



UPLIFT ALIVE REPORT: SITE VISIT TO FLOOD AFFECTED COMMUNITY IN MATHARE SETTLEMENTS, NAIROBI KENYA.

INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES MATHARE SITE VISIT



Mathare residents show the damage caused by the floods.

Uplift Alive is an international humanitarian organisation that aims to uplift communities by providing them with opportunities and capabilities to advance their livelihoods.

In April 2024, devastating, unprecedented floods ravaged Kenya in various provinces, displacing thousands of our brothers and sisters from their homes. The relentless rains not only destroyed properties but also claimed lives throughout the country. In these trying times, Uplift Alive works to come together, extending our hands to those in need.

On 15th May 2024, Uplift Alive organised community volunteers to conduct a site visit to the flood affected residential informal settlement in Nairobi Kenya, Mathare. Mathare Valley is located in the Eastlands of Nairobi, Kenya. It's the oldest and second largest urban slum in Kenya after Kibera. The objectives of the site visit were threefold:

1. Provide immediate **emergency relief** to the residents of Mathare including dry foods, toiletries and assorted used clothes, shoes, and blankets in good condition.
2. Engage in conversations with the victims and families of the flood to **learn and understand their needs and concerns** as well as mobilise community and grassroots partners.
3. Conduct a **needs assessment** of the situation and provide recommendations for further relief and actions.

Uplift Alive's key approach is to partner with community organisations that know and understand their context and needs and create actions and ways forward. This report sets out to underline what we learnt and recommendations moving forward for the Mathare community.



Temporary shelter hall housing 60 Mathare residents after the floods destroyed their homes.

Visitors to Mathare were struck by the reality that the floods exacerbated the already impoverished conditions under which residents were living. Some people lost their lives in the floods, and those who survived lost everything, including their homes. The floods swept away their temporary shelters and all their means of livelihood.

Time and time again in emergencies and crises, we continue to see that the community are the first responders, providing immediate lifesaving assistance. They come together in crisis. Mathare was no exception. It is remarkable to see first-hand how the people of Mathare live in unity and found strength in their unparalleled community. When part of the valley was swept away by the floods, those who were not directly affected came to the rescue, organizing a small hall where everyone could eat, live, and sleep. At one point, there were 200 people in the small space.

At the time of the Uplift Alive site visit, most of the affected had been temporarily housed by neighbours who were also already struggling with basic supplies and relied on donations brought to the hall. Sixty people were still staying in the hall.

The hall is currently managed by Community Health Promoters; a local community organization who volunteer relief services.

OUTCOMES OF THE VISIT

Five Uplift Alive International volunteers visited Mathare. The welcome and response was quite overwhelming. Residents were glad to receive the donation items which included dry foods like maize flour, toiletries and assorted used clothes and shoes, in good condition. One of the volunteers from the community said “ thank you so much for the food and especially rice, we had ndengu (green grams) but did not know what to eat with. Now we have rice.” The simple act of providing temporary food security provide a gateway to further assist the community.

Most of those staying in the hall, particularly the men, had gone out seeking casual labour. This was encouraging as it showed their resilience and determination to move forward despite the challenging

situation. The majority of those Uplift Alive volunteers met were mothers with small children who gave volunteers a short tour of the nearby area that had been affected by the floods.



Mathare residents receive Uplift Alive donations.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND APPEAL FROM THE FLOOD SURVIVORS

Uplift Alive conversations with the survivors and simultaneous needs assessment showed that the floods biggest impact has been the loss of homes, creating a massive displacement crisis. Victims have lost their homes and with them their rights to shelter, dignity and privacy. Their main challenge was the fear of disease due to the overcrowded sleeping halls. According to the UNHCR report on infectious disease, the majority of deaths in conflict and displacement are due to indirect causes, specifically infectious diseases. Another concern was the lack of privacy, as people of all ages and genders, including young children, were sleeping together in the hall. Everyone has the right to privacy, dignity and safety, yet this is considered a privilege in times of crisis.

They requested assistance from Uplift Alive International to help some families start over by providing housing assistance including initial rent, basic bedding, and utensils.

Based on the urgency of the need, the following families were identified as the first priority:

1. **Damaris K.** was pregnant and delivered a week ago. Currently she is being hosted by a neighbour. She lived with her mother but their house was swept away by water.
2. **Loice W.** is a widow living with her children and grandchildren at the camp/hall. Her house was also swept away rendering her homeless.

3. **Elizabeth M.** is a single mother with a 1-year-old child. Also staying in the hall, her house was also washed away.
4. **Siprose K.** a mother of four, was abandoned by her husband a while back. She has young children with the youngest being 8 months old. She is sickly.
5. **Bakari J.** is also a victim who used to stay alone. He stays in the camp now too however suffers from mental health problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD



Two siblings from Mathare pose for a photo with scones.

assistance to search for employment to eventually lead to self-sustainability.

4. Lastly, Uplift Alive also received a special request to provide **children' supplies** including diapers and baby products. The project will incorporate the provision of basic supplies as long as the hall continues to run.

Thank you for your support.

1. Through a partnership with the Community Health Promoters, Uplift Alive International recommends providing **temporary settlement** for the most vulnerable few families as requested. Temporary settlement - KSH 20000/=, USD 150, can settle one family. These will cater for a bed, a mattress, 2 blankets and some utensils. If possible, the volunteers in Kenya can be organized to appeal for more other items that are in good condition from in kind donations to support the organization in settling these people.

2. To ensure sustainability of the project, the project will include **awareness raising campaigns among vulnerable communities about the effects of climate change** and how to build resilient communities. This will include a vulnerability assessment and action planning process which uses a mix of community level consultations to ensure that the project is participatory.

3. The third aspect of the project will focus on a **livelihood assistance program** for those provided with temporary housing including transportation