

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

4 November 2014

KEY POINTS

- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned against unnecessary restrictions on the movements of health workers coming back from West Africa.
- President Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone visited the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) Situation Center in Freetown on Monday.
- The peak season for Lassa fever in West Africa is about to begin, and overstretched health workers are warning they may not have the resources to deal with the disease if cases increase.

Key Political and Economic Developments

1. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon warned on Monday against unnecessarily strict restrictions on the movement of health workers who have been fighting Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in West Africa. "The best way to stop this virus is to stop the virus at its source rather than limiting, restricting the movement of people or trade," Ban stated. "Particularly when there are some unnecessary extra restrictions and discriminations against health workers." China on Monday joined the countries imposing quarantines on health workers returning from the three affected West African countries.
2. President Ernest Bai Koroma of Sierra Leone visited the UNMEER Situation Center in Freetown on Monday. He was shown around by UNMEER SRSG Anthony Banbury, and the UNMEER Ebola Crisis Manager for Sierra Leone, Amadu Kamara. Apart from receiving the President, on the second day of his visit to Sierra Leone SRSG Banbury also had meetings with diplomats, national and international EVD response officials, and UN agency representatives.
3. UNMEER Liberia ECM Peter Graaff met the Netherlands' Special Envoy on Ebola, Hans Docter, and Kingdom of Denmark's Ambassador to Ghana (also accredited to Liberia), Margit Thomsen, and briefed them on the EVD response in Liberia.
4. Dr. Peter Salama, Global Ebola Emergency Coordinator for UNICEF, told reporters at UN Headquarters that the agency will be doubling its staff from 300 to 600 in the three most-affected countries - Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone - where children account for one-fifth of all Ebola cases. Dr. Salama also said an estimated 5 million children are affected and some 4,000 children have become orphaned from the current epidemic. UNICEF is reaching out to EVD survivors who are often willing to work on the frontlines of the disease response at the community level in local care centers with community health workers.
5. UNMEER Liberia ECM Graaff, UNMIL SRSG Landgren, and UNICEF and CDC representatives participated in a field visit to Nimba County. In meetings with the local counter-EVD structures it was noted that although the epidemic seems to register an apparent trend downwards, the underlying problems persist. The poor state of the health facilities prevent the population from seeking qualified help, while in certain communities EVD-denial still prevails. A strengthened response at village level and the permanence of the CCCs as health centers with qualified medical personnel were the main requests indicated by the local authorities.

Human Rights

6. In Dandayah, in the Forécariah prefecture of Guinea, a group of contact tracers was chased away by residents under threat of death, despite appeals for calm by several officials including the mayor.

Medical

7. Thirty-nine people who traveled on buses with a two-year-old who died from Ebola in Mali are still being sought for checks, although the country is believed to be free of the disease. A WHO spokeswoman said 108 contacts were being followed up, including 33 health workers, but epidemiologists believe those who have not been traced are at low risk, as they are unlikely to have

had physical contact with the sick two-year-old. The girl's five-year-old sister had a fever but was suffering from malaria, not Ebola, tests showed.

8. A total of 13,567 confirmed, probable, and suspected cases of EVD have been reported in countries with widespread and intense transmission (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone), countries with an initial case or localized transmission (Mali, Spain and the US) and previously affected countries (Nigeria, Senegal) up to the end of 29 October. There have been 4,951 reported deaths.

Logistics

9. The Government of Liberia has asked UNMEER, WFP, WHO, and UNICEF to provide food and water supplies to six non US-supported ETUs. The estimated value of the package is USD 1.2 million per month.

Resource Mobilisation

1. The African Union (AU) is seeking funding from some of the continent's richest people, including several billionaires, to pay the costs for volunteer doctors and nurses fighting EVD in West Africa, it said yesterday. The bloc is seeking to raise \$35 million in the first round and eventually as much as \$100m for the Business-to-Rescue Fund. A separate campaign to ask for contributions from citizens will follow.
2. The OCHA Ebola Virus Outbreak Overview of Needs and Requirements of USD 988 million has received USD 572 million, which is just under 58 per cent of the total ask.
3. The Ebola Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund currently has USD 60.6 million in commitments. In total USD 119 million has been pledged, surpassing the target of USD 100 million by end of October 2014.
4. All humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS - <http://fts.unocha.org>) of cash and in-kind contributions by e-mailing: fts@un.org.

Outreach and Education

1. UNHCR conducted training of 25 primary and secondary school teachers at the Kouankan II camp in Guinea, on prevention of EVD in schools. Also in Guinea, OHCHR will be conducting training of 324 women leaders from the communities that will be involved in the awareness raising campaign that is part of the EVD response.

Essential Services

2. The peak season for Lassa fever in West Africa is about to begin. The virus has been largely forgotten in the EVD crisis, and health workers are warning that they may not have the resources to deal with the disease if cases increase. The symptoms of Lassa are largely identical to EVD, posing an extra problem. All of the countries worst hit by EVD are home to Lassa fever.

Upcoming Events

- 11 December - Global Compact CEO-level Action Pledge Event at the UN.

Attachments and resources

- OCHA EVD fact sheets and 3Ws for Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone (recently updated): <http://reliefweb.int/maps>