

Statement of the UNICEF Executive Board on the Ebola outbreak

The Executive Board of UNICEF, at its second regular session of 2014, expresses its deep concern at the outbreak of Ebola virus disease in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria, as well as the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Board notes, with concern, the impact of the disease on the most vulnerable, particularly children and their families, and pledges support and solidarity for all those affected by this serious and escalating health emergency.

The Board salutes the heroic efforts by national and international health workers, community volunteers and staff from national health authorities, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, who are working tirelessly to save lives and stop the spread of the virus.

As underlined by the President of the Executive Board, the UNICEF Executive Director and numerous Member States in their statements at the Board's second regular session, the world is facing a number of unprecedented humanitarian emergencies, including crises in the Central African Republic, Iraq, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic, in addition to the Ebola outbreak. The number of people who have died from the Ebola virus is growing by the day. Many more have been affected by the disease, as countries struggle to contain the outbreak in the most difficult of circumstances. The capacities of already weak health systems are being stretched to near breaking point, while nutrition, protection and other social services systems are severely challenged. Education systems and immunization campaigns have also been disrupted. Moreover, it is clear that the Ebola outbreak will have severe implications on the economies in the region.

It is vital that the international community support the Governments and peoples in the affected countries at this time, just as it responds to the many other humanitarian crises now affecting children around the globe. In the fight against Ebola, as well as in the humanitarian response to the crises in the Central African Republic, Iraq, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and elsewhere, the first priority must be to protect the most vulnerable, who are often children and women. To do that, the international community must increase the level of its collective response, mobilizing adequate support to the work being carried out by UNICEF and its partners on the ground, in coordination with the World Health Organization.

The Executive Board again expresses its solidarity with all who have been affected by this crisis, and underscores its appreciation for all those responding from around the world to tackle this deadly virus and end the suffering it is causing.

11 September 2014



Signed by the President of the Executive Board of UNICEF,
H.E. Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya