



COUNCIL OF GOVERNORS

5th May, 2021

PRESS STATEMENT ON THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

The Council of Governors supports the decision by H.E The President to lift the cessation of movement in the disease zoned area following the decrease in COVID-19 infections in the five Counties. This gives Kenyans an opportunity to inject extra time to their businesses which will in turn boost the economy. As H.E The President reiterated, we also join him to urge members of the public to continue exercising strict caution as we are still battling the third wave of the pandemic which is very lethal.

As at yesterday, the confirmed positive cases stand at **160,904** as per the daily situational report issued by the Ministry of Health. This is an indication that the virus is still within and we must all take personal responsibility in the fight against COVID-19.

Despite concerted effort by the National and County Governments, some places of worship and the matatu sector continue to disregard the COVID-19 guidelines. In this regard, the County Governments through the joint intergovernmental emergency response committees will strictly enforce the rule of wearing of masks, social distancing and washing of hands in these public spaces. All businesses are herewith directed not to provide any service to anyone who is not wearing a mask. I urge each Kenyan to take personal responsibility because the pandemic comes for you alone,

therefore take care of yourself and be strict, resolute and unapologetic about it.

In the last one week, thirty three (33) County Governments have addressed the following critical issues:-

1. Bed capacity

The bed capacity is as follows:-

- **Isolation beds** – Last week, the total number of available beds in isolation centres were **6,420**. This number has increased by **232** due to patients who have recovered from COVID-19 infection, bringing the total number of available beds to **6,652**;
- **ICU beds** – Last week, the total number of available beds in the ICU was **336**. This number has reduced by **9** bringing the total number of available beds to **327**;
- **HDU beds** - Last week, the total number of available beds in the HDU facilities was **138**. This number has increased by **18** bringing the total number of available beds to **156**.

2. COVID-19 Vaccination

Cumulatively in 28 Counties, a total of **534,908 doses** have been received out of which **470,050 doses** have been administered as follows:-

- Healthcare workers – **86,260**
- Security – **47,400**
- Teachers – **83,721**
- Others – **252,669**

The uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine has been positive in the recent weeks and we anticipate that vaccination of the target population for phase one will be achieved in the coming weeks.

3. Testing of COVID-19

Despite lack of adequate testing kits, County Governments have ensured that testing at border points is undertaken. This week, **660** tests have been conducted in the Namanga - Kajiado border.

County Governments will ensure that all the border points are able to conduct testing so as to stem the spread of the virus. We urge the Ministry of health to expedite provision of testing kits to enable Counties upscale testing.

4. Home-based care

Cumulatively, there are **2,982** patients under home-based isolation care across 33 Counties. We are happy to note that County Governments through the Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) have continued to enforce the home-based guidelines which have been effective. We urge asymptomatic patients to embrace the home-based care to allow isolation facilities to be utilized by the critically ill patients.

5. Shortage of Anti-Retroviral (ARVs) drugs

Following the current crisis on shortage of HIV/AIDs commodities, the Council of Governors convened a consultative meeting on Monday 3rd May, 2021 between the County Governments and the Global Fund to discuss their

support to Counties in the wake of COVID-19. The meeting resolved as follows:-

- i. County Governments will ensure access to safe oxygen for COVID-19 patients;
- ii. County Governments will work to ensure that services will be delivered promptly to persons living with HIV/AIDs, and affected by T.B and Malaria through healthcare workers and CHVs;
- iii. Counties with high stocks of HIV/AIDs commodities are now considering redistribution to other Counties with low stocks; and we thank them for this consideration and being the brother's keeper
- iv. All County Governments will ensure withdrawal of obsolete regimens such as NEVIRAPIN from the County facilities;
- v. The Council of Governors will engage the Ministry of Health to fast-track the release of the pending products for HIV/AIDs stuck at the Mombasa port;
- vi. County Governments will prioritize a long-term solution in financing HIV, TB and Malaria response through domestic financing and increased Government resources to the programs.

6. Waste Management

In the recent past, County Governments have seen an influx of medical waste, particularly used PPE kits which are disposed in the dumpsites. This is hazardous waste which should be treated in hospitals and disposed in a safer manner in order to prevent further transmission of the virus.

To address the issue, County Governments have strengthened enforcement through County Environmental Inspectors to ensure integrated waste management systems are adhered to thereby limiting waste influx in undesignated areas and landfills.

To complement the efforts by the County Governments, we urge health facilities to ensure proper disposal of medical waste to prevent risk of exposure of the COVID-19 virus and other viral infections to members of the public.

Challenges

1. Disbursement of County Equitable Share of revenue

Last week I reported that the total outstanding amount owed to County Governments is **Kshs. 70.2 Billion**. Despite having only one month left to the end of the Financial year, the National Treasury is yet to disburse this outstanding amount to Counties.

This has compromised response measures towards the COVID-19 pandemic and service delivery to wananchi. We therefore urge the National Treasury to treat this matter with urgency and expedite the release of the funds to Counties.

2. Delayed implementation of the THS Programme

We wish to thank the World Bank for supporting County Governments through the THS programme that seeks to build a progressive, responsive and sustainable healthcare system. We however note that a number of Counties are yet

to expend the funds for the current Financial Year. This is likely to result in a reduction of the THS allocation for the subsequent financial years.

In this regard, we urge all County Governments to ensure that all funds are utilized by June 2021 while prioritizing all activities under the programme.

Conclusion

Whereas cessation of movement has been lifted, we must remain vigilant by observing the health protocols and ensuring personal responsibility by **wearing masks properly, sanitizing, washing hands and social distancing.**

Let us be our brothers' keeper by holding each other accountable to actions that are likely to predispose others to the virus. We must all strive to be safe and avoid being part of the COVID-19 statistics.

Asante Sana!

Signed

H.E Hon. Martin Wambora, EGH
Chairman Council of Governors