



act:onaid
Kenya

About **act:onaid** Kenya

Since 1972, ActionAid International Kenya (AAIK) has had operations in Kenya as a non-religious, non-partisan development organization to end poverty and injustices.

AAIK works in solidarity with communities living in poverty and exclusion to shift power to the communities and facilitate their own leadership by holding duty bearers accountable to Protect, Respect and Fulfill their rights in line with the constitution of the Republic of Kenya.

We have presence in twenty five counties working closely with local organisations and partners. The counties include: Baringo, Garissa, Homabay, Isiolo, Kajiado, Kilifi, Kisumu, Kitui, Laikipia, Makueni, Meru, Murang'a, Nairobi, Nakuru, Siaya, Taita Taveta, Tharaka Nithi, Turkana, Wajir, Marsabit, Elgeyo Marakwet, West Pokot, Embu, Mombasa and Migori.

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Kenya's Development at Risk as IMF Continues to Push Austerity, New Report by ActionAid Finds

A new ActionAid report, "Still Cooking with a Failed Recipe", has revealed that despite promises of reform, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) continues to promote austerity-driven policies that limit investments in public services and deepen inequality in countries such as Kenya.

The report, which analysed IMF policy advice and programme reviews across 11 countries between 2022 and 2025, found that 73 per cent of IMF recommendations focused on fiscal consolidation measures, including spending cuts and wage bill restrictions, while only a small proportion supported the expansion of public services and social protection.

In Kenya, the report highlights the growing strain that debt servicing places on public finances. According to the findings, Kenya spends approximately 29 per cent of government revenue on external debt servicing, compared to 9 per cent on health and 18 per cent on education. This imbalance significantly constrains the government's ability to invest in quality healthcare, education and social protection for millions of Kenyans.

The report also raises concerns over IMF-backed recommendations aimed at containing Kenya's public sector wage bill. These measures, including the extension of hiring restrictions and limits on wage growth, risk worsening shortages of teachers, nurses and other essential public service workers at a time when demand for these services continues to grow.

"While the IMF has increasingly adopted the language of gender equality, social protection and inclusive growth, our findings show that its policy prescriptions remain rooted in austerity," said Kitasi Wanga, Interim Programmes and Strategy Lead, ActionAid Kenya



A woman counts Kenyan banknotes during a meeting of a local Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA)

"These policies continue to place the burden of economic adjustment on ordinary citizens, particularly women and low-income households."



The findings come amid growing public concern over the rising cost of living, increasing tax burdens and Kenya's debt crisis. ActionAid is calling for an end to austerity measures that undermine public services and is urging governments and international financial institutions to pursue progressive taxation, fair debt restructuring and increased investments in health, education and social protection.

"Kenya cannot achieve sustainable development while debt repayments continue to take precedence over investments in people," added Kitasi Wanga

ActionAid Kenya Champions Child Rights, Sanitation, and Dignity at the Day of the African Child 2026 Commemoration

The National Day of the African Child 2026 was marked with vibrant celebrations held on the 16th of June at the Raila Odinga Stadium in Homa Bay County, bringing together learners, communities, government representatives, and development partners in a shared commitment to advancing children's rights and well-being.

Among the key participants was ActionAid Kenya, which joined stakeholders under the Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services and the State Department for Children Services in marking the day. Discussions focused strongly on improving access to education, child protection systems, and universal water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services.



Students follow proceedings during the National Day of the African Child 2026 celebrations held at the Raila Odinga Stadium in Homa Bay County, participating attentively in discussions and activities focused on advancing children's rights, education, and well-being.

This year's commemoration highlighted the urgent need to ensure that all children have access to clean water, decent sanitation, and hygiene facilities in schools. Stakeholders noted that inadequate WASH infrastructure continues to affect learners' health, dignity, and school attendance, particularly for girls.



Euphemia Awuor, Local Programs Coordinator, ActionAid Kenya, engages in discussion with a representative from the Office of the First Lady, Elizabeth Koech, and Principal Secretary CPA Carren Ageng'o of the State Department for Children Services under the Ministry of Gender, Culture and Children Services during the National Day of the African Child 2026

Reaffirming its commitment, ActionAid Kenya emphasized its ongoing support for child rights programming, including strengthening boys' and girls' forums that empower children to speak out and advocate for improved services in their schools and communities. The organization also continues to support the construction and rehabilitation of sanitation infrastructure, including ablution blocks, to ensure learners study in safe, clean, and dignified environments.

Learners at the event shared powerful reflections on the realities faced in schools. One such voice, Romanus Jared, a Grade 8 learner from Apuoche School in Homa Bay County, captured the urgency of the situation, stating:

“No child in Kenya should ever have to choose between thirst and illness. Clean and safe water must reach every school and every home. No Kenyan girl should have to stay home for five days every month because her school cannot protect her dignity. Sanitary towels and private latrines are not luxuries. They are rights. No more children should be fetching water instead of sitting in a classroom learning. Every school gets a functional handwashing station with soap. Not as a luxury. But as the most basic defense against disease.”

His message underscored the importance of ensuring that access to water, sanitation, and hygiene is treated as a fundamental right essential for dignity, health, and uninterrupted learning.

The event concluded with a strong call to duty bearers, including government agencies, development partners, and community leaders, to accelerate investment in child-centered services. Stakeholders urged sustained action to ensure that every child learns in a safe, inclusive, and enabling environment where rights are protected and dignity upheld.

As the National Day of the African Child 2026 was observed in Homa Bay County, the overarching message was clear: safeguarding children’s rights, improving sanitation infrastructure, and strengthening education systems require urgent and collective commitment from all stakeholders.



Romanus Jared, a Grade 8 learner and a participant in the ActionAid Kenya child sponsorship programme from Apuoche School in Homa Bay County, addresses attendees during the National Day of the African Child 2026 celebrations held at the Raila Odinga Stadium in Homa Bay County.

Early Warning Systems Transform Climate Resilience and Livelihoods in Isiolo County

In the face of increasing climate uncertainty, pastoral communities in Isiolo County, Kenya are gradually reshaping how they survive and plan as droughts, floods, and unpredictable rainfall continue to disrupt livelihoods. For households that have traditionally depended on livestock, the growing access to timely climate information is changing decision-making from reactive coping to proactive planning, allowing families to prepare before shock strikes rather than respond after losses have already occurred.

As prolonged droughts, harsh climatic conditions, and incidents of livestock theft continue to erode pastoral livelihoods, many households are increasingly embracing farming as a complementary source of food and income. Supported by climate information and early warning systems, communities are making more informed decisions on crop selection, planting seasons, water management, and livestock production, helping them diversify their livelihoods and strengthen household resilience.



Rose joins fellow PFS members in weeding one of their group farms, where they cultivate sweet potatoes, a climate-resilient crop that adapts well to the prevailing weather conditions, helping strengthen household food security and livelihoods.

This shift is being driven through early warning systems supported under the COOPEN Initiative, implemented by ActionAid Kenya and funded by Fondazione Cariplo and Compagnia di San Paolo. The initiative is helping communities receive and use climate

information more effectively through technology powered by TRIM, strengthening their ability to plan for droughts, floods, and seasonal changes while protecting both livestock and household food supplies. It is also supporting communities to integrate this information into everyday choices around grazing, farming, and water use.

The programme is being implemented through Pastoral Field Schools (PFS) in Burat and Oldonyiro in Isiolo County. Through these groups community members collectively access climate information, share experiences, and strengthen their capacity to adapt to changing climatic conditions.

For many farmers, the impact is already visible in how they plan their livelihoods. As one farmer, Rose Siboom, explains,

“Through early warning mechanisms, we are able to plan for our farming and water management. This includes growing food crops that can adapt to our current climatic conditions. Sweet potatoes have been performing well, as well as vegetables, which are important for nutrition.”

Her experience reflects a wider change across communities where climate information is increasingly shaping what people plant, when they plant, and how they manage scarce water resource

Community leaders also emphasize how early warning systems are reducing uncertainty and helping families prepare in advance. As Rosemary Nasuru, a local community leader, notes,

“Climate information has become an important tool for our communities. Families are now able to prepare in advance, make better farming decisions, and reduce losses during periods of drought and extreme weather.”

This growing confidence in climate information is helping households reduce risks and improve food security outcomes.

The benefits are also being witnessed through Pastoral Field Schools, where communities are learning to interpret climate information and translate it into practical actions. According to Etungá Yoronimo Augustino, Facilitator, Epulet Pastoral Field School,

“Through the early warning information and working with group members, we have been able to empower group members with information on climatic conditions. In this way, they have been able to make informed choices on farming and pasture management for livestock.”

His experience highlights the critical role that community-based learning platforms play in helping pastoralists make timely and informed decisions that protect their livelihoods while adapting to changing environmental conditions.

At the heart of this effort is the enhanced 3Map digital platform, an integrated system that gathers, stores, analyzes, and visualizes ecosystem and climate-related data. It combines information from community and automated weather stations, satellite rainfall estimates, market price trends, government bulletins, and locally generated indicators such as pasture conditions, water availability, soil health, and livestock production. Through interactive dashboards, mobile data tools, an online knowledge archive, and a community discussion forum, the platform turns complex data into clear, actionable insights that communities and stakeholders can use for coordinated decision-making.



Rosemary Nasuru (in beads), a local community leader, engaged in pasture preparation together with members of her pastoral field school, demonstrating how climate information and early warning systems support better planning, improved grazing management, and stronger resilience during periods of drought and extreme weather.

According to Cynthia Asafi, Project Coordinator, the strength of the initiative lies in how it connects information with action. She explains,

“The value of this work is not just in collecting climate data, but in making sure communities can understand it, trust it, and use it in their daily decisions. When pastoralists combine their local knowledge with digital tools like 3Map, they become stronger decision-makers in managing risk and protecting their livelihoods.”

Alongside climate information systems, the initiative is also strengthening economic resilience through Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs), enabling households to pool resources, access savings, and invest in small businesses and livelihood diversification. These financial networks are helping families recover more quickly from shocks while building longer-term stability.

These interventions are creating a more connected resilience system where information, digital innovation, and community action reinforce one another. In Isiolo County, pastoral communities are demonstrating that when people have access to timely climate information, participatory digital tools, and collective support systems, they are not only better prepared for climate shocks but are also building more secure and sustainable livelihoods for the future.



Members of a Pastoral Field School (PFS) participating in group activities that integrate Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) practices, strengthening sustainable resource management and household economic resilience through savings, access to credit, and livelihood diversification.

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