UNICEF-Sierra Leone
Ebola Virus Disease
Weekly update (18-24 August 2014)

This report provides an update on the UNICEF response to the Ebola emergency in Sierra Leone. All statistics, other than those related to UNICEF support, are from the daily Sit-Rep issued by the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MOHS).

Highlights

**Situation Overview**

- The cumulative number of laboratory confirmed cases is **935** (160 new cases since last week). The number of confirmed deaths is **341** with a Case Fatality Rate (CFR) based on confirmed cases of **36.5%** (24 August 2014).
- Of the Ebola confirmed cases around 22% are children (0-17 years).
- Seventy eight (78) patients are currently admitted at the Kenema and Kailahun Isolation Units with cumulative discharges of 236 (survivors).
- The total number of contacts currently being followed is 2136: Kailahun (217), Kenema (448), Kono (0), Kambia (12), Bombali (250), Tonkolili (NA), Port Loko (589), Pujehun (22), Bo (157), Moyamba (15), Western Area Urban (374) and Western Area rural (52). A cumulative of 1901 have completed 21 days and are dropped off from follow-up (22 August).

**Funding requirements (Summary)**

- The current total requirements for UNICEF are US$3,499,706 to offer comprehensive support to the six pillars: Coordination; Social Mobilization; Surveillance and Contact tracing; Supplies and Logistics; Child Protection; and Case Management (+WASH).

**Most Urgent Humanitarian Needs**

In order to be more effective in the Ebola response there is a continued urgent need for the following:

- Additional Health Workers (doctors & nurses),
- Transport – Ambulances (4x4), Pick-ups (4x4), motorcycles,
- Medical supplies (including personal protective equipment),
- Nation-wide community outreach/social mobilization programmes,
- Scaling-up of Contact Tracing,
- Support to survivors & affected communities (including Family Tracing & Reunification and Psycho-Social Support).

**Inter-Agency Collaboration, Coordination, and Key Partnerships**

- **Senior UN System Coordinator for Ebola Virus Disease**, David Nabarro, arrived in Sierra Leone for a three-day mission. He is heading a team of different agencies (UNICEF, WFP & WHO) who will meet with key partners in the Government-led fight against Ebola.
- UNICEF continued participation in the **Ebola Operations Centre** (EOC). The EOC serves as the Sierra Leone National Central Command and Control Center for Ebola Outbreak Response activities (24/7). During daily meetings the situation is reviewed and strategic decisions are taken.

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1 Total budget for National Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak Response Plan is US$ 25,817,130
UNICEF continued supporting and participating in five Pillars that are set up for the fight against Ebola as follows: (i) Coordination, (ii) Logistics, (iii) Social Mobilization, (iv) Child/Social Protection, and (v) Surveillance and Laboratory pillar.

The Social Mobilization Pillar established four new task force committees to be more effective in responding: Coordination and Monitoring & Evaluation; Capacity Building of partners; Messaging & Dissemination; and Special Needs Groups.

UNICEF staff continued its support to eight districts around the country most affected/at risk. In five of the districts UNICEF is co-chair of the District Ebola Operations Centre. Two international experts (C4D and Emergency Coordination) continued support at national level while additional international experts in process of being recruited.

**UNICEF SLCO Ebola response**

**Social Mobilization**

- UNICEF continued to assist partners in capacity building and training of partners:
  - 67 representatives from 42 NGO partners and UN sister agencies were trained as trainers on social mobilization on Ebola (19 August 2014). The trainers will cascade the training within their organization and communities. Each trainee was supplied with IEC materials to facilitate their work.
  - In collaboration with the Independent Media Commission, 50 journalists (mostly radio station managers, producers and presenters) received an orientation on Ebola messaging and production (20 August).
  - 27 members of the Sierra Leone Girl Guide Association were trained in partnership with the Health Education Division of MOHS. The members will engage in social mobilization and sensitization on Ebola in their various communities in the Western Area (21 August 2014).
  - 80 members of the West African Examination Council were trained on Ebola sensitization at their general meeting (22 August).

- The Office of the First Lady was supplied with assorted IEC materials to support the sensitization work on Ebola under her leadership.

- Representatives from Abacha Street Market Women’s Organization (Freetown’s busiest market area), accompanied by the President of the Sierra Leone Football Association (SLFA), held a planning meeting with UNICEF on possible collaboration on Social Mobilization activities through the stall-to-stall approach. The preparations were on this week for the training of 25 women leaders to be trained on Ebola prevention next week which they will cascade to their compatriots and communities.

- 5000 leaflets, “Ebola - Stay Safe in Sierre Leone” have been developed and being distributed at Lungi International airport. Four TV’s have been placed in arrival lounge to air messages on Ebola.

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2 The Social Mobilization meets daily at UNICEF. It is co-chaired by the Health Education Department of the Ministry of Health & Sanitation and UNICEF.
● A Knowledge Attitudes and Practices (KAP) Survey – is ongoing in nine districts: Kambia; Koinadugu; Port Loko; Bo; Moyamba; Kailahun; Kenema; Western Urban; and Western Rural. 1000 individuals from 500 households are included in the survey. The survey aims at; identifying bottlenecks to prevent the spread of EVD; assessing the public’s attitudes and acceptability of pending EVD vaccines, treatment and use of the generated evidence to inform evidence-based strategies in preventing the transmission of the EVD, and caring for those already infected and affected by the epidemic.

● The UNICEF/Health for All Coalition week-long mobile street-to-street campaign in all district capitals in the country ended. 520 social mobilizers, including bike riders, equipped with megaphones went around from street-to-street on motorbikes with Ebola messages on placards, posters, leaflets and other promotional materials.

● The Ebola Communication Strategy is under review and will be submitted to the Social Mobilization pillar for approval before use.

Surveillance/Contact tracing:
● UNICEF is participating in a joint MoHS/UN monitoring mission to the districts to assess the functionality of key critical interventions, including: treatment centers, holding centers, contact tracing and burial teams.

● UNICEF/MoHS convened the national Community Health Technical Working Group (CHTWG) in order to reach a consensus regarding the role of community health workers (CHWs) in the context of the Ebola outbreak. Given the communities’ fear/reluctance of attending health facilities due to rumors and misconceptions related to Ebola and the reduced functionality of some health facilities due to the impact of the outbreak on health workers, communities have less access to Primary Health Care. Following the CHTWG deliberations, a 2 page-concept paper has been developed by a core team of the MoHS, UNICEF and an INGO representative that has been submitted to the senior management of the MoHS.

Child Protection
● UNICEF started preparations this week for supporting a rapid identification and registration for children affected by Ebola in all districts (except Koinadugu) starting from Monday 25th to Wednesday 27th August. District focal FTR (Family Tracing and Reunification) agencies will be working with the district MSWGCA to register children infected and affected by Ebola working with information from the DHMTs.

Logistics
● UNICEF/WFP finalized a review of the status of ambulances in the districts in order to identify possible vehicles that might be repaired/rebuilt and used for the Ebola response.

● UNICEF supported distribution of medical supplies donated by Government of China to seven districts.

● UNICEF has participated in the development of an updated consolidated medical supply list which needs to be procured for the Ebola response (funding pending).

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3 Given the risks entailed (considering the Ebola context) by physical contact with febrile patients, the CHTWG reviewed the required adjustments in treatment protocols and methodologies. A consensus was reached regarding a “no touch” presumptive treatment protocol. The adjusted protocol suggests that CHWs will be trained to diagnose cases only on a history of fever for malaria (presumptive treatment of malaria), fast breathing with known cutoffs using respiratory timers for pneumonia and history of frequent stools for diarrhea. The use of MUAC tapes for screening of malnutrition and examination for edema will be discontinued. Children who are visibly malnourished will be referred to the PHUs for further assessment.
• Daily monitoring by District Logistical Officers of stock levels of Ebola supplies at District Medical stores/Facilities continued.

WASH
• UNICEF has distributed 200 handwashing facilities in Primary Health Units in Kenema and Moyamba.

Challenges
• Inadequate financial and human resources (including technical and materials) is a major constraint to the fight against Ebola.
• Continued denial and myths surrounding Ebola seriously affect prevention and mitigation measures.
• Continued cases of affected people escaping from treatment centers. Some infected people, including medical personnel, are still disappearing with their families, leading to fear and tension in the communities and great uncertainty in the control of the disease.
• Refusal by health workers to work in isolation wards and Ebola treatment hospital.

Human Resources and Surge Capacity
• Three additional international emergency experts are expected to join the team in the next two weeks. There is a continued need for additional capacity in the CO for experts in Child Protection in Emergencies, WASH Hygiene/Sanitation/CLTS Specialist and Logistics Coordinators.

Funding
• Within the broader framework of the National Accelerated Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak Response Plan, UNICEF Sierra Leone Country Office (SLCO) has identified a number of key priority thematic areas: Coordination, logistics, surveillance, Social Mobilization/public information, and child protection which it continues to support through financial and technical support as well as through provision of supplies.
• The current total estimated funding requirements for UNICEF are US$ 3,499,706 to offer comprehensive support to the five pillars: (i) Coordination, (ii) Supplies and Logistics, (iii) Social Mobilization, (iv) Surveillance and Contact Tracing; (V) Child/Social Protection. Since the beginning of the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, UNICEF has received a total amount of US$ 899,772 which includes; US$ 200,000 (OFDA), US$ 131,248 (CERF), and US$ 243,524 (UNICEF Global - Thematic Humanitarian Response - WCARO), US$ 300,000 (US Fund for UNICEF), and US$25,000 (Dawnus). The current funding gap is US$ 2,599,934. Keeping in view the fast spread of Ebola additional interventions/support are required, hence the funding requirements are being revisited and will go up.
• On Monday 18 August the United Nations Country Team in Sierra Leone launched an UN Emergency Appeal to Combat Ebola in Sierra Leone. The requested amount is US$ 18,130,000 million.
### Broader impact

- Reports from the field indicate that women and children are not accessing basic health services and there is an increase in non-Ebola related child morbidity and mortality. A systematic assessment is urgently needed to get a full understanding of the overall impact of the outbreak on access to basic social services and overall economy.

- Advocacy has to be done to convince Government and partners to rethink priorities; review allocation of funds; improve disbursement; and increase monitoring to address the immediate needs due to Ebola but also reconsider how social protection, school grants, health care, social welfare and Local Councils will be supported to deal with the aftermath of Ebola and its impact on households and children.

- The new WB/UNICEF *Social Safety Net Programme* will have to be reviewed and expanded to address the effect of Ebola. This programme was initially going to cover only about 12,000 out of the 882,650 extremely poor households, none of them in the Kailahun and Kenema, the two districts hardest-hit by Ebola.

### Media and communication

- UNICEF continues to attend to the requests for interviews by various international media including Bloomberg, The Guardian, Nieuwsblad van het Noorden and Leeuwarder Courant.

- UNICEF facilitated two Guardian journalists’ trips to Kailahun who gathered stories on UNICEF Social Mobilization activities; children orphaned by Ebola; effects of Ebola on maternal and child health. Interviews with the Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs and Director of Children’s Affairs were also facilitated.

- UNICEF commissioned a professional photographer to take several photos of its activities on Ebola in the field and produce photo essays.

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