

UNICEF Situation Report # 01 – EBOLA Virus Disease (EVD) September 24, 2014 Burkina Faso

A. Highlights

- An Ebola preparation and response plan of USD 27 million has been elaborated and adopted by the Government of Burkina Faso
- Five suspected cases were investigated, with blood samples sent to France for tests. All suspected cases were confirmed free of Ebola virus infection
- A UNICEF preparation and response plan with focus on communication and supply has been developed within the framework of the Government's communication plan
- UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of National Basic Education to carry out a nationwide information, sensitization and communication campaign on the prevention of EVD. Children in primary and secondary schools will be reached through teachers, parents and mothers' school committees. 50,000 leaflets will also be distributed

B. Situation Overview

- In the sub-region, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), as of 24 September 2014, 5843 (probable, confirmed and suspected) cases and 2803 deaths have been reported in the current outbreak of EVD in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.
- To date, no confirmed Ebola case has been recorded in Burkina Faso or in its neighboring countries (Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Togo). All the countries mentioned above have developed their preparation and response plans and prevention measures are underway.

C. Coordination and Partnerships

- The response is led by the Minister of Health through weekly coordination meetings of the National Committee of Epidemiological Management
- The main objectives of this coordination mechanism set previously for other disease outbreaks (meningitis and cholera) is to share information about the epidemiological situation in the country, discuss about adequate response strategies/actions, identify bottlenecks and shortfalls related to preparation and response, and to take decisions/set directives for all involved stakeholders
- More than ten stakeholders are part of the coordination mechanism, including UNICEF, WHO, Medecins du Monde (MDM), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), Terre des Hommes, USAID and the European Union
- A national communication plan is being implemented since August 2014

D. UNICEF Response

Social Mobilization/Health Promotion

A national communication plan for social mobilisation/health promotion has been developed. It centres on an information and sensitization campaign which is carried out through mass communication channels. Radio and television spots are broadcasted in French and in the main national languages nationwide. SMSs are delivered by the mobile companies. The messages are focused on key aspects of the Ebola virus (what it is; modes of transmission; how to prevent infection). Overall a good part of the population is reached through these messages but more efforts are needed to reach communities and families based in rural areas.

UNICEF's key contribution to the national communication plan is the strengthening of interpersonal communication mechanisms. Activities are about to start in eight regions, involving community radio stations, community relay units, traditional and religious leaders and community health workers. The goal of these activities is to raise awareness, strengthen knowledge, promote best practices, and hygiene and sanitation measures. The targeted regions are: Cascades (bordering Côte d'Ivoire and Mali); Mouhoun (bordering Mali), North (bordering Mali), Southwest (bordering Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana), Sahel (bordering Niger and Mali), East (bordering Niger and Benin), Centre North and Central Plateau.

Health

- UNICEF office of Ouagadougou and the field office of Dori are both equipped with automatic hand cleaning devices
- UNICEF provides technical support to the Government through participation to the weekly coordination meetings and various workshops.
- UNICEF and other partners are supporting the Government of Burkina Faso in implementing its preparation and response plan. This national plan of USD 27 million is focused on: social mobilization/health promotion, training of health workers, provision of protection equipment and antiseptic products, improvement of epidemiological surveillance, and establishing of isolation/treatment centers
- The main activities already implemented by the government with the support of its partners, including UNICEF are:
 - More than 1/3 of the 23,000 health workers trained in EVD management and prevention
 - 322 isolation centers identified across the country, but only one of them is fully prepared for case management
 - Medical check-up carried out at major border crossing points and at the airport
 - A plan has been put in place for identifying and monitoring the contacts of suspected Ebola cases
 - Five suspected cases were investigated, with blood samples sent to France for tests, and confirmed free of Ebola infection.

Education

- UNICEF is supporting the Ministry of National Basic Education to carry out a nationwide information, sensitization and communication campaign on the prevention of EVD. Children in primary and secondary schools will be reached through teachers, parents and mothers' school committees. 50,000 leaflets will also be distributed

WASH

- Several preparedness activities have already been undertaken in coordination with the government and NGO partners. Weekly updates on the situation of EVD in Burkina Faso are shared with WASH partners. These are further discussed during monthly WASH coordination meetings. All WASH partners have been encouraged to amplify hygiene-focused messaging in their routine activities, particularly in border areas.
 - The contingency planning for flooding and disease outbreak has been updated in collaboration with all actors. Supplies (chlorine and wash items) prepositioned in response to flooding and other disease outbreak would be used for any potential EVD outbreak.

Supply and Logistics

- Provision of equipment and antiseptic products to the Ministry of Health. These products were previously prepositioned for cholera prevention
- Further antiseptic products have been ordered for the Ministry of Health

Additional Operations

- A business continuity site will be fully functional by the end of October 2014. It will have the capacity to accommodate up to 15 essential staff who will be able to perform all critical functions and transactions from the site. All measures are taken for the site to function during an EVD outbreak.

E. Next Steps

- With support from UNICEF, prevention and awareness activities are to be scaled up mainly in areas bordering Cote d'Ivoire, Benin, Mali and Ghana. Nearly 5,000 relay units will take action through group/door-to-door discussions. Training/orientation sessions in interpersonal communication are being planned for key partners in order to strengthen their knowledge and skills on how to communicate on Ebola
- Information messages through radio and television stations, newspapers and via SMS will continue, with a focus on repetition and variation of broadcast time
- As the new school year starts in October, key messages on Ebola will be conveyed through an information, sensitization and communication campaign in schools. The three ministries responsible for health, education and secondary education are working together to ensure preventive hygiene/sanitation activities in schools, high schools and colleges are put in place
- The National Immunization Days, which will be held in late September 2014 throughout the country, will provide an opportunity for disseminating prevention messages to communities and families. Health personnel who vaccinate children are also educating communities in their homes about Ebola
- Needs estimation for hand washing disposals in schools to accompany the prevention strategy of the ministry of education.

F. Funding and other resources

- Implementation of the UNICEF preparation and response plan with focus on communication and supply will require an estimated budget of US \$285,000
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