UNICEF-Liberia
Ebola Viral Disease: SitRep #14
10 April 2014

Key Points

- The total number of suspected, probable and confirmed cases of Ebola is 25, with 12 related deaths.
- The total number of confirmed Ebola cases stands at five.
- Foya, Lofa County, remains the epicentre of the Ebola outbreak. However suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases have been reported in Lofa (10), Margibi (6), Bong (4), Nimba (3), Montserrado (1) and Grand Cape Mount (1) Counties.
- Staff from MSF and the US Department of Defense-run Lassa fever laboratory in Kenema, Sierra Leone, have arrived in Liberia.
- UNICEF made a new contribution of US$8,000 to provide WASH-related trainings to health workers in Bong and Nimba Counties, and provided supply items of monetary value of US$74,310 as of today.
- UNICEF’s total, estimated funding requirement for Ebola-related Health, C4D and WASH interventions remains US$478,036 for the next three months, and the estimated gap remains US$344,676.

Situation Overview

At the daily meeting of the National Task Force (NTF) on Health Emergencies, relevant staff from the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) and key partners provided the following updates:1

SURVEILLANCE, VERIFICATION AND CASE MANAGEMENT:

- The total number of suspected, probable and confirmed cases of Ebola is now 25, with 122 Ebola related deaths (including the two persons that died in Guinea early in the outbreak).
- Total confirmed Ebola cases stands at five, all of which resulted in death.
- To date, suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases have been reported in Lofa (10), Margibi (6), Bong (4), Nimba (3), Montserrado (1) and Grand Cape Mount (1) Counties. Foya, Lofa County, remains the epicentre of the Ebola outbreak, as well as the county with the highest number of related deaths (9).
- Technical support and expertise:
  - Three staff from MSF-Brussels as well as the Emergency Coordinator from MSF-Guinea arrived yesterday (9 April). Some or all of this team is expected to deploy today to Foya, Lofa County.
  - Staff from the US Department of Defense-supported Lassa fever laboratory in Kenema, Sierra Leone, were due to arrive in the country this morning to discuss development of up to two Ebola laboratories in Liberia, including a main lab at Liberia Institute of Biomedical Research (LIBR) in Margibi County and a second lab in Lofa County.
  - Today, the Surveillance and Laboratory Committee of the NTF is supporting training of technicians from Redemption Hospital, Montserrado County, on collection of Ebola samples; and is packaging eight additional samples to send for testing in Guinea or Sierra Leone.
  - Yesterday (9 April), the Case Management Committee of the NTF trained 150 staff at JFK Medical Center in Monrovia, Montserrado County.

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1 Note that information contained in this report is supplemented with the MoHSW’s official daily Ebola SitRep, and occasionally with credible information provided by partners, such as UNMIL and key NGOs.

2 One additional reported death (unconfirmed) of a woman who was under treatment at Duside Hospital of Firestone Rubber Plantation, Harbel, Margibi County has not been considered in this death counting. It will be recalled that this woman came to Margibi from Foya, Lofa County.

3 Several of these cases were directly connected to Foya, Lofa County, including the two Ebola-related deaths at Firestone Duside Hospital. Both deaths were of women who travelled from Foya to Firestone at the advice of their relatives.
The Psychosocial Committee of the NTF is counselling the family of the recently deceased patient in Harbel, Margibi County, and plans to conduct additional outreach in Margibi County as well as Chicken Soup Factory, Montserrado County.

Both the Case Management Committee and the Psychosocial Support Committee of the NTF have finalized separate Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for health and social workers dealing with suspected Ebola patients and their families.

**BUDGET AND DONOR SUPPORT:**
- The MoHSW revised the three-month Ebola response budget. It now stands at US$2.445 million, though additional funds may be needed for certain activities (e.g., creation of Ebola isolation units in Liberian hospitals). The budget covers all 15 Liberian counties.
- Partners are requested to send the MoHSW details of contributions made to date against the revised budget and action plan.
- To date, in addition to the US$250,000 provided from the MoF, the government has received US$10,000 from the Mano River Union. Other donor support (ECHO, the UK Department for International Development/DfID, etc.) has been channelled through partners.

**INFORMATION AND REFERRAL MANAGEMENT:**
- The MoHSW remains the authority on Ebola statistics and continues to manage information via several channels and mechanisms. These include: Daily SitReps; periodic press releases; daily press briefings; appearances on national radio programmes and the UNMIL Radio-produced daily Ebola talk show; maintenance of Ebola Hotlines; and support for the newly-established press situation room at the Ministry HQ in Congotown, Monrovia.
- The Liberia Broadcasting System (LBS) is re-broadcasting the daily Ebola talk show.
- The Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICAT) continues to work closely with the MoHSW, including through the holding of periodic press conferences.

**COORDINATION WITH COUNTY HEALTH TEAMS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND OTHER MINISTRIES:**
- At the national-level, the various Committees of the NTF are meeting daily and often on weekends. The MoHSW has decided to reduce the daily coordination meetings to three times a week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
- At the county-level, daily Task Force are reportedly occurring in Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Margibi, Montserrado and Grand Cape Mount Counties, under the leadership of the respective County Superintendents. Nonetheless, the MoHSW continues to emphasize the need for greater support and coordination at the county level.
- Twenty-nine health workers, including District Health Officers, health center staff and hospital staff, were trained in Grand Cape Mount County.

**COORDINATION WITH PARTNERS:**
- UNICEF continues to play key roles on the Health Promotion and WASH Committees of the NTF (see below for further details).
- Technical assistance is being provided to the MoHSW by the WHO, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), MSF-Brussels, the US Center for Disease Control (CDC), the US Department of Defense Lassa fever laboratory in Sierra Leone, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the ArcelorMittal-sponsored Ebola expert from SOS International.
- Africare is supporting training of health workers in Nimba County and Samaritan’s Purse gave a Training of Trainers (ToT) for 66 health workers in Foya and Vahun Districts, Lofa County.
- Other key partners include UNFPA, UNMIL, UNHCR, USAID, Save the Children, Global Communities/CHF International, Plan-Liberia, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Concern Worldwide, the Liberian National Red Cross, Rebuilding Basic Health Services (RBHS), BRAC, Pentecostal Mission Unlimited (PMU), the Liberia Teacher Training Program (LTTP), Population Services International (PSI), Tiyatien/Last Mile Health, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), ChildFund, Oxfam, WASH Consortium, Crusaders for Peace and the Association of Liberian Professionals.
UNICEF Response

HEALTH AND COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT (C4D):

- UNICEF formally contracted a firm and hired two communications consultants to assist with C4D efforts in Lofa County.
  - The firm is specialized in interpersonal communications (IPC) and will take a “door to door” outreach approach. Under the current contract, it is expected to conduct an initial 3-week on-the-ground outreach.
  - The consultants will coordinate Health Promotion/ C4D activities carried out by different partners; help UNICEF adapt messaging to the local context in the epicentre of the Ebola outbreak; and monitor and implement C4D activities. One consultant will be based in Foya while the other will be based in Voinjama.
- UNMIL distributed over 8,000 flyers to people in populated areas of Montserrado, as well as eight area schools. These flyers were jointly developed by UNMIL, UNICEF, WHO and the MoHSW.

WASH:

- UNICEF participated in a two-day meeting of the WASH Committee of the NTF that ended today (10 April) at the MoHSW HQ in Congotown, Monrovia. Attendees included UNICEF, WHO, Global Communities/CHF International, Oxfam, and WASH Consortium. The objectives of the meeting were to review the WASH Ebola training budget and plan prepared by the Environmental Health Division (EHD) of the MoHSW and encourage WASH actors to contribute to the training plan and budget, which covers all 15 counties.
- During today’s meeting, the Committee members finalized the training budget and identified Nimba and Bong as priority counties, based on the MoHSW’s request that they focus there. This request was based on the fact that trainings are already being provided by other partners in Lofa County.
- UNICEF made a new contribution of US$8,000 for the ToT of health workers in Bong and Nimba Counties and provided supply items of monetary value of US$ 74,310 for Ebola outbreak interventions as of today.

UNICEF Funding Needs:

- UNICEF’s total, estimated funding requirement for Ebola-related Health, C4D and WASH interventions remains US$478,036 for the next three months, and the estimated gap remains US$344,676.

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