

**UNICEF-Sierra Leone**  
**Ebola Virus Disease**  
**Weekly update of 3rd 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.*

### Summary

- The cumulative number of Laboratory confirmed cases are **540**, while confirmed death is **198** with a Case Fatality Rate (CFR) based on confirmed cases of **36.7%**.
- Seventy four (74) patients are currently admitted at the Kenema & Kailahun Isolation Units with cumulative discharges of 143.
- Total number of contacts listed is 1999: Kailahun (847), Kenema (797), Port Loko (52), Kambia (10), Bo (111), Bombali (65), Bonthe (26), Moyamba (9), Tonkolili (10) and Western Area (72). 947 have completed 21 days and are dropped off from follow up.
- On 30 July 2014 the President of Sierra Leone announced a **national health emergency**<sup>i</sup>. A Presidential Task Force on Ebola has been established to lead the response.
- On the same day the Sierra Leone Accelerated **Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak Response Plan** was launched. The budget for six months is estimated to be **\$25,917,130**. The amount pledged or committed by partners is \$7,658,180 and the current gap is \$18,258,950.
- Coordination of the Ebola response is spearheaded by the **Ebola Operations Centre**. The EOC serves as the Sierra Leone National Central Command and Control Center for Outbreak Response activities and meets every day. UNICEF is co-chair of the **District level Ebola Operations Centres (DEOCs)** in five districts (Bo, Bombali, Kono, Moyamba, Tonkolilli) and is an active member of DEOCs in four other districts. UNICEF also participates actively in the National Ebola Taskforce and its different pillars.
- Intensified Social Mobilization Campaign - The **street-to-street social mobilization campaign** for Western Area/Freetown (WA) – Ten vehicles with mounted PA systems and manned by 3 trained volunteer mobilizers/car – visited all neighborhoods in WA and will be intensified using 50 Okada drivers with volunteer mobilizers (motorcycles).
- A special Prime-Time slot (8.30-9PM) has been secured during which all **40 radio stations** around the country will transmit a programme on Ebola awareness and prevention. This slot can also be used by the EOC to communicate to the general public.
- Based on the findings of a **Rapid Assessment (RA) of the Impact of the Ebola Pandemic on Children** and their communities a Psycho-Social training of Family Tracing and Reunification partners in Ebola response was organized.
- 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 interventions it seeks to support through financial, technical support and through provision of supplies.

- 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). Since the beginning of Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, UNICEF has received a total amount of US\$ 531,248 which includes; US\$200,000 (OFDA), US\$131,248 (CERF), and US\$200,000 (UNICEF Global - Thematic Humanitarian Response - WCARO). The amount received is US\$ 531,248 and the current gap is **US\$ 2,968,458**.

| Country Office | Ebola Response Requirements (US\$) | Funds Received /pledged (US\$) | Funding Gap (US\$) | % funding gap | Comments   |
|----------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|--|
| Sierra Leone   | 3,499,706                          | 531,248                        | 2,968,458          | 85%           | CERF US\$131,24; OFDA US\$200,000; Global - Thematic Humanitarian Response (WCARO) US\$200,000 |

### UNICEF SLCO Ebola response

#### Coordination

- UNICEF participates in the *Ebola Operations Centre* (EOC). The EOC serves as the Sierra Leone National Central Command and Control Center for Ebola Outbreak Response activities. During daily meetings the situation is reviewed and strategic decisions are taken.
- *National Task Force on Ebola* met once during the week with a focus on updating the broader development group, including UN, donors, local and international NGOs.
- UNICEF supports and participates in five *Pillars* that are set up for the fight against Ebola as follows; (i) Coordination, (ii) Logistics, (ii) Social Mobilization, (iv) Child/Social Protection, and (v) Surveillance and Laboratory pillar.
- UNICEF staff have been out-posted starting this week to eight districts around the country most affected/at risk. In five of the districts UNICEF is *co-chair* of the newly established *District Ebola Operations Centre*. Two international experts (C4D and Emergency Coordination) provide support at national level. Additional international experts in process of being recruited.

#### Social Mobilization

- The Social Mobilization pillar met twice during the week. Activities included:
  - Updating Strategic Plan on Social Mobilization to fully align it with the overall plan.
  - New communication material was reviewed, edited and approved by partners (T-shirts for community mobilizers, vehicle bumper stickers etc.).
  - Formation of Inter religious Sub-Committee that will work together to develop key messages on Ebola to be placed in sermons;
  - W3 (who, what, where) mapping for NGOs doing Social mobilization ongoing.
  - The hairdressers/barbers Association will be targeted for training and radio programs.
- An intensive *street-to-street social mobilization campaign for Western Area/Freetown (WA)* started – Ten vehicles with mounted PA systems and manned by 3 trained volunteer mobilizers/car visited all neighborhoods in WA. Each team is provided with megaphones and a variety of IEC/BCC materials (including posters, leaflets and fact sheets).

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- For ensuring access to the hard-to-reach areas in Freetown another campaign by volunteer mobilizers on motorbikes (50) with provision of hand megaphones and placards is starting on August 4<sup>th</sup> 2014. IEC/BCC materials will continue to be distributed to the communities.
- UNICEF has agreed with Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) for a special Prime-Time slot (8.30-9PM) during which all 40 radio stations around the country will transmit a programme on Ebola awareness and prevention. This slot can also be used by the EOC to inform the general public on issues related to the response. The first programme will start on August 4<sup>th</sup> 2014. All newspaper have offered a page daily for the same purpose (up to 100 days if needed).
- The Sierra Leone *National Emergency Call Center* - of Toll Free Number “117” - moved to a bigger space at Connaught Hospital and volunteer members of Concern Women will join the centre to make it operational on a 24/7 basis. The line can be used by concerned citizens as well as DHMTs. Remaining challenges will be addressed the coming week – including by a possible physical move to the EOC.
- The *rumor bank*, established with support from UNICEF will be linked to the “117” hotline. Rumors are collected from the community and the social mobilization pillar develops accurate factual responses and circulates to the media.
- UNICEF continued this week with the development of a *documentary film* for social mobilization against denial/myths surrounding Ebola.
- *IEC materials* on Ebola have been reviewed, updated and additional copies have been printed. Distribution is ongoing. The materials include; 100,000 posters, 75,000 fact sheets, 73,000 key messages, FAQs 5000, and 900 banners.
- Jingles, radio slots in six local languages & songs continue to be developed and aired on national and key community radio stations across the country esp. in the Ebola affected districts.
  - A training of trainers for (NGO staff) workshop on Social Mobilization and community outreach will take place next Tuesday, 5th August 2014. Trainers from FAO’s Agricultural Extension workers programme will be included who have agreed to use their networks around the country to sensitize the population about Ebola.
  - The 70 lecturers from six teacher training colleges who were trained on Ebola prevention at Freetown Teachers College in Freetown last week were provided with assorted IEC/BCC materials and stickers for display and distribution in their institutions. The lecturers are passing the messages to students and colleagues.
  - UNICEF organized a comprehensive introductory training for 30 Journalists in Freetown on Ebola, Psychosocial support and Behavior Change theory.
  - Outreach activities by community mobilizers going door to door in Kailahun and Kenema are continued to be monitored.

**Surveillance/Contact tracing:**

- A Training Guide for community mobilizers has been finalized for use by volunteers who facilitate contact tracing in the communities.
- UNICEF is supporting DHMTs in Kailahun & Kenema with training of 242 Peripheral Health Units staff and 1,245 community workers/volunteers (Kenema) and 210 volunteers (Kailahun). This

should improve understanding and knowledge on Ebola among the affected communities facilitating improved contact tracing.

- For Western Area a UNICEF is assisting the DHMT in developing a Neighborhood Watch (NW) Programme. The NW volunteers are carefully selected and trained community members that are tasked with the following: Act on behalf of their communities as volunteers to prevent Ebola; Facilitate contact tracing by preventing and resolving difficulties including threats, violence, rejections, protests and abusive language, etc.; Report persons/homes that develop signs and symptoms of Ebola; Report individuals that may be evading health workers; Conduct outreach sensitization activities on Ebola within their communities
- UNICEF drafted a plan to roll out contact tracing in four additional affected districts.

#### Logistics

- Supplies including intravenous fluids, gloves, facial masks, disinfectants and goggles were distributed to the affected districts and will continue as required.

#### Child Protection

- A report on a **Rapid Assessment (RA) of the Impact of the Ebola Outbreak on Children and their communities** in the two most affected districts was presented and discussed at the Protection Pillar meeting. The findings indicate that there are at least 87 children who have been abandoned/separated from their families. Fear, distrust, stigma & discrimination have resulted in the collapsing of community cohesion and coping mechanisms.
- The RA also highlights the *economic impact* [Loss of income<sup>ii</sup> → Negative Coping mechanism → Food insecurity]; *Health Impact* [Reduced supply and demand for health services → Increase in non-Ebola related morbidity & mortality]; *Education Impact* [Reduced supply and demand for education → Declining school performance + Absence of safe & protective environment]
- Immediate child protection needs identified are (i) Community sensitization; (ii) Interim care for abandoned children and engagement of community mechanisms for reunification of affected children; (iii) Psycho-social care & support; and (iv) Basic needs/Livelihood support.
- The content of five relief packages of food and non-food items for affected individuals and communities were developed in collaboration with Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs (MSWGCA) and nutrition department of the MoHS. Awaiting final approval by EOC.
- A psycho-social support training of *Family Tracing and Reunification (FTR)* partners was completed for over 30 Child Protection (CP) agencies and MSWGCA staff in Freetown, facilitated by Save the Children and GOAL, with UNICEF Social Mobilization team support (1-2, August14).
- A mapping of CP agencies engaged in Ebola response has started to help identify resource gaps and interventions needs.
- UNICEF identified additional staff to support Kailahun & Kenema districts on Child Protection issues.

#### WASH

- Implementing Partners in WASH from affected and non-affected districts have been trained on Ebola and have started engaging in Social Mobilization activities in their catchment districts.
- A protocol for all Ebola hand washing stations requiring that they have stickers listing educational messages for illiterate population and teaching proper hand washing techniques is being developed.
- Hand washing facilities with Ebola messages are expected to be installed in district hospitals and major markets.

#### Challenges:

- Continued denial and myths surrounding Ebola seriously affect prevention and mitigation measures.
- There have been cases of affected people escaping from treatment centers. Some infected people are disappearing with their families, leading to fear and tension in the communities and great uncertainty in the control of the disease. This was a variable that was not anticipated, given some of these people are medical personnel.
- Inadequate financial resource (including technical and human resources) is a major constraint to the fight against Ebola. This is evidenced in the contact tracing ratios comparing visited contacts to non-visited contacts.

**Way forward:**

- Roll-out ‘street-to-street campaign’ using social mobilizers on motorcycles to all district towns.
- In addition to mass sensitization on Ebola, UNICEF plans to put more effort into targeted Social Mobilization activities in areas where a portion of the population has been reluctant to collaborate with Contact Tracers and Outreach Workers.
- Finalize recruitment of additional International staff in areas of: Coordination, C4D and Child Protection/Psychosocial Support.
- Continue fundraising in order to ensure comprehensive support to the six pillars.
- An anthropologist from Senegal who lead the anthropological study (WHO) will return to Sierra Leone next week to work with the Social Mobilization and Protection pillar to translate the findings of his study in new messages and programmatic interventions.

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<sup>i</sup> Initial measures will be implemented for a period of 60 to 90 days: All epicenters of the disease will be quarantined; The police and the military will give support to health officers and NGOs to do their work unhindered and restrict movements to and from epicenters; Public meetings and gatherings will be restricted with the exception of essential meetings related to Ebola sensitization and education; Active surveillance and house-to-house searches shall be conducted to trace and quarantine Ebola victims and suspects; Parliament is recalled to promote MPs leadership at constituency levels; New protocols for arriving and departing passengers have been instituted at the Lungi International Airport; Cancellation of all foreign trips by ministers and other government officials except absolutely essential engagements.