



## Joint Press Release

### **The Republic of Kenya joins other African Countries in undertaking ground breaking Cost of Hunger in Africa Study**

**Nairobi Kenya, 18<sup>th</sup> February 2019-** The Government of the Republic of Kenya on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February launched the ground-breaking Cost of Hunger in Africa Study which is being conducted under the leadership of the Kenya National Treasury. The goal Cost of Hunger in Africa, Kenya study is to increase the understanding of the consequences of child under nutrition by estimating its social and economic costs on health, education and national productivity.

The Republic of Kenya expects to generate evidence that will justify the need to increase investment in nutrition and recommend actions to inform and support policies and strategies towards human capital development that will contribute to and catalyse implementation of Kenya's "Big Four" Agenda and Vision 2030.

The Cost of Hunger Study findings in Kenya will guide the government in identifying targeted interventions to address child under nutrition noted Dr. Julius Muia from the National Treasury and development planning, he also added that among various other interventions the government has set aside 1.2 billion to address to under-nutrition and child welfare.

Dr. Rashid Aman from the Ministry of Health noted that elimination of malnutrition required concerted efforts from all sector ministries. He also lauded the African Union for launching the continental Nutrition Score Card which he highlighted, will help African leaders monitor nutrition progress on the continent.

In her remarks Dr. Margaret Agama-Anyetei from the African Union commended the Government of Kenya for launching the Cost of Hunger in Africa-Kenya study



Dr Margaret recalled that nutrition security of any country will contribute to developing the Human Capital, fundamental to creating and contributing to the economic value of communities and nations. In line with the AU theme of the year 'Durable solutions also need to be found for all populations inclusive of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced persons' and therefore all member states with refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons within their borders should factor them within major policy and strategic studies such as the Cost of Hunger in Africa Studies.

Representing WFP, the Kenya Country Director Annalisa Conte highlighted WFP commitments in working with the government of Kenya, she noted that reducing under nutrition is not only a public health issue but one that also plays a role in decreasing child mortality and can affect economic development. This was further stressed by WFP Africa Office Director Angeline Rudakubana who called on all stakeholders to scale up political commitment and to increase investment to

accelerate actions for nutrition, particularly for achievement of Agenda 2063 and SDG 2.

COHA is a pan-African initiative led by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), with support from the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).<sup>16</sup> African union member states have completed the study, namely Burkina Faso, Chad, DRC, Egypt, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Ghana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe. The findings of the Cost of Hunger in Africa conducted in these countries indicated that member states are incurring significant losses ranging between 1.9 and 16.5 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) annually due to the effect of malnutrition.

Among dignitaries present to witness the launch were representatives of the ministries of Agriculture, Labour and Social Protection, Education, the National



Treasury and Planning. Also present was the African Union Commission, and development partners such as Nutrition International, UNICEF, WFP Africa and Country Offices. Representatives from government, academia, civil society and NGOs were also present. The Kenya COHA study is being implemented by a National Implementation Team (NIT), which is composed of members from various sector Ministries, the academia and development partners. The NIT is coordinated by the state national Treasury and Planning department.

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