

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

19 February 2015

KEY POINTS

- UN General Assembly holds informal meeting on Ebola.
- Effective community engagement key to getting to Zero
- Response partners ramp up social mobilization in Western Area in Sierra Leone

Key Political and Economic Developments

1. The UN General Assembly held an informal meeting on Ebola, yesterday and received briefings from the Secretary-General, SRSG Ould Cheikh Ahmed, SE David Nabarro and representatives of the affected countries among others. Participants assessed that the global response to address Ebola has significantly slowed transmission and highlighted the role of the community in response efforts to reach zero transmission.

Response Efforts and Health

2. In total, 23,218 confirmed, probable, and suspected cases of EVD have been reported in the three most affected countries. There have been reported 9,365 deaths.
3. WHO reported a total of 128 new confirmed cases of EVD in the week to 15 February, a decline from 144 cases reported in the week to 8 February. Guinea reported 52 new confirmed cases – a decrease from 65 in the previous week. Most of the cases in Guinea were reported in Conakry (13) and in the western prefecture of Forecariah (24). Transmission remains widespread in Sierra Leone, with 74 new confirmed cases, a marginal decline from 76 cases in the week to 8 February. Of the 74 case in Sierra Leone, 45 were reported in Freetown. Liberia reported 2 new confirmed cases in the 4 days to 12 February, compared to 3 cases reported in the week to 8 February. Both cases in Liberia originated from the same area of Montserrado County, linked to a single chain of transmission.
4. Challenges remain as each of the three countries reported an increase in security incidents related to the Ebola response compared with the previous week. In Guinea and Sierra Leone, 39 and 45 unsafe burials were reported, respectively, in the week to 15 February, and over 40 new confirmed cases were identified only when testing was carried out on samples from individuals after they died in the community, away from treatment facilities. This potentially means other members of the community may have been put at greater risk of exposure to EVD than they would have been had those individuals been isolated when they first showed symptoms.
5. Engaging effectively with communities has been one of the keys to successfully driving cases to zero in many parts of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, but continues to present a challenge in several areas. Contact tracing relies on the cooperation of affected communities to ensure the vital task of tracking chains of transmission. Recent success in engaging with communities in the eastern Guinean prefecture of Lola enabled responders to trace cases and contacts related to an unsafe burial and rapidly bring a localised outbreak under control. Efforts must be made to secure similar breakthroughs in the remaining areas of transmission.
6. UNMEER has begun to deploy surge capacity to Guinea to enhance the response efforts. A team drawn from UNMEER Accra and Liberia arrived on 18 February to increase coordination and operational capabilities required to curb the spread of EVD in Forecariah.
7. Following the micro-flare up in the Aberdeen area (Western Area), a “Five Days Rapid Response” social mobilization action plan was set up by WHO, UNICEF, District Health Management Teams (DHMT) and implementing partners to reinforce activities such as community engagement meetings, to address social issues, including: access to water, disinfecting toilets and quarantine. About 85

Community Health Worker (CHW), social mobilizers, contact tracers and social workers will be divided into teams and will be given a section within Aberdeen to serve as their main area of operation for the five days.

8. In Liberia, UNMEER, WHO, CHT, ASEOWA and Foya District Health team conducted a field visit to Foya CCC operated by Samaritan Purse International to assess its EVD response capacities. The assessment reveals that the transportation of laboratory specimens of suspected cases to Gbarnga in Bong is a challenge which may even increase during the rainy season.

Logistics

9. The WFP-led Logistics Cluster has been coordinating with private sector partner MAERSK, through the LET Partnership; MAERSK have generously donated both refrigerated and non-refrigerated containers to the humanitarian community for storing essential items key to the Ebola Response. A total of 396 containers have been approved, which continue to be delivered to the affected countries. Last week, four refrigerated containers were received in Conakry, Guinea which will be used to store medical supplies at the main logistics hub. Additionally, 35 non-refrigerated containers arrived in Monrovia, Liberia. Partners with container requirements have been encouraged to contact the Logistics Cluster.
10. For regular logistics operational information please visit <http://www.logcluster.org/ops/ebola14>.
11. UNMEER Geo-Information Management Services (UNMEER GIMS) v1.0, web mapping application can be freely accessed at <http://www.unmeer-im-liberia.website>.

Resource Mobilisation

12. The OCHA Ebola Virus Outbreak Overview of Needs and Requirements, now totaling USD 2.27 billion, has been funded for USD 1.25 billion, which is around 55% of the total ask.
13. The Ebola Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund currently has USD 136.8 million in commitments. In total USD 140 million has been pledged.
14. All humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (<http://fts.unocha.org>) of their contributions via the e-mail address: fts@un.org.

Outreach and Education

15. NTSR

Essential Services

16. Schools continues to progressively open in Liberia. In Greenville, Sinoe County, some schools opened although very few pupils attended the classes. The distribution of thermoflash thermometer and IPC materials by UNICEF is still ongoing. The County Health Officer (CHO) is also providing the schools with IPC materials from its stock. In Gbarpolu County, only some private schools opened yesterday in Bopolu and Gbarma districts. School officially opened in Liberia on 16 February.

Upcoming Events

17. NTSR

Attachments and resources

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