

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

12 November 2014

### KEY POINTS

- A second case of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) has been confirmed in Mali.
- A total of 13,896 confirmed, probable, and suspected cases of EVD have been reported. There have been 5,102 reported deaths.

### Key Political and Economic Developments

1. A second case of EVD has been confirmed in Mali, as a nurse who was working in a private clinic in Bamako has died from the disease. She had treated a patient from Guinea who died from EVD at the end of October. Contact identification has started in the clinic; 28 health care workers are already identified and will be under observation. This case is not related to Mali's first case of EVD, that of a two-year old girl that died from EVD after coming from Guinea.
2. The United States on Tuesday proposed that the International Monetary Fund write off some \$100 million in debt it is owed by Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to free up more resources for those countries, the hardest hit by the EVD outbreak. The debt relief should enable the three impoverished West African countries to spend more on government services and to support their economies as they cope with the epidemic, officials said on condition of anonymity. The countries now owe the IMF a combined \$372 million, of which \$55 million comes due over the next two years.
3. Liberia has announced a drop in new EVD infections. Liberian assistant health minister Tolbert Nyenswah said new cases had dropped from a daily peak of more than 500 to around 50, confirming tentative announcements by experts worldwide of an apparent slowdown in the epidemic. Mr Nyenswah added, however, that there were still new cases emerging across the country.
4. The Canadian government is tightening restrictions on travellers from the affected countries in West Africa by imposing self-monitoring and quarantine measures. The policy announced Monday applies to all travellers from the affected countries. But because Canada had already stopped issuing visas to residents and nationals of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, the policy will mostly apply to returning healthcare workers and international staff who work for humanitarian aid groups.
5. The UNMEER ECM in Liberia, Peter Graaff, attended a media roundtable sponsored by the Ministry of Information and the Press Union of Liberia. He underlined the media's critical role in reaching out to the population to keep up behavioral changes that have slowed the rate of new infections. He also highlighted the media's responsibility for balanced reporting, weighing the temptation of sensationalism against its potential impact.

### Human Rights

6. Sierra Leone's attorney general has defended as lawful and justified last week's arrest of a prominent radio journalist who criticized the government's handling of the EVD crisis. He accused the radio host David Tam-Baryoh of undermining the effort to stop the disease's spread by making "disparaging and inflammatory statements" about the government's work, that were likely "to incite public hatred, disaffection and instability."
7. A group of Guinean politicians, civil society activists and private citizens went on hunger strike Tuesday to demand the safe return of thousands of villagers they say have fled their homes amid EVD-related unrest in the south. The action follows the murders in September of an eight-member EVD education team attacked by angry locals in Womey, a town at the epicentre of the deadly outbreak. The army has been deployed in the town since the killings and has been accused of human rights violations there. Many inhabitants are said to have fled to the surrounding forests in fear.

## Response Efforts and Health

8. In Guinea, UNICEF is working with the government and partners in rolling out a new strategy in fighting the epidemic, focusing on three integrated approaches: 1) Community Care/Transit Centers (CCCs) 2) Community Watch Committees (CWCs) and 3) community mechanisms of psychosocial support. The purpose of the CCCs is to bring EVD care/transit centers as close as possible to the communities, and ensure safe transfer of cases to the Ebola Treatment Units, thus limiting the geographical spread of the disease. CWCs are composed of community members chosen by the community itself, to implement intensive social mobilization and referral of suspected cases to the CCCs and Ebola Treatment Units.
9. Sierra Leone will make a one-off payment of US\$ 5,000 to the family of any health worker who dies as a result of treating an EVD patient, authorities said on Tuesday, as a sixth doctor in the country tested positive for the virus. The National Ebola Response Centre said the benefit would be paid retroactively to relatives of the more than 100 health workers who have died from the disease in Sierra Leone. That figure includes all five doctors who had previously tested positive.
10. Researchers at Harvard say they are making progress with an EVD test that delivers results in under an hour, while another team in France says it is working on a test that could give results in as few as 15 minutes, and could be ready for use in early 2015. And in San Diego, the company Genalyte says its test takes just 10 minutes and will be ready in early 2015 as well. WHO and others are encouraging the speedy development of rapid tests.
11. The doctor who contracted EVD in West Africa before returning to New York City has been declared free of the virus. This means that 41 days after the first EVD diagnosis in the United States, there are no known cases of the virus in the country. Dr Craig Spencer, 33, who had been treating EVD patients in Guinea, was diagnosed with EVD on October 23rd.
12. A total of 13,896 confirmed, probable, and suspected cases of EVD have been reported, the majority of which was in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. There have been 5,102 reported deaths.

## Logistics

13. Up to 7 November, UNICEF has delivered 3,000 metric tonnes (MT) of supplies to the region. Supplies already delivered include: tents, protective equipment, gloves, safety goggles, intravenous fluids, medicines, bars of soap, concentrated chlorine, pickup trucks and motorbikes.
14. In Sierra Leone, UNHAS has confirmed that transport of CDC-specified lab samples will be accepted on the helicopters (for in-country transport from field to lab). The Lab Technical Working Group has also confirmed it is working on modalities for collection of the samples, in coordination with UNMEER and the Sierra Leone Air Force.
15. For regular logistics operational information please visit <http://www.logcluster.org/ops/ebola14>.

## Resource Mobilisation

16. The OCHA Ebola Virus Outbreak Overview of Needs and Requirements of US\$ 988 million has been funded for \$ 656 million, which is around 66 per cent of the total ask.
17. The Ebola Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund currently has US\$ 71.9 million in commitments. In total \$ 121 million has been pledged.
18. 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](mailto:fts@un.org).

## Outreach and Education

19. Progress is being registered in overcoming resistance to EVD sensitization among Guinean communities, such as in the locality of Koropara in N'zérékoré prefecture. However, resistance continues to be registered in some areas of Conakry, Coyah, Forécariah, Lola and N'zérékoré, leading to unsafe burials and sometimes aggressive behavior against EVD response workers.
20. MSF has launched an online training programme aimed at helping aid workers involved in fighting the EVD outbreak. The organization said its training platform was available to anyone wishing to gain a basic understanding of the virus and how it can be contained.

## Essential Services

21. The rate of women dying in childbirth in West African countries hit by EVD is soaring, with as many as one in seven at risk of death as fear of contact with bodily fluids prevents people from helping them. The United Nations Population Fund estimates that 800,000 women in Sierra Leone, Guinea

and Liberia are due to give birth in the next 12 months. Of these, some 120,000 could face life-threatening complications if they do not get the emergency care they need.

22. Security forces in Liberia have been weakened by the EVD epidemic. Several police stations in the poorest parts of Monrovia have closed after officers became ill and/or died of EVD, while armed attacks and opportunistic crime have increased in the cities. In Nimba county, the crime rate has increased significantly.
23. The EVD outbreak erupted at a crucial period in the agricultural season for rice and other important food crops in Sierra Leone. Up to 40% of farms have been abandoned in the most affected areas, according to the International Fund for Agricultural Development. About 47% of surveyed farmers in Sierra Leone claimed that EVD is having considerable adverse effects on farming activities. Experts expect serious food shortages to hit the country in early 2015.

#### **Upcoming Events**

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

#### **Attachments and resources**

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