



**NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMITTEE**

**ON CORONAVIRUS**

**UPDATE OF CORONAVIRUS IN THE COUNTRY**

**AND RESPONSE MEASURES, AS AT 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

**Day: 94**

**Brief No: 88**

**Wananchi Wapendwa, Hamujamboni**

I am delighted, and indeed pleased to be part of you here in Nyeri. Nyeri is one of the Counties that I am privileged to visit during this period of the Coronavirus pandemic. Let me start by appreciating and thanking the Governor, Kahiga Mutahi and the people of Nyeri County, for the role you continue to play, to contain the spread of Coronavirus disease in the County. Cutting the cycle of transmission, and reducing conditions that aid the virus to spread, is a fight that no level of

Government can win on its own, without the involvement of the people. Success in any effort by the Government, largely depends on the level of involvement of the people. I therefore, want to thank you for working together with the County Government in the containment measures. This collaboration is responsible for the very low number of Covid-19 cases, at only **9**, from a pool of **459** samples so far tested here in Nyeri. Three (**3**) of the positive cases are healthcare workers who contracted the virus during the normal course of their duty. This is a great sacrifice to our people, and I want to recognize them for their devotion and commitment to duty. Healthcare workers are our heroes in this fight, and I shall spare no effort to ensure they are adequately protected.

The Ministry of Health will continue to work with the County Government of Nyeri, by offering support to upgrade the county human resource and equipment capacity. To this end, the Ministry has supervised the training of trainers for **8** healthcare workers per county, and sensitized **1,281** other cadres of healthcare

workers for Nyeri County. We will strive to provide more, and my desire is to ensure that our people can access the best health services across the entire country.

### **Fellow Kenyans,**

Covid-19 is not the only health issue the Government is concerned about. As you are aware, the National Government vision on health is '**Health care for all Kenyans**'. This vision was derived from the realization that, Kenyans must be healthy to positively engage in economic growth, and development of our country. Therefore, Covid-19 is not the only disease burden, but there are others as well. I want to discuss some of them, particularly the non-communicable ones, such as high blood pressure, diabetes and cancer.

These conditions are a major public health concern, with significant social and economic implications in terms of health care-needs, lost productivity and premature death. They hamper our Nation from achieving its social, economic and development targets. While



infectious ones remain a significant cause of disease and death in our country, the incidence and mortality from non-communicable diseases is rising rapidly, resulting in a "double burden of disease", and further straining our health systems.

NCDs contribute one in every three deaths, and account for half of all hospital admissions in the country. Deaths due to NCDs are projected to rise to 55%, by the year 2030, unless appropriate interventions, for sustained attention on prevention and care are put in place. NCDs are known to have the potential, to drive individuals and households into poverty, owing to the catastrophic costs of care and their debilitating nature. It is further estimated that, they can decrease household income by 28.6%.

I am concerned that close to 24% of our population is living with high blood pressure, while 5% have high blood glucose. It is equally unacceptable, that over 47,000 new cases of cancer are diagnosed, while 32,987 patients die of cancer each year.

My Ministry is aware of the magnitude of the NCD situation in the country, and has prioritized prevention and control of non-communicable diseases in its Kenya Health Policy 2014-2030. Among the areas of focus of the policy is, strategic partnerships with County Governments and other stakeholders, as we implement best buys, as enshrined in our NCD strategic plan of 2015-2020.

As you may already be aware, Nyeri is one of the high burden counties for NCDs, with close to half of deaths in the county caused by NCDs, and about 700 new cancer cases annually. Nyeri was selected as one of the UHC pilot counties due to its high NCD burden. We laud the County Government for putting in place measures to halt and reverse its rising burden of NCDs. These include, initiating vibrant NCD clinics at primary care level, and the integration of NCDs in community health services. This is strengthened by clinics in the County Referral and Sub-County Hospitals, with an established cancer treatment center, and the adoption of the

Ministry of Health standardized data management tools for NCDs.

I am glad to note that, the County also conducted a successful breast cancer screening campaign, using mammography during last years' world breast cancer month in October. My Ministry will continue supporting the County, to further accelerate these efforts.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

These NCDs are often silent, showing no symptoms for many years even when the disease is advancing. The vital warnings will often go unnoticed, unless we create time to take simple, cost-effective and rapid screening tests. In most cases, by the time one develops symptoms, complications are usually advanced; and the risk of emergencies like heart attack, or stroke is greatly increased. Getting this warning signal early is by far the better option! The actions that can be taken when detected early, are way cheaper and less risky for patients, than interventions in later stages.



Prevention measures of NCD are known to many of us; reduce salt intake, be physically active, maintain the ideal body weight, eat more fruits and vegetables, less processed foods and sugary drinks. However, knowing alone is not enough; making all these simple recommendations to be our daily practice, is what will make the difference.

As I have stated severally, persons living with NCDs, are more at risk of becoming severely ill with Coronavirus disease, than those without. To protect persons living with NCDs from the effects of Covid-19, my Ministry has been running an awareness campaign, and issued guidelines to health on the management of patients with Covid-19 and NCDs, as well as guidelines for continuity of NCD and mental health services in all our health facilities. I want to urge all our people with NCDs, to follow medical advice and regime of medication, while at the same time observing Covid-19 containment measures of hand washing, social and physical distancing, and proper wearing of face masks in public places, among others.

As I stated earlier, the Government is committed to achieving the '**Right to Health**' through the Universal Health Coverage (UHC), as stipulated in the Government's Big Four agenda. Re-aligning NCD services delivery into the UHC framework, aims at enabling Kenyans to access quality, promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative care based on need and not on ability to pay. To achieve this objective, and as part of the Managed Equipment Services (MES), the Government has invested an estimated Kshs. 1.5 billion for the period 2013-2020, to upgrade health facilities in the county. I am glad to note that the upgrading of Nyeri Hospital and the Mukurweini Sub-County Hospital to level 5 and 4 hospitals respectively, has been part of the MES program. I want to thank the County Government of Nyeri, together with the residents for these efforts. These are developments that benefit not only the people of Nyeri, but the country as a whole.



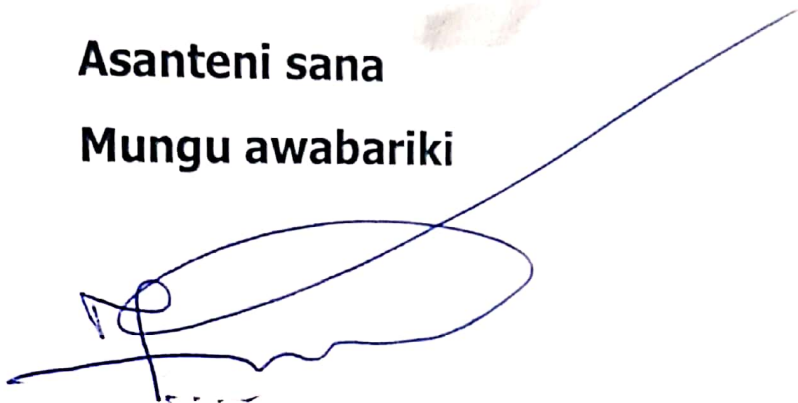
As I conclude, let me briefly give you our Covid-19 statistics. Today, we have 137 people testing positive from 3,167 samples. The overall disease burden in the country now stands at 3,594 from 115,336 number of samples tested so far. Nyeri still remains with 9 persons infected. I want to urge the people of Nyeri to continue working together with the County Government so that this figure does not rise. This applies to residents of all the other counties.

Finally, allow me to reiterate our commitment to supporting not just Nyeri County, but the entire country in the control of Non-Communicable Diseases, particularly in this period of the Covid-19 pandemic. As the Government continues to meet its constitutional obligation, of providing preventive and curative health services of the highest possible standards, I call on all of us to assume responsibility for our own health and wellness, in embracing the preventive measures we have talked about.

Thank you all for contributing to our shared vision of a country free of preventable non-communicable diseases.

**Asanteni sana**

**Mungu awabariki**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a horizontal line and a vertical stroke.

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