



**NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMITTEE**  
**ON CORONAVIRUS**  
**UPDATE ON CORONAVIRUS IN THE COUNTRY**  
**AND RESPONSE MEASURES, AS AT 21<sup>ST</sup> June**  
**2020**

**100 DAYS OF COVID-19 IN KENYA**  
**FIGHTING TO WIN THE WAR**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On March 13, 2020, a 27 year-old Kenyan woman who had come home from the US was confirmed as the first person to test positive for COVID-19 in the country. As she was admitted into hospitalized care, we began contact tracing to identify the people she had been in contact with.

Today marks 100 days since that first case, and it has indeed been a journey, one which has familiarized us with

such terms as 'contact tracing,' 'quarantine,' 'community spread' and 'social distancing'.

At a personal level, when we announced our first COVID-19 case, I had only been in office for two weeks, and when I walked out of State House, following my confirmation as Cabinet Secretary of Health, like a majority of us, I admittedly knew nothing about the Coronavirus. How quickly that has changed!

I wish to thank His Excellency the President for the confidence he placed in me, and the myriad of people who I have been honored to walk with on this steep journey. Indeed, were it not for our healthcare workers, the leadership of the Ministry of Health, the National Emergency Response Committee, the Command Center and the Inter-ministerial teams, who put in and continue to put in endless hours to ensure the safety of all Kenyans, our situation would be dire.

I also wish to thank you - - the Fourth Estate - - for the unwavering support you have given us, when it comes to highlighting all matters related to COVID-19. For giving

us your airtime and helping us in spreading the truth. On behalf of the NERC and the Ministry of Health, and indeed all Kenyans, - - and on my own behalf - - I would like to say thank you. We are indebted to you.

Last but not least, I would also like to thank my fellow Kenyans, who by and large have heeded instructions, stayed home, social distanced, worn masks and kept our Nation safe.

### **Where We Are**

Fellow Kenyans, we have come a long way since our first patient was confirmed. To begin with, they threw a spanner at the perception that COVID-19 was a disease of the elderly, and brought to light the fact that it could affect anyone including the young, who represent a significant percentage of our national population. They also illuminated the fact that as a country - - one that had only eight infectious disease beds - - we were ill-prepared to deal with a pandemic such as COVID-19.

In 100 days, and with the disease now affecting 40 out of our 47 counties, including refugee camps, our bearings are clear and direction determined, because indeed, as I paraphrased the other day, “**mtaka cha mvunguni, sharti ainame**”. We have put in the work and will continue to do so, taking note of and learning from the challenges and failures we have experienced since this journey began.

It is noteworthy, that when COVID-19 struck, Kenya had never had a situation that required the mass quarantining of individuals, and we therefore did not have a framework for it, the experience on how to deal with it, and regulations on whose responsibility it should be. We also did not have the reagents and testing kits that are an essential part of managing the pandemic, and along with the rest of world, had to begin the competitive process of procuring them, together with the PPEs that are critical to the protection of our warriors - - the frontline healthcare workers on whom we depend. Between this and capacity shortages in human resources, medical equipment and physical infrastructure, preparedness

seemed a daunting task. We had to adapt and learn quickly largely through trial, tribulations and innovation that particularly impacted our quarantine system. We are aware that we inconvenienced many of you in the process and for that, I would like to offer my apology with assurance, that our systems are now much better and practical. We are still learning.

That we are in the midst of a crisis and going through a battle, is something we now understand well. COVID-19 has badly weakened our economy, cost us jobs and impacted our businesses particularly those in the informal sector. But we are forging on and continuing to balance economic concerns, with the preservation of lives. Thanks to President Uhuru Kenyatta, and the measures he has taken and directed, we are recovering and will continue to do so.

## **Achievements**

We started with an eight bed infectious disease capacity, developed 120 beds capacity at the Mbagathi Hospital, and quickly converted over 500 beds at the Kenyatta

University National Hospital for COVID-19. We cascaded capacity to the county levels where COVID-19 has effectively triggered the transformation of the healthcare system in the country, and underscored the importance of coordination between the national and county governments. There are many commendable examples of counties that committed themselves to the rapid building of capacity. We congratulate them and remain confident, that in the next two weeks, all counties will have at least a 300 isolation beds. Let us not forget that health care is a devolved function and that national assistance notwithstanding, every county is tasked with preparing to provide the necessary services. We have provided guidelines for safe service provision, including establishing that appropriate PPEs are available in all health facilities, and to all community health volunteers, and that all health workers understand safety protocols.

At the same time, we have built capacity and self-sufficiency in the manufacturing of PPEs as part of our response to COVID 19. We have 3 factories producing

PPEs in Kenya, and our capacity to manufacture and supply hand sanitizers has surprised many.

Fellow Kenyans, I am sure that you have also noticed the significant increase in **testing capacity**: We are pursuing numerous channels to ensure that in the coming weeks, this capacity is bolstered even more.

Just to highlight how we have progressed month by month and where we are today;

- In **March -3,419**, samples were tested out of which 78 were positive.
- **April- 19,108** samples tested, and **328** tested positive.
- **May-57,527** samples tested with **1,615** turning out positive.
- As at June 21<sup>th</sup> June 2020- **59,958** samples were tested and **2,717** tested positive.

The figures demonstrate that, the number of samples tested increased as we upgraded our testing capacity.

## **Enhancing Capacity**

Following recent financial allocations from the National Government, and as a result of additional funding we have received from development partners, and local well-wishers, we now have the greater capacity to combat COVID-19 by enhancing not just our testing capacity, but also our distribution of free masks to the vulnerable communities, among us and contact tracing mechanisms at cross-county and national borders levels.

We also have hired an additional 4,509 healthcare workers to operate the 189 ventilators that we have nationally.

## **Challenges: Mental Health**

Fellow Kenyans, well beyond the safety and containment measures we have undertaken as a Government, there have been many unforeseen challenges related to COVID-19. One of these is a silent, invisible killer that is affecting our Nation and indeed the globe: Depression. As with all pandemics, COVID-19 has affected our lives - - and particularly our mental health - - in ways untold. For some, the public health actions we have taken, such as social distancing have brought about anxiety and feelings of isolation while for others, the containment measures have yielded feelings of suffocation. We are sensitive to this, and have put in place systems that respond to it that we have mentioned continuously and will be discussing in detail over the next few days.

## **Way Forward: Home-based Care**

Fellow Kenyans, by now it is evident that, like many other diseases, the Coronavirus will be with us for a long time and that it will, in all probability, eventually stretch our

medical systems just as it has done globally, even in the world's wealthiest nations. Now the time has come for us to take personal ownership and responsibility of this disease as never before. The more the Government de-escalates measures, the greater the responsibility we will each have to assume.

It is with this in mind, that the Ministry has developed guidelines and protocols supporting the home and community-based isolation, and treatment program that we will be implementing, going forward.

Our shift to this form of caring for our loved ones, in an environment that is familiar and comfortable for them, has been informed by both our traditional support systems, and the International Best Practices, being applied to COVID-19. It is a more practical approach to managing COVID-19, in that it calls for increased personal responsibility, and eases undue burden on our hospitals. It will be applicable to those exhibiting mild symptoms.

## Conclusion

The 100-day milestone is bitter sweet. We mourn the 123 lives we have lost to date, and celebrate the fact that we are better equipped for, and more informed to combat, COVID-19 than before. I can proudly say that, though we have not won the war yet, we are ready to fight the battle and come out victorious. Let us recommit ourselves with determination to continue fighting, without tiring or giving up.

Fellow Kenyans, there is a silver lining to everything. We have seen a change in behavior; some of which will outlast coronavirus, such as, increased levels of hygiene, use of technology and also creativity, as well as children talking about "***yule mtu wa Corona.***" On this 100th day, even as you enjoy that special meal - - one sausage and two beers, let us protect our loved ones by thinking of ourselves as '**watu wa Corona**' because as I've stated before, I can get it, and you can get it. Gerrit?

**Today**, we have registered **260** positive cases, from **3,651** samples tested in the last 24 hours. We now have

a total of **4,738** positive cases in the country. Cumulatively, **140,012** samples have been run so far. Out of the **260** positive cases, **254** are Kenyans and **(6)** are foreigners, while, **176** are males and **84** are females. The youngest case is a **7** months old infant, and the oldest is **90** years.

**The contribution of the cases by counties is as follows; Nairobi, (157), Mombasa, (42), Kwale, (15), Kiambu, (14), Machakos, (9), Kajiado, (7), Migori, (3), Nakuru, (3), Busia, (3), Homabay, (2), Kilifi, (1), Kisii, (1), Kisumu, (1), Kakamega (1) Laikipia, (1).**

**The cases are distributed in sub counties as follows; in Nairobi, the cases are from; Dagoretti North, (23), Embakasi South, (21), Langata, (22), Makadara, (17), Embakasi East, (11), Kibra, (11), Kamukunji, (11), Embakasi West, (10), Westlands, (8), Kasarani, (5), Embakasi North, (5), Embakasi Central, (3), Ruaraka, (3), Starehe, (2), Dagoretti South, (2), and Mathare, (2).**

**In Mombasa, the 42 cases are in, Likoni, (10), Changamwe, (9), Kisauni, (9), Mvita, (8), Jomvu (3), and Nyali, (3). In Kwale, the 15 cases are from; Msambweni, (13) and Matuga, (2). In Kiambu, the 14 cases are from; Kiambaa, (4), Thika, (3), Kabete, (3), Kiambu Town, (2) and Kikuyu, (2).**

**All the (9) cases in Machakos, are from Athi River. In Kajiado, the 7 cases are from, Kajiado East, (4), and Kajiado North, (3). In Migori, the 3 cases are from Kuria West, (2) and Suna East, (1). The 3 cases in Nakuru are from, Naivasha, (2) and Nakuru East, (1). All the (3) cases in Busia are from Teso North.**

**The (2) cases in Homabay, are from, Homabay Town, (1), and Mbita, (1). The one (1) case in Kilifi is at Kaloleni. The case in Kisii is from Kisii Central, while the case in Kisumu is from Kisumu Central. In Kakamega, the one (1) case is from Ikolomani,**

**and, finally, the case in Laikipia, is from Laikipia East.**

On a positive note, we have discharged 21 more patients from our various hospitals, bringing the total number of recoveries to 1,607.

Sadly, we have lost an additional (2) patients from the disease. This brings the cumulative number of fatalities to **123**.

As I close, fellow Kenyans, allow me to wish each and every father out there, a very Happy and Blessed Father's Day. As one of you, I can totally relate to the fact that when all is said and done, "heavy is the head that wears the crown." As the heads of our households, we carry the responsibility of building and securing our family's welfare, and we make tremendous sacrifices to do this. Brothers, in this COVID moment, let us remind ourselves of this responsibility, and as fathers, go the extra mile towards protecting our children, because we are not only held responsible for what we do, but also for what we fail to do. Wouldn't it be loathe, to make all the financial,

emotional and physical sacrifices, we do only to let our children die or struggle from COVID-19, because we didn't shield them from it?

These 100 days have been 100 days of challenge, 100 days of caring and reconnecting with family and community; a 100 days of business support and 100 days of learning and gaining knowledge. Knowledge is power, they say, so let's lift up our responsibility and say there is:

Power in social distancing!

Power in hand-washing

Power in mask-wearing!

Power in sanitizing!

May God give us the power to save Kenyan lives and win this war.

**SEN. MUTAHI KAGWE, EGH,  
CABINET SECRETARY.**