

UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) External Situation Report

17 December 2014

KEY POINTS

- Authorities in Sierra Leone will begin a house-to-house search for patients in the Western Area.
- 87 Ethiopian health workers arrived in Liberia to bolster the response to the EVD outbreak.
- In total, 18,464 confirmed, probable, and suspected cases of EVD have been reported in the three most affected countries, where there have been 6,841 reported deaths.

Key Political and Economic Developments

1. President Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone announced that government officials will begin a house-to-house search on Wednesday for sick people in the Western Area, which includes Freetown. It was not clear, however, if people had to stay in their homes and, if so, for how long. The Sierra Leonean government has periodically restricted movements into and out of hot spots in order to slow the disease's spread. Freetown and its surrounding areas currently account for more than half of the country's new infections.
2. The director of the United States Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Dr. Thomas Frieden, visited Guinea on 15 December. Dr. Frieden met, among others, with the coordinator of the National Ebola Response Cell, Dr. Sakoba Keita and participated in the national response coordination meeting. Dr. Frieden, Dr. Sakoba and a delegation including the United States Ambassador took part in a visit to the ETC in Macenta, where they attended a ceremony awarding a certificate to two survivors of EVD.
3. Britain said on Tuesday it would not be seeking US military assistance to fight EVD in Sierra Leone, where it expects to see "enormous change" by the end of January following a surge in response measures. The head of the British taskforce, Donal Brown, said he expected a breakthrough within four to six weeks. "The pieces are in place to fight the disease, which weren't here a month ago. So I think you will see enormous change in the next few weeks," Brown said Tuesday. While Britain is discussing how the US government might provide more foreign health workers and assist in the building of additional laboratories for EVD testing, Brown said there was no need for US military support in Sierra Leone. The UK is calling for additional resources from the World Health Organization to boost case surveillance for rural areas.

Human Rights

4. NSTR

Response Efforts and Health

5. 87 Ethiopian health workers arrived in Liberia on Tuesday to bolster the response to the EVD outbreak, which the government says it wants to stamp out before Christmas. The doctors and nurses will join an African Union (AU) mission against the outbreak, which already deployed more than 175 Nigerian medics to Liberia and Sierra Leone earlier this month. "The aim of the AU is to support the government on the progress so far made. We want to expand on it, to make sure that the community also supports it," said Major-General Julius Oketta, who heads the AU EVD mission. The bulk of the African Union's efforts in Liberia focus on Montserrado County, which includes the country's capital and largest city, Monrovia.
6. Mali has released the last 13 people being monitored for EVD from quarantine, and the country could be declared free of the virus next month if no further cases are recorded, the World Health Organization said on Tuesday. Mali has recorded six deaths from EVD. The country's last infected patient recovered and left hospital last week, while the remaining individuals who came in contact with an infected person finished a mandatory 21-day quarantine at midnight on Monday. Mali's prime minister's office said in a statement that authorities will keep focusing on awareness and prevention.

7. In a review by the European Commission and WHO, organised to ascertain compliance with the existing exit screening guidelines at international airports in the affected countries, the evaluation team found a very high level of implementation of the guidelines in all three airports. The team assessed the probability of a passenger boarding a plane without having been screened as close to nil. The measures in place are likely to detect travellers with fever and to prevent persons with symptoms consistent with EVD from boarding a plane. However, the evaluation team also expressed concerns about the long term sustainability and planning of resources, which will need more support.
8. The Netherlands is sending three teams of specialised laboratory technicians to Liberia and Sierra Leone to help fight the EVD outbreak. They will be working in mobile laboratories, purchased by the Netherlands and transported to the region by its navy transport vessel Karel Doorman. The three teams of four or five staff each will operate on a rotating basis, spending several weeks at a time working in Liberia and Sierra Leone. A total of 50 laboratory technicians will be involved.
9. In total, 18,464 confirmed, probable, and suspected cases of EVD have been reported in the three most affected countries, where there have been 6,841 reported deaths.

Logistics

10. WFP, UNMEER and the German Air Force continue coordinating the dispatch of essential items from Accra via two dedicated aircraft. One of the two C-160 transport aircraft departed Accra on 15 December carrying 18 motorbikes for Freetown. On 16 December another 18 motorbikes were airlifted for Monrovia. In addition to the above and as surge capacity, on 16 December, a Boeing 747 was chartered by WFP to transport two ambulances, parts for a biomedical waste disposal machine (autoclave), 40 motorbikes, tents, 130 hospital beds and ICT equipment to Freetown, Sierra Leone.
11. WFP has so far airlifted 73 vehicles to the region in order to augment the light vehicle fleet: 27 to Sierra Leone, 21 to Guinea and, 25 to Liberia. 8 more vehicles are en route (via sea) to Sierra Leone from Gibraltar as part of an in-kind contribution from THW, the German Federal Agency for Technical Relief. Additional vehicles and trucks have also been procured or donated locally to WFP, ensuring the provision of 'last mile' transport.
12. For regular logistics operational information please visit <http://www.logcluster.org/ops/ebola14>.

Resource Mobilisation

13. The OCHA Ebola Virus Outbreak Overview of Needs and Requirements, now totaling US\$ 1.5 billion, has been funded for \$ 1.08 billion, which is around 72 percent of the total ask.
14. The Ebola Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund currently has US\$ 108.8 million in commitments. In total \$ 140 million has been pledged.
15. All humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (<http://fts.unocha.org>) of contributions by e-mailing: fts@un.org.

Outreach and Education

16. UNMEER's FCM covering Nzérékoré, Guinea, was informed about instances of resistance in different parts of the prefecture where the local community has resorted to hiding persons suspected of having EVD or has outright refused to refer them to the nearest ETC in Nzérékoré. Villages such as Kaya and Tilepulo have refused any EVD response activity. In the district of Wessoah, youth groups have reportedly decided to prevent any EVD-related activities by community agents or the Guinean Red Cross. In response, UNMEER has proposed a meeting to be held this week with the prefectural coordination and UNICEF to plan a sensitization campaign to be funded by UNICEF, with highly regarded community members such as elders, teachers and other civil servants who will in turn disseminate EVD prevention and response messages at the local level. This campaign is to be followed by a sensitization mission led by the prefect in communities displaying resistance.

Essential Services

17. NSTR

Upcoming Events

- 18-20 December – UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will visit Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Mali and Ghana, to raise awareness about the ongoing EVD outbreak.

Attachments and resources

- Reliefweb: [Maps on the EVD response](#)