested in management of case finding and contact tracing at the sub-county and community level so as to achieve and report 100% contact tracing rate.

Further, Counties continue to provide public health education to communities on COVID-19 prevention. However, we note that the Ministry of Health has withdrawn ambulance services from all Counties that support the movement of COVID-19 patients to facilities. This is a huge setback and may negate some of the efforts that Counties are putting in.

## **5. Training and Sensitization of Healthcare workers**

Last week I reported that a total of **19, 177** healthcare workers had been trained. Cumulatively, this week, Counties have trained and sensitized an additional **4103** healthcare workers bringing the total to **23,280**. Further, we reported that a total number of **64,283** community health volunteers had been trained and sensitized. This week the number has increased by **3930** bringing the total to **68,213**.

We appreciate the efforts put in place by County Governments, Ministry of Health and various partners to train and sensitize our frontline workers in COVID-19 response.

## **6. Community of Practice on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)**

Last week, the Council hosted the inaugural COVID-19 Response Community of Practice on WASH aimed at safeguarding operations of Water Service Providers (WSPs) and their financial sustainability during COVID 19 pandemic.

I would like to appreciate all stakeholders who contributed to useful resolutions that will help us ensure sustained WASH services during and after the pandemic.

We are cognizant that Water Services and Sanitation are crucial for successful home-based care of infected patients, management of waste and prevention of further spread of the virus. Additionally, our healthcare facilities are also served by the WSPs, we therefore urge all County Governments and stakeholders to support WSPs so as to prevent interruption of water supply in these frontline institutions during this critical time.

## **7. Response to Gender Based Violence**

In the last one week, the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified structural violence and inequalities that the most vulnerable in society continue to endure. As a response measure, the Council of Governors with support from UN Women has inducted a total of **11 tele-counsellors** who will be responsible for manning GBV hotlines in select Counties, as well as offering psycho-social support to GBV survivors, including Persons with Disabilities. The tele-counselors will also refer survivors to other GBV service providers and follow up on the interventions to enhance a multi-sectoral response to GBV.

## **8. Compliance in the Transport sector**

County Governments have provided functioning hand washing and sanitization facilities at the bus stations and stop overs along the transport corridor. We are also undertaking ad-hoc and impromptu roadside health checks to confirm compliance with government regulations on COVID-19.

However, we still face a challenge with the transport sector on human and truck traffic at the border points. We urge the National and County Governments to accelerate operations at border points to avoid overcrowding, taking into consideration road safety for freights and passenger movements.

## **Conclusion**

With the reopening of the economy, we call upon all Kenyans to take personal responsibility in protecting themselves and their families by **wearing a mask** every time they are in public spaces, **observe physical distancing, observe good cough etiquette**, regularly and thoroughly **wash hands or sanitize** them and **avoid unnecessary movement**.

We also wish to remind all our younger population that COVID-19 is a serious disease that should not be taken for granted. Young people must be in the forefront in ensuring the vulnerable populations especially their old parents and guardians in rural areas are protected. I would want to emphasize to the young people that there will time for parties, now is time to keep house and keep safe.

## **Signed**

**H.E. Hon. FCPA Wycliffe Ambetsa Oparanya, EGH, CGJ**  
**Chairman, Council of Governors**