UNICEF-Liberia
Ebola Virus Disease: SitRep #33
7 July 2014

Key Points
- As of 06 July, one (1) new suspected and four (4) new confirmed EVD cases have been reported.
- The total number of suspected, probable and confirmed EVD cases reported for Outbreak #2 now stands at one hundred twenty-three (123). Of these, a total of fifty-seven (57) are confirmed.
- The total number of deaths for Outbreak #2 in confirmed, probable, and suspected cases now stands at seventy-six. (76). Thirty-five (35) deaths have been confirmed as EVD positive cases.
- Foya, Lofa County, and New Kru Town, Montserrado County, remain the epicentres of this Ebola outbreak.
- A common, inter-country Strategy for Accelerated Response to Ebola Outbreak in West Africa was adopted by 11 countries attending an Emergency Ministerial Meeting held in Ghana last week.
- Resistance and denial have been reported at community level. During the weekend of 5/6 July, a group of UNICEF supported animators raising awareness on Ebola were chased away and their vehicle damaged by community members in Lofa County. Reports of patient rejection at some Monrovia hospitals persist.
- UNICEF continues to provide active support to the response in coordination with National Task Force (NTF) sub-committees.
- UNICEF’s estimated funding requirement for the EVD outbreak response is US$1.59 million. The current funding gap is US$1.27 million.

Situation Overview
- As of 11 pm on 06 July, one (1) new suspected and (4) new confirmed EVD cases have been reported.
- With these changes, the total number of suspected, probable and confirmed cases reported for Outbreak #2 now stands at one hundred twenty-three (123). A total of ten (10) cases have been reported among health workers, including nine (9) deaths.
- A total of fifty-seven (57) confirmed cases, including thirty five (35) from Lofa County, one (1) from Margibi County, and twenty one (21) from Montserrado County are reported.
- The total number of Ebola-related deaths for Outbreak #2 in confirmed, probable, and suspected cases now stands at seventy-six (76). Thirty-five (35) deaths have been confirmed as EVD positive cases. The reported national case fatality rate (CFR) is 71.8%.
- The total number of patients currently in isolation is sixteen (16) including ten (10) in Lofa County and six (6) in Montserrado County. A repeat lab test of four (4) previously lab-confirmed EVD positive patients that completed treatment now records negative results for EVD. All 4 were released from the Foya, Lofa County isolation unit.
- Foya, Lofa County, and New Kru Town, Montserrado County, remain the epicentres of this Ebola outbreak. A suspected case from Grand Cape Mount County was brought to Monrovia early Sunday morning, as the county health team (CHT) reported they were unprepared to manage the situation appropriately.
- Ten (10) specimens await lab testing.
- Rejection of patients at hospitals persist in Monrovia, creating an overload of emergencies at private facilities.
- Resistance and denial in in the communities also continue. UNICEF supported animators working in Lofa County were chased by a group with machetes over the weekend. Their vehicle was damaged.

National Task Force Updates
Sub-committee updates emphasized the need to clarify organizational structures within and across NTF subcommittees; improve case tracking; improve standards of care and response at facilities; refine communication messages and strategies; improve engagement of all county health teams in the response; and increase burial team capacity.

Coordination:
- Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Bernice Dahn reported on the Emergency Ministerial Meeting on the EVD Outbreak in Accra last week. She said the group developed and agreed on an inter-country response, with an estimated budget of US$ 10 million. Recommendations include: establishing a sub-regional coordination center in
Guinea and countries engaging the highest levels of government to mobilize resources. The Ebola response strategy has also been placed on the Agenda of the upcoming ECOWAS Heads of State meeting on July 10th.

- Members of the Lofa County Health Team attended a cross-border meeting in Sierra Leone. Outcomes included processes to improve coordination and sharing of information on contacts and lab results. The next meeting is to be held in the first week of August in Liberia.
- An emergency meeting for all County Health Officers is proposed. Technical assistance has been sent to Margibi County.
- Professional staff recruited and given contracts for the response in Lofa County, and general community health volunteers (gCHVs) in Lofa County continue to work without payment or information on their incentive.

**Case Management:**

- The case management team created a contact tree to clarify responsibilities and chain of response for the ambulance, investigation, and burial teams. All sub-committees were encouraged to make a similar organigram to improve coordination between groups.
- Free CellCom and Lonestar numbers have been established to report suspected cases: 1333 and 4455. These calls go directly to a 24 hour call center at JFK Hospital. EVD or regular emergency response will be activated accordingly.

**Case Tracking**

- Restructuring of the team is ongoing. The 22- zone structure utilized for Polio campaigns will be adopted to improve coordination and reporting in Montserrado County. Reports from Lofa County remain an issue.

**Training**

- Training of all staff at the 278+ community health clinics remains on-going; completion is expected by Friday. Training teams have been delayed due to the breakdown of 3 vehicles, and support requested from partners. Partners working in Bomi, Gbarpolou, Lofa, and Cape Mount are also requested to support with vehicles to facilitate a TOT.

**Communication and Social Mobilization**

- Concern persists regarding: consistency of messages; need for communication messages and materials on stigma; and change of communication strategies that instil fear to those that give hope. A new approach to emphasize the testimonies and success stories of survivors in media, official press releases, and other avenues will be employed.
- Meetings were held with the leadership of the Muslim Council of Liberia and the Council of Churches. The group pledged to hold a conference to inform their religious intuitions and requested support for the training.

**Psychosocial**

- The psychosocial team continues to request support for survival kits. The team is also now responsible, along with the contact tracing team, to provide test results to family members of EVD cases that die in the community.
- The group has expressed a need to find care for the infant of an EVD victim. The child has completed follow-up, but other members of the household are now positive.

**UNICEF Response**

UNICEF continues to provide active and critical C4D, health and WASH sector support to the national Ebola response in coordination with National Task Force sub-committees.

- UNICEF facilitated all working-groups within the Communication and Social mobilization sub-committee to create an activity plan. Today all current radio messages will be replaced with the 2 EVD songs while messages are revised and redistributed. An additional 5000 posters have been printed for distribution to IPC teams and partners.

**UNICEF Funding Needs:**

UNICEF’s current estimated funding requirement for Ebola-related C4D, Health and WASH interventions remains approximately US$1.59 million. The Country 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$93,000 from the UK Committee for UNICEF. The current funding gap is US$1.27 million.

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