

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

26 December 2014

KEY POINTS

- Sierra Leone has declared a lockdown in the north of the country to look for suspected cases of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD).
- Under the coordination of UNMEER, THW has purchased 240 additional hospital beds for use in Sierra Leone.

Key Political and Economic Developments

1. Sierra Leone has declared a lockdown of at least three days in the north of the country to try to contain an EVD flare-up there. Response workers will go door to door to look for suspected cases of EVD. Shops, markets and travel services will be shut down. Sierra Leone had already banned many public Christmas celebrations. Alie Kamara, resident minister for the Northern Region, indicated that "muslims and christians are not allowed to hold services in mosques and churches throughout the lockdown, except for christians on Christmas day". No unauthorized vehicles will be allowed to operate, except those officially assigned to EVD-related assignments. The lockdown is scheduled to last for at least three days, but this could be extended if deemed necessary.
2. The Guinean Minister of Health is conducting a tour of EVD-affected prefectures to supervise and encourage EVD response activities. He arrived in Guéckédou on 24 December after visiting Faranah and Kissidougou, and was scheduled to visit Macenta, Nzérékoré and Yomou on 25 December.

Human Rights

3. NSTR

Response Efforts and Health

4. In Sierra Leone, in the week to 21 December, the Western Area continued to register the highest number of cases (161), followed by Port Loko (107) and Bombali (24) districts respectively. Kono also remains a concern. Of significance this week was the increase of cases in districts outside Western Area. Port Loko experienced a 64% increase in confirmed cases. However, this is likely a result of better capture of existing cases, rather than an overall increase.
5. According to WHO, the Ebola Treatment Unit (ETU) in Conakry (Donka) and the transit centre in Forécariah have reached full capacity due to the case load originating in the prefectures surrounding Conakry, including an outbreak of 14 confirmed cases in Dubreka prefecture. The transfer of ill persons in Dubreka and Kindia is on standby pending space becoming available in Conakry's ETU.
6. Under the coordination of UNMEER, THW (German Federal Agency for Technical Relief) purchased 240 additional hospital beds in Accra. These beds will be transported to Sierra Leone, where they will be used to augment 3 key ETUs (Military, PTS1 and PTS2).
7. A new burial ground in Monrovia is open and partners including MSF and IFRC have started using it as of 24 December. A specific media strategy around this issue is intended to help more families to call the safe burial teams to collect their deceased for safe burials at the new site or other approved graveyards around Monrovia.
8. On 24 December, the prefectural coordinator of Guéckédou, Guinea, led a mission including the deputy commander of the gendarmerie and UNMEER's FCM to evaluate the crossing points of Kiessney and Keno on the border with Liberia. The purpose of the mission was to bolster EVD surveillance measures by border control units ahead of the holiday celebration period, when there is usually an increased flow of people across the border in both directions. Reportedly, joint units of the Guinean gendarmerie and police were stationed at both crossing points.
9. UNMEER was informed that the laboratory in the Nzérékoré ETU became operational on 24 December. The laboratory equipment was donated by the Belgian government and the laboratory is

operated by technicians from the Belgian military. On the same day, another new EVD lab became operational in Greenville, Sinoe County, Liberia.

10. The Liberian health ministry has received permission from the World Bank to release funds for the payment of workers' salaries to the counties. Unfortunately the pre-Christmas deadline was missed, but the plan to pay all workers in the counties through banks and off-site payments is being completed by the government. UNDP will support the teams financially and logistically to execute the payments, which are planned over several days and are expected to begin through the holiday period. Separately, funds that had been provided to banks in time were not paid to contact tracers and active case finders by the 23rd, due to banks' liquidity issues. There were demonstrations at the health ministry as a result.
11. UNDP has received a request to pay more than 400 workers in Montserrado, Liberia, including staff of the newly established IMS for the county. UNDP, as a provider of last resort, will seek to ensure that all other avenues for payment have been exhausted before committing to these payments.
12. In total, 19,463 confirmed, probable, and suspected cases of EVD have been reported in the three most affected countries, 1,488 of which in the last three weeks. There have been 7,573 deaths.

Logistics

13. A WFP-chartered Bell 205 helicopter has arrived in Conakry, where it will be used for the medical evacuation of humanitarian personnel working in Guinea. This aircraft is currently undergoing inspection and preparation prior to its deployment to the deep field.
14. WFP has donated a 33kW generator to MSF France, which will use it to provide power to an Ebola Treatment Unit (ETU) in Macenta.
15. The Logistics Cluster has informed partners operating in Sierra Leone that, due to the diligent work of UNMEER, customs at both Lungi Airport and Freetown Port will remain operational throughout the Christmas period, albeit with a reduced capacity. Partners have been advised to operate on the assumption that customs offices will be open and will be able to deal with urgent requests.
16. For regular logistics operational information please visit <http://www.logcluster.org/ops/ebola14>.

Resource Mobilisation

17. The OCHA Ebola Virus Outbreak Overview of Needs and Requirements, now totaling US\$ 1.5 billion, has been funded for \$ 1.09 billion, which is around 72% of the total ask.
18. The Ebola Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund currently has US\$ 134.9 million in commitments. In total \$ 140 million has been pledged.
19. 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

20. On 22 December, the coordinator of Kankan prefecture in Guinea led a mission comprising government officials, members of the gendarmerie and UNMEER's FCM in the Fonkanon district of Kankan. The purpose of the mission was to sensitize the local community on EVD prevention measures and to advocate against the stigmatization of persons affected by EVD. Members of the local community brought to the attention of the mission that communication procedures should be strengthened at the community level, particularly concerning safe and dignified burials. They asked for the Guinean Red Cross to communicate the results of EVD tests to affected families, so that they would be informed whether the cause of death was EVD or not.

Essential Services

21. From 10-16 December, as part of the Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM), a total of 18,885 children under 5 were screened at the community level in 64 out of 149 chiefdoms (389 communities) in Sierra Leone. 506 were referred for treatment at the Peripheral Health Units that provide nutrition treatment services.

Upcoming Events

- UNMEER SRSG Anthony Banbury will visit Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone from 27 December to 1 January

Attachments and resources

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