UNICEF-Liberia
Ebola Virus Disease: SitRep #41
25 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

- Between 21 and 23 July, 36 additional suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases and four (4) additional deaths of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases had been reported in Liberia. The additional cases include four (4) health workers.
- As of 23:00 on 23 July, the cumulative number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases reported during Ebola Outbreak #2 in Liberia stood at 258; and the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola deaths stood at 130.\(^1\)
- To date, confirmed Ebola cases have been reported in Bomi, Bong, Lofa, Margibi, Montserrado and Nimba Counties, which constitute the Ebola response counties.
- The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) has decided to reorganize the national approach to the Ebola epidemic so as to improve coordination and the overall response. Under this new plan, an open briefing for all partners will be held on Fridays at 9 AM, with more high-level and technical meetings to take place during the week.
- The MoHSW is responding to recent security incidents linked to the Ebola outbreak by working to enhance engagement by Liberian security agencies with the goal of preventing or managing such incidents.
- UNICEF completed filming for the forthcoming Ebola awareness video, which will feature the President of Liberia and other prominent citizens delivering key messages on the disease. The agency has also produced 120 CDs carrying the revised Ebola messages, and is now facilitating their distribution to radio stations nationwide.
- 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

- The MoHSW has decided to reorganize the national approach to the Ebola epidemic so as to improve coordination and the overall response.
- Under the new plan, the Ebola National Task Force will be restructured and a new body known as the Incident Management System will be created. The composition, functions and meeting schedule for these two bodies is as follows:
  - **Ebola National Task Force**: Chaired by the Minister of Health. Membership will include key MoHSW staff; ministers from other relevant line ministries; and high-ranking representatives from key partners, including the WHO, the CDC, UNICEF, UNMIL, MSF and donors such as USAID and the European Union (EU).\(^2\) An e-mail inviting high-ranking officials (or their delegates) from these ministries and agencies to the Taskforce will be sent by the MoHSW this weekend. The Taskforce will meet every Wednesday at 9 AM at the MoHSW.
  - **Incident Management System**: Chaired by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO). Membership will include representatives from key technical partners, including the WHO, the CDC, UNICEF and MSF, as well as representatives from the committees of the existing Ebola National Task Force. These committees will now fall under the leadership of the Incident Management System, which will meet daily at 9 AM at the MoHSW (Saturday and Sunday schedule yet to be clarified).

---

1 Outbreak #2 began on 29 May.
2 Cumulative statistics are drawn from MoHSW Ebola SitRep #70, which reports cumulative cases as of 23:00 on 23 July.
3 Please note that this list of partners is not exhaustive. The MoHSW will decide the full list.
The sub-committees of the existing Ebola National Task Force will remain largely the same and will continue to meet at the end of each day to report on their work.

To facilitate situational awareness, a broader meeting open to all partners will be held on Fridays at 9 AM at the MoHSW. During this meeting, a briefing on the developments from the previous week will be provided.

**Situation Overview**

According to the MoHSW, between 23:00 on 21 July and 23:00 on 23 July, 36 additional suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases had been recorded in Liberia. These additional cases include four (4) suspected, probable or confirmed cases of health workers, bringing to 32 the total number of cases among health workers since the outbreak began; 10 of these health workers have died. Breakdown by County for additional cases and deaths is as follows:

- **Bong:** Two (2) suspected cases, four (4) probable cases and four (4) confirmed cases. One (1) of these cases was a health worker.
- **Lofa:** 16 probable cases. Three (3) of these cases were health workers, and at least 10 of the cases were reported in Lakpaba Town.
- **Margibi:** One (1) confirmed case.
- **Montserrado:** Two (2) suspected cases and seven (7) probable cases.

During the same period (21 to 23 July), four (4) additional deaths of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases were reported.

With the above additions, the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola cases reported in Liberia during Outbreak #2 now stands at 258, including 82 suspected, 95 probable and 81 confirmed. Meanwhile, the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed Ebola deaths stands at 130; and the case fatality rate for probable and confirmed cases stands at 64 per cent.

Case breakdown by County is as follows:

- **Bomi:** One (1) probable and one (1) confirmed.
- **Bong:** 10 suspected, nine (9) probable and 10 confirmed.
- **Lofa:** 52 suspected, 44 probable and 41 confirmed.
- **Margibi:** Two (2) probable and two (2) confirmed.
- **Montserrado:** 19 suspected, 38 probable and 25 confirmed.
- **Nimba:** One (1) suspected, one (1) probable and two (2) confirmed.

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 MoHSW is engaging with the Liberian security sector to address security issues linked to Ebola. For example, the MoHSW is in consultation with the Liberian National Police (LNP) to ensure protection for burial teams, who have at times been blocked from retrieving bodies.

The increased focus on security by the MoHSW follows a 23 July attempt to light a MoHSW conference room on fire. The perpetrator was a man who was reportedly disgruntled over the Ebola situation. He was arrested and is now under investigation. The focus on security also follows a demonstration at Redemption Hospital in Montserrado County on 24 July, when a crowd gathered to protest the holding of the body of a deceased patient by the hospital. The hospital was awaiting a lab test for Ebola before releasing the body to the family. Some members of the crowd threw rocks.

The expansion of the ELWA Ebola treatment unit remains stalled due to ongoing resistance by some members of the community. The MoHSW is continuing to engage the community, including through formal visits and meetings with key local leaders.

**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 completed filming of an Ebola awareness video, which will feature prominent citizens including President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, religious and traditional leaders, hiphop singer Takun J and Cultural Ambassador Juli Endee. The video is now being edited. Once finalized, it will be distributed to video clubs nationwide, as well as through other networks.
UNICEF finalized the CD’s with the revised Ebola messages, which have been translated into all 16 languages spoken in Liberia, and is now facilitating distribution of the CDs to radio stations nationwide. One-hundred and twenty (120) CDs have been produced to date, with more in process.

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.

UNICEF Contacts

- **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: pprabhakaran@unicef.org

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