



KENYA

COMMUNITY EPIDEMIC AND PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS PROGRAMME

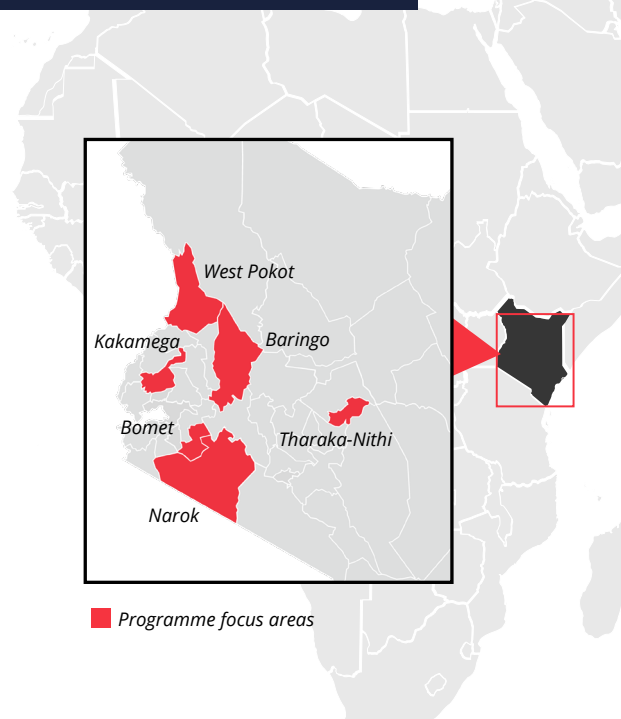
Early detection. Early action. Healthier communities.

Epidemics and pandemics are some of the biggest threats to a safe and healthy world. But with effective preparedness and response, we can minimize their impacts and even stop them in their tracks.

Kenya is one of the hotspots for emerging and re-emerging infectious zoonotic diseases, such as Rift Valley fever, anthrax, avian influenza, African swine fever and rabies. Many communities are at risk of being exposed to these diseases due to proximity to wildlife and livestock. In communities like the Maasai, there are deep-rooted cultural connections with livestock. Kenya also faces other major health vulnerabilities including cholera, measles, polio and viral hemorrhagic fevers. There is limited reach into many communities in Kenya to detect, report and control disease outbreaks early.

Kenya Red Cross, with support from the IFRC and funding from USAID, has been working with communities to prepare for and prevent the spread of diseases. Focused in Bomet, Narok, Tharaka-Nithi, West Pokot, Kakamega and Baringo Counties, Kenya Red Cross is working with the government, communities, local responders, private actors and humanitarian partners to collectively prepare for and respond to epidemics.

Kenya Red Cross is providing critical information, community-based surveillance and referrals in coordination with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development to ensure early detection, timely reporting, and early action to stop diseases from spreading.



325

alerts (for anthrax, rabies, acute watery diarrhea, measles, COVID-19 and Rift Valley fever) reported by volunteers and confirmed by government officials between 2018 and March 2024.

509,300+

households reached with critical health messaging on diseases such as anthrax, cholera, measles, polio, COVID-19 and viral haemorrhagic fevers.

205,800+

vaccinations of livestock and pets by end of 2023 to protect against priority zoonotic diseases such as anthrax and rabies.

OUR WORK



Preparing communities

We make sure communities have critical information about the spread of diseases and how to prevent them, systems to detect outbreaks and mechanisms that ensure information sharing and community engagement. Activities include:

- Engaging communities through house-to-house visits, school health clubs, focused group discussions and mobile cinemas.
- Strengthening community-based referral systems.
- Engaging, training and collaborating with community influencers, such as teachers, leaders and traditional healers.



Preparing first responders

Kenya Red Cross has more than 260,000 members and volunteers across the country which gives extraordinary reach into communities. Through its auxiliary role to government, Kenya Red Cross is often central to emergency response during disease outbreaks. Activities include:

- Contingency planning with government and key partners
- Strengthening systems to enable a fast, scaled-up response.
- Strengthening partnerships with different sectors and ministries.
- Training and readying community-based volunteers.
- Infection prevention and control assessment and training in Red Cross-run health facilities.



Preparing stakeholders

Epidemics don't just threaten lives. They threaten all parts of society, including trade, transport, and education. We work with a wide range of stakeholders in epidemic preparedness and response. Activities include:

- Supporting partners working in human, animal, and environmental health to collaborate through a One Health approach.
- Mapping critical data to support decision-making on epidemic risk management.
- Training and partnering with media to report accurate, lifesaving information that helps people before and during disease outbreaks.



One Health approach

Kenya Red Cross adopts a One Health approach, overseen by a multisectoral committee, focusing on integrating human, animal, and environmental health. It involves training and collaborating with local media to enhance risk communication and community engagement strategies. Additionally, community volunteers are mobilized for health promotion and surveillance activities. Furthermore, private sector actors, such as private veterinarians, are engaged in disease outbreak response, particularly in animal vaccination efforts.

Scan to watch a video:



“ When departments come together, we create synergy by combining human and financial resources, technical capacity, and even equipment. This synergy minimizes waste and enables us to achieve much greater results with limited resources. ”

Rose Micheni, Tharaka Nithi County Chief Officer, Public Health and Sanitation and a County One Health Committee Co-chair

