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 **1077** (142 new cases since last week). The number of confirmed deaths is **387** with a Case Fatality Rate (CFR) based on confirmed cases of **35.9%** (31 August 2014).
- Of the Ebola confirmed cases around 22% are children (0-17 years).
- Sixty four (64) patients are currently admitted at the Kenema solution Unit with cumulative discharges of 244 (survivors).
- The total number of contacts currently being followed is 3188: Kailahun (236), Kenema (517), Kono (0), Kambia (12), Bombali (382), Tonkolili (347), Port Loko (804), Pujehun (204), Bo (283), Moyamba (87), Bonthe (6), Western Area Urban (196) and Western Area rural (114). A cumulative of 3406 have completed 21 days and are dropped off from follow-up.

**Funding requirements (Summary)**

- The current total requirements for UNICEF are US$12,446,731 to offer comprehensive support to the six pillars: Coordination; Social Mobilization; Surveillance and Contact tracing; Supplies and Logistics; Child Protection; and Case Management. This also includes WASH, Nutrition, and Education.

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

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

- After the visit of **Senior UN System Coordinator for Ebola Virus Disease**, David Nabarro last week the response to Ebola is being further reviewed and scaled up by the Government as well as UN Agencies.
- This week **UNICEF has declared Level 3 emergency in Ebola affected countries** including Sierra Leone which will result into the scaling up of UNICEF response in Sierra Leone.
- 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.
• 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 four newly established task force committees of Social Mobilization Pillar are now operational to further reinforce the response in the areas of: 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. UNICEF continue co-chairing the District Ebola Operations Centre in five of the districts. Additional international experts who are being recruited will start joining the Sierra Leone Country Office team starting this weekend. This will enhance the country office team capacity to scale up the response to this Ebola emergency.

UNICEF SLCO Ebola response

Social Mobilization¹

• A week long district level Training of Trainers (TOTs) in all 14 health districts completed today. Each district trained a minimum of 50 participants (Western Area Urban trained 100), including: Paramount Chiefs, Counselors, Traditional Healers, and NGO partners. The training was a collaboration between MoHS/UNICEF/FAO. IEC materials were distributed to each chiefdom for further dissemination.

• UNICEF donated 80 off-road motorbikes to the Ministry of Health and Sanitation for contact tracing and Social Mobilization activities. The motorbikes will allow surveillance teams with rapid identification and monitoring of persons who may have been in contact with Ebola infected persons. Social Mobilizers will use them to be more effective in reaching remote communities to raise awareness and educate people on preventing the disease from further spreading.

• UNICEF & Government are preparing for a nationwide flagship house to house campaign that will enhance interpersonal communication and engagement of communities in fight against Ebola. Each house to be visited will be provided with a bar of soap to promote hand washing and a sticker with Ebola messages will be placed on each house visited. Specific objectives of the House to house family sensitization are:
  - To reach 100% of households with information on Ebola
  - To increase community acceptance of Ebola affected persons especially children
  - To promote hand washing with soap at household level
  - To rebuild public confidence and trust in the health system
  - To install neighborhood watch structures at community level

• The Social Mobilization pillar is currently reviewing and updating a Social Mobilization Strategy on Ebola and an Action Plan to further scale-up Social Mobilization efforts.

¹The Social Mobilization meets daily at UNICEF. It is co-chaired by the Health Education Department of the Ministry of Health & Sanitation and UNICEF.
• 25 representatives of the *Abacha Street Market Women’s Organization* were trained as trainers on Ebola. The women will in turn train others to conduct community sensitization in their markets using the stall-to-stall approach.

• This week we witnessed an avalanche of requests from many stakeholders (including parliamentarians & journalists) requesting for UNICEF/ MoHS film on Ebola and IEC materials as they want to join hands on community sensitization against Ebola.

• Data collection for *KAP study* was completed this week. The report is expected to be ready by end of next week.

• Maps (District/Chiefdom level) indicating activities by Social Mobilization partners as part of Ebola response ‘*Who is doing What, Where* *(3W)* have been prepared to further improve coordination and prioritization of activities.

**Surveillance/Contact tracing:**

• UNICEF participated in a *Rapid Independent Monitoring of key functions for the Ebola Response* in two districts - Bo and Pujehun. Despite increased awareness and significant progress in most pillars of the response, the following key challenges were noted:
  - Holding Centres are not always available where needed, and even when available there are challenges in terms of motivation and willingness of staff to work in those facilities (long waiting time for results, overcrowding of facilities and inadequate provision of drinking water for patient and staff)
  - Incentives for personnel are not regular or uniformly disbursed as not all contact tracers were on the Closed-User-Groups/received airtime and weekly financial incentives were irregular.
  - There is an acceptance of quarantining by communities and more needs to be done around supplies of nonfood items like indoor games, firewood for cooking and water.

**Child Protection**

• A rapid identification and registration of children affected by Ebola has been finalized in six out of 14 districts. Findings reveal that **365 children under 18 years have been directly affected**: 192 boys and 173 girls. Affected children include those who are orphaned, separated from primary caregivers, or unaccompanied. In many instances they are quarantined as they do not display EVD symptoms but have lost relatives or parents to EVD. UNICEF has supported District focal FTR (*Family Tracing and Reunification*) agencies (World Vision, St George’s foundation, Christian Brothers, Goal, Save the Children, Family Health Movement, Plan International, Defense for Children International, Don Bosco, Ben Hirsch, and Child Fund) through the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children’s Affairs (MSWGCA) to conduct the assessment.

• UNICEF donated 6 off-road motorbikes to MSWGCA and will be used by district teams providing psychosocial support to children and the families who are severely affected by the outbreak.

• Draft operating procedures were also developed for social welfare service providers to respond to children affected and those manifesting symptoms of EVD.

**Logistics**

• UNICEF/WFP finalized assessment of non-functional *ambulances* in the districts and agreed to start repairs of vehicles with minor mechanical problems. Pending availability of spare parts other vehicles will be fixed.
UNICEF continued providing *Logistics support on distribution of medical supplies* donated by various donors to three districts and four Government Hospitals for Ebola emergency.

UNICEF/Central Medical Stores developed an updated consolidated medical supply list for next 6 months including Nutrition and WASH supplies which needs to be procured for the Ebola response.

Daily monitoring by District Logistical Officers of *stock levels of Ebola supplies* at District Medical stores/Facilities continued.

**WASH**

- The cascading of the UNICEF Ebola mobilization and sensitization training by all 37 WASH implementing partners to their field staff has now been completed.
- Subsequent sensitization of 1,300 CLTS champions and WASH committee members in all project communities in 8 districts on Ebola ongoing.
- UNICEF WASH implementing partners are now participating in district and chiefdom Ebola task forces.
- UNICEF distributed hand washing facilities to 97 PHUs in Bombali district, 93 PHUs in Moyamba, and 117 PHUs in Kenema.

**Education**

- A draft contingency plan for *Education in Emergencies* (EiE) has been developed and shared with UNICEF WCARO and with the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MEST).
- Meanwhile, MEST has set up a Task Force, comprising eight members (all from within MEST), to lead the EiE initiative; it is expected that the Task Force will work with other education stakeholders to finalize and implement the response plan.
- UNICEF SLCO has developed a draft programme strategy that emphasizes on facilitating learning continuity for about 1.5 million Primary and Junior Secondary School pupils across the country.

**Challenges**

- The denial and myths surrounding Ebola are still seriously affecting prevention and mitigation measures.
- Continued refusal by health workers to work in isolation wards and Ebola treatment hospitals.
- Ebola referring (holding-centers) not ready for use in several districts.
- Slow payment of incentives for Government staff involved in the Ebola response.
- 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.

**Human Resources and Surge Capacity**

- Five additional international emergency experts are expected to join the team next weeks - Social mobilization (2), Technology expert (1), Coordinator (1), Health & Emergency expert (1). There is a continued need for additional capacity in the UNICEF Country Office for experts in Child Protection in Emergencies, WASH Specialist and Logistics Coordinators.

**Funding**

- The current total estimated funding requirements for UNICEF have now increased to US$ 12,446,731 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 including WASH, Education, and Nutrition. Since the beginning of the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, UNICEF has received a total amount of US$1,050,120 which includes; US$ 200,000 (OFDA), US$ 131,248 (CERF), and US$ 243,524 (UNICEF Global - Thematic Humanitarian Response - WCARO), US$ 300,000 (US Fund for UNICEF), US$25,000 (Dawnus), US$50,348 (SLFA), US$ 100,000 (Government of Japan). The current funding gap is US$ 11,396,611.

- On 18 August the United Nations Country Team in Sierra Leone launched an initial UN Emergency Appeal to Combat Ebola in Sierra Leone. The requested amount is US$ 18,130,000 million.

**Broader impact**

- There are continued reports from the field that the women and children are not accessing basic health services even for non-Ebola cases which may result into increased 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 hard-hit by Ebola.

**Media and communication**

- UNICEF continues to respond to requests for interviews by international media and these include: Bloomberg and Japanese magazine, *Friday*
- Photos of our Social Mobilization activities in Kailahun were shared with the RO, HQ and international media
- UNICEF/MOHS film on misconceptions on Ebola continues to be broadcast on the national television (SLBC) public screening platforms in Freetown

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