

**Global Ebola Response Coalition Meeting**  
**14 November 2014**  
**Issues Discussed and Next Steps**

The Secretary General's Ebola Envoy chaired the sixth meeting of the Global Ebola Response Coalition Core Group on 14 November. The main points covered in the meeting follow.

WHO updated on the **latest epidemiological situation**. The shape of the outbreak continues to evolve and we are seeing some quite marked differences in that shape between countries and within countries. Although Liberia continues to dominate the overall numbers, the fastest growth in the outbreak is in Sierra Leone, driven by new cases in the West and North of the country. In Guinea, there are multiple areas in the East where the outbreak is currently outstripping isolation capacity. In Liberia we are seeing the virus re-emerging and flaring up again in many locations. The identification of new cases in Mali, with a new chain of transmission, is a cause for much concern for the Coalition; although it is felt Mali offers an opportunity to "get ahead" of the outbreak quickly and before it takes hold.

In light of this epidemiological pattern, we discussed how **the Ebola response** is evolving. We are seeing a transition which can be characterised as moving from a situation where we are being hunted by the virus, to one where we are hunting the virus through e.g. more aggressive contact tracing. This is happening as we direct the focus of our effort out into the counties, prefectures and communities, particularly with epidemiological capability. Emergency Operations Centres at district level are a critical part of the response in Sierra Leone and are taking the heat from the epidemic, through creating focus and coordination, and providing unity of purpose. In terms of the overall approach, the focus on building isolation, treatment and burial capacity is critical in dealing with the consequences of Ebola but we also need to deal effectively with the transmission itself: it is very important we have a clear picture of where the disease is, where it came from and where it will go. It is felt by many that mobility and flexibility were key components of the overall response, to allow us to be responsive to the emerging epidemiological pattern both within and across countries.

**UNMEER** outlined their response to the demand for greater flexibility and mobility, and to the importance of moving efforts to the "battleground" of the districts and communities. They are working intensively to increase the numbers of Field Crisis Managers on the ground and are identifying creative options to increase human resource capacity, prior to the arrival of international staff to the most affected areas. They are working closely on this with partners. They are producing a series of district plans, setting out specific needs which will *inter alia* give potential donor partners a clear idea of both material and financial requirements. Information management capacity is also being strengthened and future planning will be informed by that. More logistical outreach is being put in place.

We discussed the **role of the private sector**, particularly looking at ways to engage with business more effectively and creatively. The private sector is well co-ordinated in the three most affected countries, with groups established in each. These groups are keen to initiate dialogue with other partners. A private sector group had just been established in Mali. The Ebola Private Sector Management Group is considering whether to go further and establish groups beyond the affected countries. A focus for those groups would be on the critical issues of lessons learned and of recovery. High priority issues for business are around travel insurance and the introduction of stigma in their sector. Their offer to the wider Coalition is of a committed and enthusiastic group of private sector representatives, with significant outreach. It is notable that infection rates amongst staff and communities around the areas where the private sector operates, are relatively low. It was agreed we will consider the opportunity of the upcoming World Economic Forum meeting in Davos to embrace the role of the private sector in the Ebola response, building on discussions at the recent WEF meeting in Dubai. And also consider the opportunities presented through the work of a number of African institutions to maximise engagement with the private sector.

The Chair provided a brief update on the meeting on 13 November of the Advisory Committee of the **Secretary General's Ebola Trust Fund**. He encouraged Coalition participants to consider the Trust Fund as a source of funding; this includes non-UN Agencies who could source funding through a UN partner. An important objective of the Trust Fund is to turn resources around quickly: significant funds had already been allocated and disbursed to the special logistics operation of the World Food Programme, and a number of new activities are under active consideration for funding.

**In summary**, the Chair noted we had responded well to the need to strengthen coordination, which had been identified in the previous meeting. This was achieved through discussions in and around the General Assembly session on Ebola, in a meeting between the Ebola Envoy and NGOs, and through an excellent session in this meeting of the GERC on the role of the private sector. The Chair summarised the main issues from the meeting as: an evolution of the epidemic and also of the international response; the greater flexibility it is important to factor in to our overall approach; the importance of a stronger district level effort in the response; strong concerns around the emerging situation in Mali, and related to that the importance of the preparedness agenda; and a consistent theme during this meeting of the GERC on the importance of recovery and renewal.

In addition to a session in the **next meeting** on long term recovery and renewal, the Chair also flagged a proposal to include next week an update on progress with vaccine development.

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