UNICEF-Liberia
Ebola Virus Disease: SitRep #40
23 July 2014

*This report provides an update on the UNICEF response to the Ebola emergency in Liberia. All statistics, other than those related to UNICEF support, are from the SitReps issued by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare through the Ebola National Task Force.

Summary

Since 20 July, six (6) additional suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases and 10 additional suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola deaths have been recorded in Liberia. One of the additional cases is of a health worker in Lofa County, bringing to 28 the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases among health workers since the epidemic began in March.

As of 23:00 on 21 July, the cumulative number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases reported during Outbreak #2\(^1\) in Liberia stood at 222; and the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola deaths stood at 126.\(^2\)

To date, confirmed Ebola cases have been reported in Bomi, Bong, Lofa, Margibi, Montserrado and Nimba Counties, which constitute the Ebola response counties.

In a show of support for the Ebola response, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and high-level UN, international and national officials attended the 22 July meeting of the Ebola National Task Force.

Some members of the community around ELWA Hospital in Montserrado County are reportedly resisting the expansion of the Ebola treatment unit at the facility. The MoHSW, the House Representative for Montserrado District #5 and the Montserrado County Superintendent are working together to mitigate the community’s fears through meetings and dialogue.

UNICEF released a truck to the MoHSW for a period of two weeks for use in the Ebola response. The agency also supported the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia (IRCL) in developing a statement on the Ebola emergency, to be aired on television and radio stations tomorrow (24 July). UNICEF also completed the production and translation into all 16 languages of all revised Ebola messages; is packaging the revised messages for distribution to radio stations; and is developing a short, informative video on Ebola that features prominent citizens delivering key Ebola messages.

UNICEF’s revised budget for the Ebola outbreak response is US$ 1.59 million for the period between March and September 2014. The funding gap is US$ 960,000.

National Response

President Sirleaf attended the Ebola National Task Force meeting yesterday (22 July) to reinforce the Government’s commitment to stopping the spread of Ebola in Liberia. In her statements, the President emphasized that financial resources and material support have been received from many sources to help in the Ebola response, and that what is most needed at this juncture is action – both to deliver the materials supplied, and to continue to raise awareness of the virus, its symptoms and the ways to prevent its spread.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General of UNMIL, the WHO Regional Director for Africa and the US Ambassador to Liberia also attended the 22 July meeting of the National Task Force, as did the Liberian Minister of Internal Affairs, the Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism and other senior Government officials.

Situation Overview

According to the MoHSW, between 23:00 on 20 July and 23:00 on 21 July, six (6) additional suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases and 10 additional suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola deaths had been recorded in Liberia. Breakdown by County is as follows:

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\(^1\) Outbreak #2 began on 29 May.

\(^2\) Cumulative statistics are drawn from SitRep #68 of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, which reports cumulative as of 23:00 on 21 July. (At the time of writing, SitRep #69 was not yet available.)
Ten (10) of these health workers have died.

With these additions, the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases reported in Liberia during Outbreak #2 now stands at 222, including 78 suspected, 68 probable and 76 confirmed. Meanwhile, the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola deaths stands at 126; and the case fatality rate for probable and confirmed cases stands at 68 per cent. Case breakdown by County is as follows:

- **Bomi**: One (1) probable and one (1) confirmed.
- **Bong**: Eight (8) suspected, five (5) probable and six (6) confirmed. 3
- **Lofa**: 52 suspected, 28 probable and 41 confirmed.
- **Margibi**: Two (2) probable and one (1) confirmed.
- **Montserrado**: 17 suspected, 31 probable and 25 confirmed.
- **Nimba**: One (1) suspected, one (1) probable and two (2) confirmed. 4

Bomi, Bong, Lofa, Margibi, Montserrado and Nimba Counties remain the six (6) Ebola response counties (i.e., the counties where confirmed Ebola cases have been reported); while Gbarpolu and Grand Cape Mount remain alert counties.

The Psychosocial Committee of the Ebola National Task Force informed that there are some infants and children who have lost guardians due to the Ebola epidemic, and who are in need of support.

The Case Management Committee of the Ebola National Task Force hopes to open the expanded Ebola treatment unit at ELWA Hospital in Montserrado County this weekend. However, resistance has been registered from some members of the community around the hospital.

Yesterday (22 July), the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) and Assistant Minister of Preventive Services at the MoHSW held a meeting with the elders in the community an attempt to allay their fears and debunk myths about the treatment unit.

As of 9 AM this morning, some community members were reportedly demonstrating near the clinic. The Minister of Health, the CMO, the Montserrado County Superintendent and House Representative of Montserrado District #5 are working together to resolve the situation, including through further meetings with community members.

**UNICEF Response**

As a member of the Ebola National Task Force, UNICEF continues to provide critical social mobilization/communications, case management and logistical support to the national Ebola response.

**SOCIAL MOBILIZATION/COMMUNICATIONS:**

- UNICEF supported the IRCL in developing a statement on the Ebola emergency, which will be aired on television and radio stations tomorrow (24 July). The statement was recorded today and was delivered by Sheik Kafumba Konneh, head of the Muslim community in Liberia and President of the IRCL; Archbishop Lewis Zeigler, head of the Catholic Church in Liberia; and Bishop Jonathon Hart, head of the Episcopalian Church in Liberia.
- UNICEF has completed the production of all revised Ebola messages and translated them into in all 16 languages spoken in the country. The agency is now packaging the messages for distribution to FM and community radio stations nationwide.
- In an effort to raise awareness via all communication channels possible, UNICEF is working with the MoHSW and a Monrovia-based multimedia company to develop a short informative, video on Ebola that features prominent citizens delivering key Ebola messages.

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3 The 21 July MoHSW SitRep reports that (2) suspected cases previously recorded in Bong County have been removed from the totals, while two (2) confirmed cases have been added. Total cases for the County thus remain the same, but the breakdown has changed.

4 The 21 July MoHSW SitRep reports that (1) suspected case previously recorded in Nimba County has been removed from the totals, while one (1) confirmed case has been added. Total cases for the County thus remain the same, but the breakdown has changed.
LOGISTICS:
- UNICEF released a truck to the MoHSW for a period of two weeks for use in the Ebola response. This comes in addition to the one (1) vehicle and seven (7) motorbikes previously donated.

UNICEF Funding Needs:
- UNICEF’s revised budget for the Ebola response is US$ 1.59 million for the period from March to September 2014. The UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) approved a donation of US$ 306,355 toward this budget. This is in addition to the following support provided to date: US$ 100,000 from the Japan National Committee for UNICEF; US$100,000 from the US OFDA (provided through the UNICEF Regional Office for West and Central Africa); US$ 30,000 from the UK Department for International Development (DFID) (re-programmed funding); and US$ 93,000 from the UK Committee for UNICEF. The funding gap is US$ 960,000.

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