UNICEF-Liberia
Ebola Virus Disease: SitRep #26
20 June 2014

Key Points

- As of 20 June, three (3) new suspected Ebola cases, one (1) new probable Ebola case and six (6) new confirmed Ebola cases had been added to the official case totals for Outbreak #2 in Liberia. Several suspected Ebola cases were discarded after testing negative for the virus.
- With these changes, the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed cases reported during Outbreak #2 now stands at 29, including 20 in Lofa County and nine (9) in Montserrado County.
- The total number of Ebola-related deaths has risen by one (1) and now stands at 17, for a case fatality rate of over 50 per cent.
- Notably, two (2) confirmed Ebola patients treated in the isolation unit in Foya Borma Hospital in Lofa County were discharged after retesting negative for the virus. The hospital also recently received a two-person team from Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) to assist in the isolation unit.
- Foya, Lofa County, and New Kru Town, Montserrado County, remain the epicentres of the second outbreak.
- UNICEF, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) and partner organizations led a training for 96 of the 472 animators and communicators identified to support interpersonal communication (IPC) and community engagement activities in Montserrado County. The teams deployed to the field today to begin their work.
- UNICEF and the MoHSW led a briefing today for seven (7) media executives in Monrovia in an effort to improve media coverage and encourage the use of the media to raise awareness and dispel myths about Ebola. The agency also increased the number of FM radio stations currently airing Ebola messages from 10 to 14.
- UNICEF is redeploying its two field coordinators to Foya and Voinjama, Lofa County, to further enhance media, IPC and community outreach and awareness raising.
- UNICEF provided five motorbikes and 10 additional megaphones to the MoHSW to assist in the Ebola response. These are in addition to the vehicle provided to the MoHSW earlier this week, as well as the 15 megaphones provided during the first outbreak.
- 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

- According today’s SitRep from the MoHSW, as of last night, 10 new suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases had been added to the official case totals. Meanwhile, several suspected Ebola cases were discarded after testing negative for the virus. The newly reported cases breakdown as follows:
  - Three (3) suspected cases, all reported in Lofa County.
  - One (1) probable case reported in Lofa County.
  - Six (6) confirmed cases, including five (5) in Foya, Lofa County, and one (1) from New Kru Town, Montserrado County.
- The newly reported confirmed case in New Kru Town, Montserrado County, was brought to JFK Memorial Hospital in Monrovia, where he later died.
- With the above updates, the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases now stands at 29 for Outbreak #2, including 20 cases in Lofa County and nine (9) cases in Montserrado County. The exact breakdown of cases is as follows:
  - Four (4) suspected cases, all from Lofa County;

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1 It is worth noting that as suspected cases are reported and tested, they may be subsequently discarded (if they are negative), or re-classified as confirmed (if they are positive). It is also possible that a suspected case may be reclassified as probable if a link between that case and a confirmed case is found, following initial classification. For this reason, the daily figures are subject to fluctuation (up or down). The MoHSW remains the authority on all Ebola figures.
Seven (7) probable cases, including three (3) from Lofa County and four (4) from Montserrado County; and
Eighteen (18) confirmed cases, including thirteen (13) from Lofa County and five (5) from Montserrado County.

Following the death of the confirmed patient at JFK Memorial Center, the total number of Ebola-related deaths now stands at 17, including eight (8) of the 20 patients in Lofa County and all nine (9) 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 50 per cent (17 of 29 cases). This includes deaths in 10 of the 18 confirmed cases.

In a positive development, two patients who previously tested positive for Ebola were discharged after retesting negative, following treatment in Foya Borma Hospital, Lofa County.

Foya, Lofa County, and New Kru Town, Montserrado County, remain the epicentres of this Ebola outbreak.

The cumulative number of Ebola cases from the first and second outbreaks now stands at 41.

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):

Yesterday, UNICEF, the MoHSW and partner organizations led a training for 96 of the 472 animators and communicators identified to support interpersonal communication (IPC) and community engagement activities in Montserrado County. These 96 individuals are expected to pass the knowledge they gained onto their fellow outreach workers, who will canvass rural and urban areas of Montserrado, with a focus on the epicentre of New Kru Town and its immediate environs. The trainees received flipcharts and posters to assist them in their activities.

It will be recalled that 110 of these individuals were recruited by UNICEF through its traditional WASH partners. They have been provided with protective rain gear, including boots and jackets, to facilitate their work during the current rainy season.

The remaining 362 individuals were recruited by UNMIL, Crusaders for Peace and the Liberian Red Cross.

UNICEF and the MoHSW also led a briefing today for seven (7) media executives from radio and television outlets in Monrovia in an effort to:

- Improve media coverage of the Ebola outbreak; and
- Encourage the use of the media to raise awareness and dispel myths and denial about the disease.

UNICEF has increased the number of FM radio stations currently airing Ebola messages from 10 to 14. The added stations can reach areas up to 150 miles out of Monrovia.

In addition to the 14-person IPC team contracted by UNICEF to conduct outreach in Lofa County, UNICEF is redeploying its two Ebola field coordinators to Foya and Voinjama, Lofa County, to further enhance media, IPC and community outreach and awareness raising. Samaritan’s Purse and other partners are also playing key roles in outreach and awareness efforts in the county.

UNICEF provided 10 megaphones to the MoHSW to assist in awareness raising initiatives. These are in addition to the 15 megaphones provided during the first outbreak.

CHILD SURVIVAL (WASH AND HEALTH):

UNICEF provided five motorbikes to the MoHSW to assist in its Ebola response efforts. These motorbikes are in addition to the vehicle provided to the Ministry earlier this week. The bikes will be formally handed over to the Ministry tomorrow.

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 Country Office will likely revise funding requirements based on the recent increase and spread of Ebola.

Additional Updates from the National Task Force Committees

UPDATE ON COORDINATION IN LOFA:
- Yesterday, the sensitization and awareness meeting was held with the paramount, town and clan chiefs in Foya District, Lofa County. It was chaired by the District Statutory Superintendent.

CASE MANAGEMENT UPDATES:
- A doctor and a nurse from MSF have arrived in Foya, Lofa County, where they are assisting with the isolation unit at Foya Borma Hospital.
- A clinic across the Lofa border in Sierra Leone is reportedly operating and able to receive suspected Ebola cases. This may ease the burden on Lofa County, where Sierra Leoneans are often travelling in search of treatment.

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