

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

21 January 2015

KEY POINTS

- UN General Assembly holds informal meeting on Ebola.
- WFP continues to ensure regular supply to health facilities in Sierra Leone
- IOM and partners support border surveillance initiatives in Liberia

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, highlighted that there is no room for complacency and reiterated the goal to reach zero transmission.

Response Efforts and Health

2. In Sierra Leone, WFP is supporting 102 EVD health facilities, including treatment centres, holding centres, and community care centres (CCCs) as part of efforts to care for and contain the virus in conjunction with the health response. So far, WFP has already distributed assorted food and nutrition commodities to meet the needs of more than 7,400 patients in these facilities, representing a bed capacity of over 1,100.
3. WFP continues to focus its assistance on EVD hot-spots, particularly the Western Area and Port Loko in Sierra Leone where the majority of new EVD cases originate. Since mid-December, WFP has been undertaking general food distributions to support over 47,000 homes in Waterloo – of whom so far 33,000 households have now been reached. In Kafu Bullom where transmission remains high, WFP is focusing its assistance on quarantine homes. Since the lockdown of this chiefdom which began last week, WFP has provided food assistance to 389 quarantined homes. General food distributions throughout Port Loko District, including Kafu Bullom, will commence following household registration which is currently under way.
4. UNMEER conducted a field visit and a rapid assessment of the local health facilities and the EVD-response capacities in Cestos City, Rivercess County, Liberia. The County Health Officer noted a series of existing gaps and challenges including lack of basic medical supplies, non-payment of incentives for the staff, lack of training and difficulties in retaining medical staff. The Rivercess ETU and CCC are under construction and expected to be completed by end of the month. UNMEER will liaise with relevant partners to ensure that the gaps are addressed. The county hospital in Cestos city is the primary care giver in the absence of an ETU and/or CCC in the area.
5. Training for funeral homes in Montserrado County, Liberia on the safe management of dead bodies is moving slower than planned although it is a priority. The Montserrado IMS team believes that the training should be part of a broader national-level initiative directed at funeral homes across the country.
6. In total, 21,689 confirmed, probable, and suspected cases of EVD have been reported in the three most affected countries. There have been reported 8,626 deaths.

Logistics

7. WFP is enhancing operational capacity to undertake medical evacuation of humanitarian staff with EVD by deploying a WFP-charted Bell 412 helicopter to Freetown, Sierra Leone on 22 January. Plans are for the aircraft to be based in Freetown initially, and then to operate out of a field location, such as Bo or Port Loko, as required. This is the second dedicated Medevac helicopter that WFP has deployed to the region; the other is stationed in Conakry, serving Guinea.

8. DIFD has donated a forklift to WFP to serve the main logistics hub in Port Loko, thus addressing an important challenge in port operations in Sierra Leone.
9. For regular logistics operational information please visit <http://www.logcluster.org/ops/ebola14>.

Resource Mobilisation

10. The OCHA Ebola Virus Outbreak Overview of Needs and Requirements, now totaling USD 1.5 billion, has been funded for USD 1.18 billion, which is around 79% of the total ask.
11. The Ebola Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund currently has USD 135.8 million in commitments. In total USD 140 million has been pledged.
12. 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

13. A cross-border meeting took place in Tiene, Grand Cape Mount County, Liberia to launch the border assessment exercise led by IOM from 19 to 24 January. The assessment which began in the communities of York Island and Kvu town will cover 8 locations in Tewor and Porpka districts.
14. In a related development, the District Commissioner of Tewor, Liberia in a meeting with UNMEER and the IOM social mobilization coordinator highlighted the need to support border patrol initiatives and areas.
15. In Liberia, Global Communities in collaboration with county authorities, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoH&SW) and the National Traditional Council launched the support to traditional and cultural engagement for active border surveillance and community meetings sessions in Lofa County. The project is intended to empower traditional leaders engage communities to be vigilant in border surveillance, conduct community dialogue as well as take ownership of all processes involved in the fight against EVD in Lofa County.

Essential Services

16. The management of the reopening of schools across Liberia after having been closed for the past six months is being carefully coordinated by the Ministry of Education with technical support from UNICEF and Save the Children. In a discussion with partners in Bong County, Ministry officials and representatives from Africare, CDC UNICEF, UNMEER and WHO discussed, among others, the need to focus on short-term activities to allow schools to function as safe environments, guidelines on the number of students/classroom, clear ToRs for the schools Ebola safety committees, hotlines, and trainings on the protocol document.

Upcoming Events

17. On 22 January an induction training for approximately 60 epidemiologists and public health workers will take place at the UNMEER offices in Monrovia, Liberia. A theme of the induction training will be the need for all African Union (AU) personnel to work as part of a consolidated team with the shared goal of 'getting to zero'.

Attachments and resources

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