



West Africa – Ebola Virus Disease outbreak

ECHO CRISIS FLASH N°24

Period covered

16/08/2014 to 20/08/2014

Time of validity

Epidemiological data from
18 August.

GUINEA:

Cumulated number of
cases (confirmed and
probable only): 543

Cumulated number of
deaths: 394

LIBERIA :

Cumulated number cases
(confirmed and probable
only): 834

Cumulated number of
deaths: 466

SIERRA LEONE:

Cumulated number cases
(confirmed and probable
only): 848

Cumulated number of
deaths: 365

NIGERIA

15 cases and 5 deaths

All COUNTRIES:

Cumulated number cases
(confirmed and probable
only): 2 240

Cumulated number of
deaths: 1 230

ECHO Emergency Contact

Tel.: +32 2 29 21112

Fax: +32 2 29 86651

ECHO-ERCC@ec.europa.eu

Epidemic situation

Sierra Leone

- Another senior doctor was infected with Ebola in the Connaught hospital in Freetown and died at Kailahun MSF treatment center. At least 32 health staff died from Ebola in Sierra Leone.

Liberia

- MSF opened a 120 bed treatment facility in Monrovia County.
- Liberia authorities claim having found the 17 Ebola patients escaping the health facility in Monrovia Saturday, August 16th and transferred them into the JFK Ebola Treatment Centre. The Government indicated the Centre would re-open.
- Liberia's President declared on 19th August a curfew from 9:00 pm to 6:00am and ordered security forces to quarantine the West Point slum home to at least 50,000 people. Riots have been reported.

Guinea

- A recrudescence of cases in the forest area (Gueckedou and Macenta) is noted. 23 new cases were reported since last week. Gueckedu MSF treatment centre already had 32 cases and is now overpassing 50 cases. This is a worrying development that needs additional control measures.
- Guinea closed its border with Sierra Leone and Liberia on 18 August.

Nigeria

- The 21 days incubation period of the index case has ended on 18 August. Any new case arising will have to be considered a secondary case, indicating a spreading of the epidemics.
- Government indicates a 95% follow up of contact tracing, and is intensifying its messaging and community sensitisation.
- The doctor that had managed the first Ebola case in Lagos died, bringing at 5 the number of health workers killed while managing this first case.

Other countries

- Ivory Coast, the most at risk country has developed a comprehensive Ebola prevention plan. On 14 August, an on-site simulation was organized between Kandopleu and Biankouma, at the Liberian border.

RESPONSE

International

- International events are now being cancelled, such as the African Union Summit, foreseen from 2 to 7 September and now postponed sine die, due to the Ebola crisis in the region. The African Union convened a first working session on the Ebola crisis on 19 August in Addis Ababa to take stock of the situation and measures to take.
- The African Development Bank decided on 19 August to allocate 60 million US\$ to the three Ebola affected countries. This amount is planned to support health worker salaries and prevention systems.
- Most countries in the region are developing prevention and preparedness plans. Benin, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Niger, Mali, Burkina-Faso are all setting up prevention and response plans. Most of them requested international assistance. Portugal offered 20 tons of drugs and equipment to Guinea Bissau in preparation for Ebola outbreak.

- Suspected Ebola cases in Mauritania, in Côte d'Ivoire and other countries were all tested negative. The suspected case that arrived in Abu Dhabi died on 18 August. The contacts of the case are in isolation waiting for lab test results.
- On 18 August, Cameroon closed its border with Nigeria. The measure is to last for around 40 days. Following the measures taken by Zambia on 9 August, also Kenya prevents all non-Kenyan passengers coming from the 3 countries to enter its territory as of 19 August. Guinea Bissau had closes its border with Guinea already on 9 August.
- The prominent regional airliner, ASKY stopped its flight to Guinea on the 18 August, after it had stopped serving Sierra Leone and Liberia on 28 July. Since almost no regional airlines are serving the 3 affected countries, the UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) started flights from Dakar to the 3 countries. Capital cities and affected inland destination are now reachable by air. This represents a positive step towards facilitating the deployment of staff to the response to the Ebola epidemic.
- The newly appointed UNSG Special Representative for Ebola, Dr David Nabarro, is undertaking a visit to the affected countries starting in Liberia on Thursday 21 August.
- WHO considers the introduction of a 'laissez-passer' that should facilitate the movement of medical and humanitarian staff including access to the quarantined areas.
- WHO and the Governments of the three primary affected countries have requested WFP to provide food assistance to 1 million persons in priority "hot zones" near where the national borders intersect for a three month period. WFP intends to support population beyond the border zones in coordination with humanitarian and health partners and National Task-forces.

Nigeria

- President Jonathan on 15 August ordered the dismissal of around 16 000 health staff that was on strike since 1 July. Nigeria is making an appeal to volunteers to help in epidemic control and messaging.

COMMENT

The situation is still largely out of control. Guinea shows a recent increase in Ebola cases that have to be responded to and followed rapidly. Sierra Leone features unknown contacts and active spread of the epidemics, and the gravity of the situation in Liberia, by now the center of the Ebola outbreak, is still largely unknown with numerous contact chains remaining untraced.

Coordination efforts are being deployed and surge capacity is coming in, more stable teams are being put in place (WFP, UNICEF, and OCHA). This has not been translated yet into a forceful field action, and the response dynamic is still insufficient in regard to the magnitude of the crisis.