

## Remarks by Dr. David Nabarro: December 1<sup>st</sup> 2014

We also support people who are living with HIV virus, and we remember those who have lost to this virus. And the reason I say this, as I would not wish anybody to feel that in our work on Ebola, we are seeking to, in any way, subtract from other important global and local health challenges. And indeed, our fundamental goal is to try to make sure that Ebola actually disappears and does not become a reality of life of people in West Africa or anywhere in the world but we know it will stay in the animal kingdom.

There has been an extraordinary response to the Ebola crisis. The whole world has taken notice, with people everywhere providing unprecedented support. Communities have changed the way they live, and national governments are driving positive change. Governments, from elsewhere, from all over, as well as Non-Governmental Organizations, Development Banks and the UN, as well as other international and local partners, regional organization like the AU and ECOWAS, have got moving around Ebola in a big way. And we are starting to see results.

First, I would like to appreciate the extraordinary courage and commitment of the thousands of people involved in the response. We are acutely aware that several of them – including providers of clinical care and community workers – have contracted Ebola and some have succumbed as a result of their illness. The world is very grateful for their commitment and sacrifice.

The response strategy is based on *Stopping* the spread of the virus, *Treating* people with the disease, *Ensuring* that communities access basic services, *Preserving* stability of societies and *Preventing* spread to new locations (*STEPP*). And the current outbreak will be ended through enabling all people with Ebola to have the best possible chance to recover from their illnesses and preventing them from infecting others.

So, what has happened as the response to the current outbreak has built up over the last few months? Communities have mobilized, people's understanding of the disease and its origins have changed markedly, infected people are being treated in increasing numbers, their contact are being traced, more than 70% of those who die, are buried safely and with dignity, treatment rates of people with Ebola exceeds 70% in increasing number of locations, and more and more people are accessing good quality care.

However, the intensity of transmission and numbers of people newly affected with Ebola still vary greatly each day, slowing down in some districts and increasing in others.

The distribution changes from week to week, and the situation can worsen unexpectedly. And this means that now more than ever, responses should be adjusted as the outbreak evolves, where intensity of transmission is high the emphasis is on community mobilization, treatment centres and safe burials and essential services for those in need. All of which, are absolutely necessary when the outbreak is ahead of as the response catches up with the outbreak the emphasis suddenly shifts to more focus on finding places or finding people with Ebola,

tracing their contacts and ensuring they receive the support and of course, treatment they need. And what this means for us now as the response advances week by week, is that responses are becoming more and more nimble and flexible continually adapting to needs at all times – remain coordinated, so resources are used effectively and efficiently.

At the same time, intense efforts are underway to develop vaccines and therapies for Ebola and to make them available where most needed.

People affected by Ebola not only need to be able to access essential services for food, water and protection but also health services for conditions other than Ebola need urgently to be re-started.

And lastly, Post-Ebola revival begins now. As transmission reduces, emphasis shifts to recovery and the renewal of societies, though all of us must remain engaged and vigilant until the last case has been treated and beyond. We must prevent return of Ebola to areas freed of the disease.

Thank you.