

Africa CDC statement on the humanitarian crisis in Libya following Storm Daniel

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - September 16, 2023 - Africa CDC is deeply concerned about the dire humanitarian situation unfolding in Libya in the wake of a devastating natural disaster. On September 10th, northeastern Libya was ravaged by Storm Daniel, a catastrophic event that unleashed torrential rains and flash floods, causing widespread devastation in numerous cities and towns. Of particular concern is the coastal town of Derna, where the death toll has tragically exceeded 11,300 on 16 Sep 2023. Additionally, in the Mediterranean city, more than 10,100 people have been reported missing. Approximately 250,000 individuals require immediate humanitarian aid, and addressing this situation is a prolonged effort aimed at averting potential major epidemics that frequently ensue following such climate-related catastrophes.

In response to this crisis, the Africa CDC has been actively engaged in efforts to provide support and relief to the affected communities. On September 13th, 2023, the Africa CDC Governing Board convened and formally called upon His Excellency Dr. Jean Kaseya, Director-General of Africa CDC, to take swift and decisive action. Building on this directive, H.E. Dr. Kaseya requested an audience and met with H.E. Moussa Faki, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, on September 14th. During this meeting, both leaders recognized the necessity of an integrated and comprehensive African Union response plan to address the urgent needs arising from this natural disaster. Subsequently, on September 15th, a meeting convened by H.E. Moussa Faki brought together Africa CDC and the African Union Commission represented by H.E. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko (Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment), H.E. Minata Samate Cessouma (Commissioner Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development) and H.E. Professor Mohamed Al Hacem Lebatt, Chief of Staff of the AU Chairperson to ensure effective coordination of relief efforts.

Throughout this period, Africa CDC has maintained constant communication with Libyan authorities, closely monitoring the unfolding situation and providing essential aid to alleviate the severe impact of the flooding. On September 16th, His Excellency Dr. Kaseya, engaged in a virtual meeting with His Excellency Ramadan Abu Janah, Deputy Prime Minister of the Government of National Unity of Libya. The meeting aimed to address the challenges faced by Libya and the necessary support required from the African Union to mitigate health-related issues resulting from the natural disaster. It was mutually agreed that Libya urgently requires medications, medical equipment, and other health supplies, in addition to deploying a team of experts to assist with on-ground response efforts.

Based on these in-depth consultations, His Excellency Dr. Kaseya has concurred with the deployment of a team of public health experts and the allocation of \$5 million USD for the acquisition and distribution of medications, medical equipment, and health-related supplies. This initiative aligns with the cooperative effort spearheaded by the African Union to respond promptly to the Government of Libya's critical appeal for aid.

Libya's path to recovery demands more comprehensive efforts. In accordance with Africa CDC's mandate as the continent's agile and proactive Public Health Institution, we are committed to providing the requisite comprehensive assistance to aid the people of Libya in overcoming the health-related challenges arising from this natural disaster. In our dedication to expanding and facilitating coordinated support, not only for Libya but also for its neighboring nations, His Excellency Dr. Kaseya will utilize the upcoming United Nations General Assembly in New York next week as an opportunity to engage in discussions with the Regional Directors of UNICEF in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, as well as the World Health Organization Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (WHO EMRO).

Africa CDC extends its deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathy to the citizens and leadership of Libya for the immense suffering caused by Storm Daniel. Africa CDC's commitment is to extend support and foster strong collaboration with the Government of Libya and all relevant stakeholders to expedite recovery and rehabilitation processes, with a particular focus on addressing the healthcare needs of the Libyan populace. Africa CDC earnestly calls upon the global community to prioritize this matter with the utmost urgency and take immediate steps to alleviate any further devastation resulting from this catastrophic extreme weather event.

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About Africa CDC: Africa CDC is an autonomous health agency of the African Union which supports Member States in their efforts to strengthen health systems and improve surveillance, emergency response, prevention and control of diseases. Learn more at: <http://www.africacdc.org>

About the African Union: The African Union is a continental body that leads Africa's development and integration in close collaboration with the 55 Member States, the Regional Economic Communities and African citizens. The AU's vision is to accelerate progress towards an integrated, prosperous, and inclusive Africa, at peace with itself, playing a dynamic role in the continental and global arena, effectively driven by an accountable, efficient, and responsive Commission. Learn more at: <http://www.au.int/en>

For further information please contact:

Dorothy Njagi | Senior Communication Officer- Policy, Health Diplomacy & Communication | Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention | African Union | email: njagid@africa-union.org | Website: www.africacdc.org | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)