

Date: 17th May 2022

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA,
H.E. UHURU MUNGAI KENYATTA,

THROUGH

HEAD OF PUBLIC SERVICE.
DR. JOSEPH KINYUA, EGH
Harambee House, Harambee Avenue,
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NAIROBI
KENYA

Re: RECOMMENDATIONS ON LOCALIZATION OF HUMANITARIAN AID AHEAD OF
THE AU HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT IN MALABO, EQUATORIAL GUINEA 25-27TH
MAY, 2022.

Dear Mr. President,

Introduction:

Across the continent, thousands of African NGOs are actively engaged in responding to humanitarian emergencies. Working alongside their governments, from national to local levels, these organizations, including grassroots, community-based, refugee-led, youth-led, women-led and women's rights organizations play a critical role in ensuring that humanitarian aid is efficient, effective, and informed by the needs and priorities of African disaster affected communities. Despite this, the global humanitarian system continues to be dominated by UN agencies, international NGOs and Global North donors. In Kenya, it is no different. During the COVID-19 when international humanitarian organisations were unable to travel and reach the people most in need it was the local and national actors who stepped in and took the lead in delivering essential services. During times of crises and emergency these organisations are the first and last responders, and they need our support. Currently, Kenyan organizations are responding to the drought, especially in the ASAL counties.

We are writing to you ahead of the AU Humanitarian Summit and Pledging Conference, which will take place in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea from 25-27 May 2022, to encourage you to use the summit as an opportunity to help advance the localization of humanitarian aid in Africa, and in Kenya specifically. As the AU works to rally increased energy and resources to address urgent humanitarian needs, the important role being played by African NGOs and their potential to do much more should be at the forefront of discussions. This has been proven time and time again in Kenya.

Example of Specific Humanitarian Assistance needed in Kenyan Territory:

1. The Food Security situation in Kenya's ASAL counties has continued to deteriorate since 2021 due to poor performance of three consecutive rains including Oct-Dec 2021 season, currently leaving an estimated 3.5 million people severely food insecure and in need of assistance in 2022.

2. The prolonged drought leading to months of inadequate access to food has left more than 650,000 children acutely malnourished

3. Livestock deaths due to drought are reported to have surpassed 1.5 million. This is the result of depleted pastures, lack of water for livestock and the subsequent long trekking distance in search of pastures and water to survive. (www.unocha.org March, 2022; NDMA April 2022)

We appreciate and acknowledge the important interventions done by your government through various Ministries engaging with national and local NGOs via the annual consultation and see this as a good basis for further mutual support.

Our Request as Charter for Change Kenya Working Group and undersigned agencies

We encourage you to demonstrate and communicate the importance of local and national actors to humanitarian response in Africa by:

- Including representation from local and national actors within Kenya delegation to the AU Humanitarian Summit.
- Acknowledging and celebrating the important and complementary role of African NGOs in leading efficient and effective humanitarian responses and expressing Kenya's commitment to the localization of humanitarian aid.
- Encouraging the AU Commission Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development to deepen engagement with African NGOs working in the humanitarian sector, by increasing opportunities for them to contribute to and support humanitarian policy and programmatic initiatives, including through partnerships with the AUC.
- Calling for the future AU Humanitarian Agency to include representation from African NGOs in its leadership and to support the capacity of African NGOs including by creating funding opportunities.
- Calling on the AU to express support for the Grand Bargain, and for donors and INGOs to respect their commitments under it, particularly by providing at least 25% of funding as directly as possible to local and national humanitarian actors.

We hope that in your pledge, you will commit to taking actions to support localization of aid in Kenya by:

- Ensuring and supporting the representation and participation of local and national actors, including NGOs, CBOs and national civil society networks in humanitarian policy and coordination platforms.
- Creating conducive policy environments to support humanitarian operations by African civil society, including by respecting international humanitarian law and facilitating humanitarian access.
- Empowering and supporting refugee-led organizations to contribute to refugee responses in Africa, including by ensuring refugees have the legal right to register and operate organizations.
- Putting in place policies and legislation that further localization and hold international Grand Bargain signatories to account for their commitments.
- Improving dialogue and communication between relevant government ministries and national NGOs active in humanitarian response.

- Ensuring that pooled funds are accessible to national NGOs, including grassroots, community-based, refugee, youth and women-led organisations to propel a locally-led action.

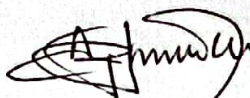
A delegation of 18 representatives of African civil society organisations active in the humanitarian sector across the continent will be present during the Summit and will be convening a side event on the localization of humanitarian aid. We request Kenya to co-host the event.

We look forward to your engagement to ensure that the Summit makes a concrete contribution to advancing and funding humanitarian action that best addresses the needs of disaster affected in Kenya and on the rest of the continent.

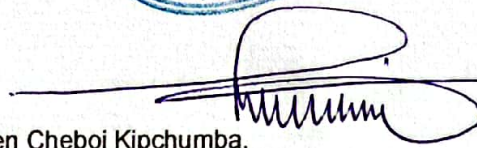
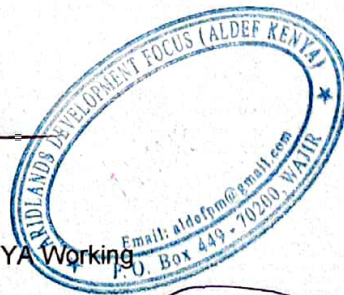
Finally, urgent action and scale-up of an integrated response is needed now to the drought crisis in the country to avoid loss of lives. We hope the election period does not distract the attention and funding away from the drought response. This drought once again shows the need for more forecast-based and anticipatory action and a Nexus approach combining long-term humanitarian, development and peacebuilding interventions to address the root causes of vulnerability and inequality in Kenya.

Please be assured of our highest regards, consideration and commitment.

Sincerely,



Ahmed Ibrahim,
The Chairperson
Charter for Change, KENYA Working
Group



Stephen Cheboi Kipchumba,
National Chairman,
The National Council of NGOs, Kenya



CC

Prof. Margaret Kobia, PhD, EGH,
Cabinet Secretary Public Service; Gender; Social Protection, Senior Citizens Affairs and
Special Programmes; and ASALs