

UNICEF-Liberia

Ebola Virus Disease: SitRep #25

18 June 2014

Key Points

- On Tuesday, 17 June, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf visited Redemption Hospital in New Kru Town, Montserrado County, to console health workers following the death of their colleague, a nurse who contracted Ebola while treating a patient. The President thanked the staff for their work and reiterated the Government's commitment to fighting the Ebola outbreak in Liberia.
- Four (4) new suspected cases of Ebola were reported in Lofa County, bringing to 26 the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases reported since Outbreak #2¹ began on 29 May. Ebola-related deaths still stands at 16.
- UNICEF is printing 15,000 additional Ebola awareness posters for dissemination by all partners, as well as 1,000 Ebola flipcharts for use by animators and communicators working at the community level.
- UNICEF and other partners have identified a total of 472 animators and communicators for interpersonal communication (IPC) and community engagement activities in Montserrado County, and another 30 for Lof County. The 472 for Montserrado will be divided into teams, and UNICEF will lead an orientation for leaders of the teams at the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) tomorrow, 19 June.
- To further bolster IPC efforts, UNICEF has also enlisted the support of the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia (IRCL), which will assist in getting the word out about Ebola.
- UNICEF is providing one vehicle to the MoHSW to assist with the Ebola response, and is working with the Ministry to distribute essential supply items and provide other needed logistical support.
- UNICEF's estimated funding requirement for Ebola-related Communications for Development (C4D), Health and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) interventions stands at approximately US\$500,000. This figure may rise as the outbreak continues. The current funding gap remains US\$187,000.

Situation Overview and National Task Force Updates

PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO REDEMPTION HOSPITAL:

- On Tuesday, 17 June, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf visited Redemption Hospital to console health workers who are grieving the loss of their colleague, a nurse who contracted Ebola from a patient and who subsequently died. During her visit, the President expressed her sympathy to the workers, encouraged them to remain at work and thanked them for their efforts. The President also used the occasion to reiterate the Government's commitment to fighting the Ebola outbreak in Liberia, showing high-level support for the effort.

UPDATE ON EBOLA OUTBREAK #2:²

- Since the last SitRep, four (4) new suspected cases were reported in Foya, Lofa County. Samples were taken from all four (4) patients and were sent to the lab in Guéckédou, Guinea, for testing.
- The total number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases reported during the second outbreak now stands at 26, including 18 cases in Lofa County and eight (8) cases in Montserrado County. The exact breakdown of cases is as follows:
 - Eight (8) suspected cases, all from Lofa County;
 - Six (6) probable cases, including two (2) from Lofa County and four (4) from Montserrado County; and
 - Twelve (12) confirmed cases, including eight (8) from Lofa County and four (4) from Montserrado County.

¹ The index patient for Outbreak #2 was admitted into Foya Borma Hospital in Lofa County on 23 May, but her case was not officially reported by the MoHSW until 29 May. The Ministry is therefore considering 29 May its starting point for tracking the second outbreak. Similarly, the first confirmed case of Ebola in Montserrado County was reported in New Kru Town on 12 June, although the onset of symptoms in the patient likely predated this.

² Unless otherwise stated, all figures reflect totals for the second outbreak of Ebola, which began on 29 May.

- The total number of Ebola-related deaths still stands at 16, including eight (8) of the 18 patients in Lofa County and all eight (8) patients in Montserrado County. The latter includes the first child fatality connected to Ebola in Liberia.
- The case fatality rate for this outbreak is over 60 per cent (16 of 26 cases). This includes deaths in eight (8) of the 12 confirmed cases and all six (6) probable cases.
- The cumulative number of Ebola cases from both the first and second outbreaks is being reviewed, as some cases from the first outbreak appear to have been discarded out upon deeper analysis.
- Foya, Lofa County, and New Kru Town, Montserrado County, remain the epicentres of this Ebola outbreak.

UNICEF Response

Through its Communications and Child Survival Sections, UNICEF continues to provide critical C4D, health and WASH sector support to the national Ebola response. This work is performed in coordination with the relevant National Task Force committees and working groups.

COMMUNICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT (C4D):

- UNICEF is in the process of printing 15,000 Ebola awareness posters for dissemination by all Government, UN, NGO and civil society partners. This includes 7,500 copies each of two different posters: one focusing on signs, symptoms and what to do if a person appears to have Ebola; and one focusing on how people can protect themselves from contracting Ebola. This brings the total number of posters printed by UNICEF since the beginning of the first outbreak in March to 40,000. For this second outbreak, UNMIL is also printing an additional 40,000 posters (20,000 of each).
- UNICEF is also in the process of printing 1,000 Ebola flipcharts for use by IPC teams and animators working at the community level.
- UNICEF, UNMIL, Liberian Red Cross and Crusaders for Peace have identified a total of 472 animators and communicators for IPC and community engagement in Montserrado County; while UNICEF and Samaritan's Purse have identified a total of 30 such individuals for work in Lofa County.
 - One-hundred and ten (110) of those identified for Montserrado County were recruited by UNICEF through its traditional WASH partners.
 - Twenty (20) of those identified for Lofa County were recruited by UNICEF. These include 14 members of an IPC firm that was previously contracted by the agency and whose contract has been renewed; and an additional six (6) local traditional communicators recruited to work alongside the IPC firm.
- UNICEF will lead an orientation for about 120 individuals selected as team leaders from the 427 communicators and animators selected for IPC and community engagement in Montserrado County. The orientation will be held at the MoHSW tomorrow, 19 June. Those trained will be expected to share what they learn with their teammates.
- UNICEF will also lead a briefing at the MoHSW for media executives about covering Ebola on Friday, 20 June.
- UNICEF has enlisted the support of the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia (IRCL), which will assist in getting the word out about Ebola in churches and mosques nationwide.

CHILD SURVIVAL (WASH AND HEALTH):

- UNICEF is providing one vehicle to the MoHSW to assist with the Ebola response, and is working with the Ministry to distribute essential supply items and provide other needed logistical support. The former includes procuring chlorine at the request of the MoHSW, for use in hospitals and in environmental spraying of households affected by Ebola.

UNICEF Funding Needs:

- UNICEF's current estimated funding requirement for Ebola-related C4D, Health and WASH interventions remains approximately US\$500,000. The office has received the following support to date: US\$100,000 from the Japan National Committee for UNICEF; US\$100,000 from the US Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance/OFDA (provided through UNICEF Regional Office for West and Central Africa); US\$30,000 from the UK Department for International Development/DFID (re-programmed funding); and US\$83,000 from the UK Committee for UNICEF. The funding gap is US\$187,000. The County Office will likely revise funding requirements based the recent increase and spread of Ebola.

Additional Updates from the National Task Force Committees

UPDATE ON COORDINATION IN LOFA:

- A meeting of chiefs and members of women and youth groups was held at Foya City Hall, Lofa County, on Tuesday, 17 June.
 - The goal of the meeting was to promote Ebola programme ownership, case detection and timely reporting among the leaders.
 - Outcomes included an agreement that all deaths in the community would be assessed by the district health team before burial, and suggestions for training of community health volunteers, development of messages for the volunteers and placing of chlorine solution for hand washing at public places.
 - The meeting attendees also suggested that a treatment centre capable of handling Ebola cases be built in Koindu, Kailahun District, Sierra Leone, which may reduce the likelihood that people from this area will cross the border into Lofa County for treatment.
- The meeting of Foya district chiefs, elders and traditional leaders, which was called by the paramount chief, is still planned for tomorrow, 19 June.

CASE MANAGEMENT UPDATES:

- A team of Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) technicians (health workers) are expected to arrive in Lofa County today, 18 June, to help with the isolation unit at Foya Borma Hospital.

SURVEILLANCE UPDATES:

- Six (6) District Surveillance Officers in Montserrado County received an orientation yesterday, 17 June, on contact tracing. They will be deployed to Bushrod Island, which is where New Kru Town is located.
- Over 60 volunteers from the Liberian Red Cross received an orientation yesterday, 17 June, and are being trained today to assist in contact tracing in Montserrado County.
- Two environmental health officers were also trained yesterday, 17 June, and were able to enter affected homes in New Kru Town to spray for Ebola.

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