Business and partners come together to prepare for crises in Kenya

Emergency simulation exercise tests private sector engagement and solutions in crisis situations

Nairobi, November 29, 2016 – A disaster preparedness and response simulation exercise today gathered over 40 representatives from the private sector, local business and community members, the United Nations, the Government of Kenya and international non-governmental organizations to enhance disaster preparedness and response.

Businesses are already making significant contributions, for example, through providing funding, skills, assets and commercial solutions but much more could be achieved through collaboration and coordinated response. The Humanitarian Private Sector Partnership Platform (HPPP) for East Africa launched in March 2016 is providing the space for cross-sector collaboration and fostering of business partnerships with government, local communities and humanitarian agencies when a disaster occurs.

The Chair of the HPPP, Equity Bank's Allan Waititu said, *"The HPPP has begun the process of mapping capacities of its more than 160 members which is a first step towards strengthening coordination for humanitarian action. The simulation exercise will also offer an opportunity to analyse the resources at hand to address a myriad of humanitarian challenges."*

Kenya experiences climate change induced shocks including recurrent drought episodes; currently 1.25 million people are food insecure and in need of humanitarian assistance. Kenya is also host to one of the largest refugee population in the Dadaab refugee camp in north eastern Kenya. The private sector has played a major role, for instance, in meeting education needs in the Dadaab camp, while a Kenyans 4 Kenya Initiative- a corporate-led initiative- raised over USD 10 million to respond to drought that hit the country during the Horn of Africa crisis in 2011. These scenarios have seen companies provide goods and services to meet humanitarian needs, knowledge, technology, expertise and their networks of influence. The simulation exercise is therefore intended to harness those capacities in readiness to deliver critical humanitarian assistance when the need arises.

"This simulation exercise comes at an opportune time for Kenya and the East Africa region. The Ushahidi platform has been used in 160 countries around the world primarily in humanitarian and crisis response and we welcome the opportunity to use the expertise we have gathered across the world to strengthen our systems in Kenya," said Mr. Daudi Were, Ushahidi's Chief Executive Officer.

The opportunity now exists to support such initiatives on a longer term period which is sustainable and engage all relevant stakeholders with the support of a platform such as the HPPP.

Local businesses and community representatives appreciated HPPP's role in engaging with communities as first responders in crisis. However, Denis Opiyo from Kibera, one of the informal settlements in Kenya added, *"more investment is needed for communities to be better equipped during emergencies as well as inclusion in*

emergency contingency planning process and appreciated this first step in form of a simulation exercise in doing so."

The Humanitarian Private Sector Platform for East Africa is part of the Connecting Business Initiative, launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016. The United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for strong leadership, robust action plan and clearly defined objectives for this new partnership, among others. "*Member States and other stakeholders should embrace and join these new initiatives, identifying where their interests, resources and expertise can best support them,*" he stated in his Outcome Report of the World Humanitarian Summit to the United Nations General Assembly.

Contact Information

For more information, contact: Luluwa Ali; +254 727532144; Email: ali19@un.org / Kathryn Taetzsch; Email Kathryn_Taetzsch@wvi.org or go to: http://hppp.online/ or www.connectingbusinessinitiative.org

Twitter: #ConnectBiz #HPPPKuraTest