

Youth-led COVID19 Emergency Response Coalition

Call to Action

Dated: Friday August 13, 2020

Close of International Youth Week

We the Youth-led COVID19 Emergency Response Coalition, representing over 32 youth-led organizations from informal settlements globally, who have worked since the beginning of the pandemic in March of this year to stem the tide of the COVID-19 virus and protect our communities, call on all partners to come together in preparation for the next phase of the pandemic.

As part of grassroots youth-led organizations response to COVID-19 pandemic, we rolled out hand washing stations in densely populated slums targeting bus/tuktuk/motorbike stations, major junctions, markets, public amenities areas, busy roads and the general public in many other strategic locations. These stations serve as one stop COVID-19 information and guidelines centers, to teach the general public on how to properly wash their hands, take body temperatures and anyone with more than normal body temperature is referred to the various health facilities for immediate action amongst other social support. For the past 3 months out of the now 94 stations in various locations in Nairobi slums, we have washed 1,500,000 hands as of August 12, International Youth Day, and a projected 3,000,000 by October 2020.

Apart from the impressive number of people reached so far, some of the immediate results registered so far include: most of the businesses have installed their own small hand washing basins to serve their customers/clients, washing of hands before and after using public transport is mandatory and the norm, wearing of masks is part of the dress-code by residents. We work closely and tirelessly with Ministry of Health to support contact tracing and re-emphasizing the need to re-adjust efforts to prevent further spread. All the facilities are managed by youth in COVID-19 prevention.

Experts globally project that the next phase of the pandemic in Africa will continue to worsen. Like other countries in the world, we risk the infection rate growing exponentially in the next coming weeks and months. The lives and health of our friends and families will be put at risk.

We thank our partners UN-Habitat, the Government of Kenya through the Ministries of Health, Youth and ICT and County Governments Nairobi, Nyeri, Kisumu, Nakuru, Kilifi and Mandera, Governments of Canada and Norway, the Chandaria, Accept International, Victor Wanyama and Water is Right Foundation, the City of Kismayo in Somalia and local community leaders. Without your support and trust, we would not have been successful.

We as well recognize that the science and understanding of the virus is changing as the world learns more. Many scientists have found that the wearing of masks is a key preventative measure in curbing the spread of the virus. Because of this we as well have adapted, and engaged the Victor Wanyama Foundation to support the making of 10,000 masks by women tailors in Mathare and Kibera, and their distribution through the stations. We have also been very successful in the production of murals that raise awareness of COVID-19. We as well have begun distribution of food to needy families.

With the average number of infections growing daily at this stage of the pandemic, we request our partners to work with us on the following:

1. Expanded support of current COVID-19 Prevention and Handwashing Stations and related services in informal settlements and towns in Kenya and globally.
2. Support the production and distribution of masks locally made by women in the community, by empowering their socio-economic rights and supporting sustainable livelihoods especially during this critical COVID-19 period with most of them having lost their jobs and with families to take care of. Our goal is to distribute approximately 20,000 free masks within the next 2 months to those who cannot afford.
3. Establishment of isolation centers. These sites would offer a safe space for those in need of a place to isolate themselves from their families and close relations for a short time. These spaces will also offer support for those unable to go to the hospital but want to be tested and need support with food and medical supplies.
4. Expansion of testing services to assure that everyone has access, for free, to life saving knowledge.
5. Provision of child educational support programmes. With school programmes halted until 2021, our primary concern is that most children will miss a great part of their educational curriculum, and that their parents will not be able to take care of them during the day.

We are at a very critical stage in slaying this dragon, and any support given will count for generations to come, we the youth are more than determined to lead from the front. This is an appeal to our partners to kindly and urgently consider extending and expanding the engagements we've since the beginning of the pandemic.



Moses Omondi
Kibera Emergency Community Response



Isaac Muasa
Mathare Environmental One Stop

On behalf of the Youth-led COVID19 Emergency Response Coalition

1. Act Now Youth Group
2. Beavers Youth
3. Cachers Youth Group
4. Coalition for Grassroots Human Rights Defenders
5. Friend Pivot Group
6. Ghetto Youth
7. Good Guys

8. Kami Safi
9. Karambe
10. Kiamaiko Social Justice Center
11. Kibra Green
12. Kosovo CHVs
13. Kwa Wanaludo Youth Group
14. LEA Mathare Youth Group
15. Manderu Anti-Drug Movement (MADMO)
16. MaSCA Community Based Organization
17. Mathare Environmental One Stop
18. Mathare Roots
19. Mathare Transformers Youth Group
20. Mathare Village Three
21. Mugumoini Youth Group
22. Pamoja Youth Group
23. Ruaraka Social Justice Center.
24. Shantit youth group.
25. Slum Children Organization
26. Tasha clan youth group
27. Ladies women's group
28. Undugu Grounds Youth Base
29. Vijanaa Self Help Group
30. Vision 2030
31. Visionary Youth Group
32. Wonderful Mothers Group