Key Points

- Since yesterday, no new suspected Ebola cases have been reported, leaving the total number of reported suspected cases at eight, including two confirmed cases, and the related death toll at four.
- The Deputy Minister of Health, who is also the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), led a team to Lofa County to assess the situation, while another Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW)-led team travelled to Margibi County to follow-up yesterday’s developments.
- The MoHSW and partners are targeting and intensifying interventions in the Ebola-affected counties of Lofa, Nimba, Margibi and Montserrado.
- Nationwide awareness-raising via mass media, bulk text messaging and other mass communication channels is ongoing.
- UNICEF is continuing to play leading roles in the emergency communications and WASH components of the Ebola response.
- Following the reported spread of the Ebola threat to Margibi and Montserrado Counties, UNICEF C4D and WASH staff immediately mobilized human and material resources to assist the MoHSW and County Health authorities in their responses.

Situation Overview

At the daily meeting of the NTF on Health Emergencies, relevant staff from the MoHSW and key partners provided the following updates:

SURVEILLANCE, VERIFICATION AND CASE MANAGEMENT:

- Since yesterday, no new suspected Ebola cases have been reported. This leaves the total number of reported suspected cases at eight, two of which have been confirmed by the Institut Pasteur lab\(^1\) in Guinea, and the total number of related deaths at four.
- The infected woman\(^2\) who travelled yesterday from Lofa County to Margibi County has been ordered to remain quarantined with her family members. She was at an undisclosed location near Firestone Rubber Plantation in Harbel, Margibi County, where her husband lives. The MoHSW dispatched a team to assess the woman and her family /direct contacts. Dr. Moses Massaquoi of the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), who has been serving in a key advisory role to the MoHSW, was among the team members.
- A blood sample of the taxi driver who transported the infected woman has been taken.
- Since the taxi driver first brought the infected woman to his home in Chicken Soup Factory, Montserrado County, that county has been added as a priority county for interventions. The priority counties thus include Lofa, Nimba, Margibi and Montserrado County.\(^3\) The MoHSW surveillance officer for Montserrado County is reportedly following up on his case.
- The Montserrado County Health Officer contacted authorities in Lofa County and asked for assistance identifying further contacts the taxi driver may have made before travelling to Montserrado and Margibi.

BUDGET AND DONOR SUPPORT:

---

\(^1\) This was previously reported as the “MSF lab in Guinea”. While MSF transported the specimens to the lab, Institut Pasteur runs the actual facility. It has handled all testing of specimens from Guinea and Liberia at its labs in Conakry, Guinea, and Lyon, France.

\(^2\) The infected woman was reportedly tested for Ebola on 25 March after her sister came down with symptoms. Her sister -- the other confirmed case -- later died.

\(^3\) Note that the suspected case in Ganta, Nimba County, remains unconfirmed, and that both confirmed cases were identified in Lofa. The addition of Montserrado and Margibi Counties to the list of priority counties is based on the fact that one of the confirmed Ebola cases was that of the infected woman who stopped in Montserrado before ending in Margibi, exposing both counties to the disease.
NTF members requested that an updated chart providing information on all contributions from the MoHSW as well as partners (UN agencies, NGOs, donors, companies, regional bodies, etc.), be drafted and circulated to the NTF, in order to facilitate closing of gaps in the response plan. The Assistant Minister of Hospital Services, who chaired the meeting in the absence of the Deputy Minister of Health, said this would be looked into.

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL MANAGEMENT:
- The Deputy Minister of Health/CMO, with support from the Emergency Communications-Health Promotion Committee of the NTF, remains responsible for clearing all messages on Ebola.

COORDINATION WITH COUNTY HEALTH TEAMS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND OTHER MINISTRIES:
- According to the Daily Situation Report of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), on 31 March, the Lofa CHT convened a meeting with partners and stakeholders in Voinjama to discuss the Ebola outbreak.
- The Deputy Minister of Health/CMO, key MoHSW staff, the WHO representative for Liberia and UNMIL’s CMO travelled to Lofa County on 1 April to assess the situation there.
- The MoHSW, County health authorities and other key stakeholders met in Kakata, Margibi County, on 31 March and discussed the Ebola response. It was agreed at the meeting that a training would be provided for health workers in Margibi. Another meeting was called today.
- The Margibi and Montserrado CHTs are actively following up the situations in their respective areas of concern, with members of the Margibi CHT visiting seven schools and six health facilities in the county to educate teachers, students and health workers on Ebola.

COORDINATION WITH PARTNERS:
- UNICEF continues to lead the Emergency Communications-Health Promotion Committee of the NTF and to provide critical support to the WASH Committee (see below for details).
- Several partners are helping meet the MoHSW’s stated need for more personal protective equipment (PPE) kits:
  - The WHO is expected to deliver the 1,000 PPEs that are currently in Ghana to Liberia by Friday.
  - ArcelorMittal reportedly provided 5 PPEs.
  - Meanwhile, the 50 PPEs provided by the Liberian National Red Cross were found to be insufficient, and the MoHSW says it will not be able to use them.
- Firestone Rubber Plantation has established an isolation unit at the Firestone Hospital, and there are plans to provide training to hospital workers.
- The EU maintains that ECHO may be willing to support bringing MSF to Liberia, but no concrete plans or commitments have been made by any concerned party, to date.
- All previously mentioned partners continue to be actively engaged in the response, including Save the Children, Plan-Liberia, Global Communities (which is being significantly funded by USAID), Samaritan’s Purse, International Rescue Committee (IRC) and UNFPA.
- In addition to their ongoing initiatives, Global Communities has announced plans to assist the MoHSW in providing trainings for CHTs in Lofa, Nimba and Bong.
- Radio stations such as UNMIL Radio continue to feature Ebola messaging, though Save the Children reports that ELBC and Radio Veritas need the MoHSW to clear certain programming before they can broadcast the messages.

UNICEF Response

HEALTH AND COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT (C4D):
- As chair of the Emergency Communications-Health Promotion Committee of the NTF, UNICEF continues to spearhead and coordinate efforts to increase awareness of the Ebola virus across Liberia, with particular focus on the priority counties of Lofa, Nimba, Montserrado and Margibi.
- In response to the spread of the Ebola threat to Montserrado and Margibi Counties yesterday, UNICEF’s C4D programme provided both human resource and materials support to the MoHSW. Specifically, UNICEF:
  - Played a key coordination role at the MoHSW throughout the day to help coordinate the response activities in Margibi and Montserrado Counties.
  - Sent 700 brochures on Ebola to Firestone Rubber Plantation in Margibi County.
o Sent another 1,000 brochures to the Margibi CHT.

- In addition to the Margibi-specific interventions, UNICEF has:
  - Finalized the Ebola brochure, which is now being disseminated to all health centres in Lofa County.
  - Finalized the five-minute drama, jingles and three key messages on Ebola, and translated all into Gbandi, Lorma, Kissi, Mandingo and English.
  - In the process of translating three key Ebola messages into Bassa, Kpelle, Vai, Gio and Mano. The five-minute drama will also be translated into these languages.

- In addition to increasing interpersonal communications, UNICEF is prioritizing finalization of the Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) document for health workers, which is only awaiting MoHSW approval. Once approved, Save the Children will print the promised 10,000 copies of the SOP.

**WASH:**

- As a leading member of the WASH Committee of the NTF, and to complement the efforts of the Emergency Communications-Health Promotion Committee, UNICEF’s WASH programme has provided the following material support to date:
  - One-hundred and twenty-five (125) cartons of soap for use in hand-washing
  - Five drums (45 kg) of chlorine
  - Twenty spray cans to sanitize materials and areas exposed to Ebola
  - Two 72-square metre tents, one of which has reportedly been dispatched by the MoHSW to Lofa County to set up an isolation unit
  - Two rolls of tarpaulin in case smaller areas for isolation units may be needed
  - Ten (10) Ebola reference documents

- WASH also had pre-positioned seven cholera kits (five in the counties, two at the National Drug Store), as well as WASH emergency materials in nine counties.

- WASH stands ready to provide additional support, following formal requests from the MoHSW.

**CONTACTS IN LIBERIA:**

- **Sheldon Yett, Representative**
  Tel: +231-(0)770-25-7100 (office), +231-(0)770-26-7100 (mobile)
  Email: syett@unicef.org

- **Dr. Fazlul Haque, Deputy Representative**
  Tel: +231-(0)770-25-7400 (office), +231-(0)770-26-7400 (mobile)
  Email: fhaque@unicef.org

- **Prabhu Prabhakaran, Resource Mobilization Specialist**
  Tel: +231-(0)770-25-7103 (office), +231-(0)770-26-7103 (mobile)
  E-mail: prprabhakaran@unicef.org

- **Adolphus Scott, C4D Specialist**
  Tel: +231-(0)770-25-7113 (office), +231-(0)770-26-7103 (mobile)
  E-mail: adscott@unicef.org