International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Facts & Figures

Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak / West Africa / 12 March 2015

# General

1. **116 new confirmed cases of Ebola virus disease were reported this past week, compared with 132 the previous week. Both Sierra Leone and Guinea reported 58 new cases. It is the first time since June 2014, that Sierra Leone’s weekly new confirmed cases have not exceeded those of Guinea.** **Liberia has reported no new confirmed cases for 21 days.** 
   * Unsafe burials continue to take place in Guinea and Sierra Leone, with 15 reported in the past week.
   * Vigilance is required in case management, surveillance and contact tracing to get to zero cases and stay there during the 42 day Ebola surveillance period before countries can be declared Ebola-free. Until then, one mismanaged case can cause a resurgence.
   * Given the continued emergence of cases in Guinea and Sierra Leone, there is a need for continued support for response operations. As long as one country has one case, all three countries are at-risk.
2. **Red Cross staff and volunteers continue to respond to new outbreaks of Ebola while also looking ahead to early recovery.** 
   * There is an urgent need to support those who have survived Ebola and those communities and households affected. Recovery programming will aim to restore households back to where they were before the outbreak, as well as making them more resilient to future risks and epidemics.
   * The impact of Ebola on peoples’ lives and livelihoods has been immense and the medium-term impacts on markets, local economies and agriculture and food production, point to future challenges around food and income security. Access to major food markets has been hampered as a result of cross-border movement restrictions and with many farmers abandoning their farms out of panic and fear, leading to fluctuating food prices.
   * More than 800 health care workers have been directly affected by Ebola, hundreds of whom have lost their lives to the deadly virus. Building more resilient community health systems has to be an intrical component of any recovery plan.
3. **IFRC has launched 16 Ebola-related operations, totalling 112 million Swiss francs, aimed at reaching 39 million people. The appeals are currently 86 per cent funded.**
   * The Red Cross adopted a coordinated regional approach, as the three hardest-hit countries have frequent exchanges and porous borders. Carrying out prevention and monitoring activities in all three countries simultaneously is critical to stopping the epidemic.
   * The Red Cross is also working in surrounding countries and in other international hubs in Africa (Kenya, Ethiopia) to prepare and educate communities should the virus spread.
4. **The Red Cross response is based on five pillars. The only way to end the epidemic is to simultaneously educate communities, isolate Ebola patients, trace and monitor anyone who has come into contact with someone infected with Ebola, and provide safe and dignified burials to those killed by the disease.**
   * The bodies of Ebola victims are highly infectious, and funeral preparations and ceremonies are a significant source of infection. Specially trained Red Cross teams have, to date, taken the lead in **providing 15,339 safe and dignified burials.**
   * Volunteer teams have traced and monitored more than **52,000 people** who have been in contact with an Ebola patient, monitoring them for three weeks to ensure any resulting cases are quickly identified, isolated and treated.
   * Red Cross teams are going door-to-door and working with elders and community and religious leaders to educate families about the importance of seeking early treatment, and teaching them about how the virus is spread. Red Cross social mobilization efforts have reached **4.6 million people** **(4,565,937)** with accurate information about the disease.
   * More than **205,000 people** have received psychosocial support from trained Red Cross staff and volunteers, including patients, survivors, and families. Survivors also receive support in reintegrating into their communities.
5. **The strength of the Red Cross is our combination of a community-based approach and a global network.**
   * The Red Cross has volunteers in all the affected communities, making them well placed to combat stigma and rumours with education. However, attacks against teams by communities, particularly in Guinea, hinder response efforts.
   * IFRC has helped to train **more than 10,000 Red Cross volunteers, 4,553 of whom were actively involved this past week,** working directly with communities. Over **370 international** staff have been deployed since March 2014.
   * All Red Cross responders receive specific Ebola training, including proper protection measures. To date, 762 people have been trained in collaboration with MSF and Movement partners.
6. **The best protection against Ebola is prevention.**
   * **There have been** **24,282 suspected, probable and confirmed cases in the three main affected countries** since March 2014**, and 9,976 deaths.**
   * The risk of transmission is low. You must be in direct contact with the bodily fluids of people who have been infected with – or died from – Ebola virus disease, then touch your eyes, nose or mouth, or allow the infection to enter through a break in your skin, such as a cut. Bodily fluids include sweat, stools, vomit, urine, semen, vaginal fluid and blood.
   * People only become contagious once they begin to show symptoms. They are not contagious during the incubation period, which can last 2 - 21 days, unless they show symptoms. Symptoms include fatigue, fever, vomiting, and diarrhoea. Late stages may include haemorrhaging.
   * The disease is **not air-borne**. The virus dies in dry conditions and heat, or in disinfection with soap or chlorine. Early symptoms can appear similar to malaria and other diseases. The Red Cross urges anyone in the region experiencing symptoms to seek immediate treatment. Early treatment increases the chances of survival considerably.

**By country**

**Guinea**

* + Guinea reported 58 confirmed cases of Ebola in the past week, up from 51 the previous week. Six prefectures, most of them in the west, reported new confirmed cases. Forecariah had the highest number of new cases (28). The capital Conakry had 13 new cases.
  + Community engagement continues to be a challenge across the country with response teams being attacked. This week seven prefectures reported at least one security incident, and since July 2014, there has been an average of ten attacks against Red Cross volunteers every month, ranging from verbal to physical assaults. This affects the ability of teams to effectively trace those who may have come into contact with an infected person and therefore hampers opportunities to end the outbreak. Many cases are also only identified after the person has passed away. Not only did these people not receive the care they need, other community members are also put at higher risk of contracting the virus.
  + **726 trained** volunteers with the Red Cross Society of Guinea were involved in the response this past week, tracing and monitoring people who have been in contact with Ebola patients, disinfecting homes, and burying the deceased. They are among the 2,630 Red Cross volunteers who have been trained on Ebola response in Guinea.
  + The French Red Cross 20-bed Ebola treatment centre in Macenta has admitted 170 patients and discharged 99.
  + **There have been 3,285** **probable, suspected and confirmed cases** in Guinea with 2,170 deaths. Red Cross safe and dignified burial teams have conducted **2,887 burials.**
  + Red Cross community outreach teams have reached **1,168,883** individuals through face-to-face education and sensitization campaigns. This includes sharing messages via national radio six times per week; and by radio twice per week.
  + An emergency appeal of **28.5 million Swiss francs** is currently **75 per cent** funded.

**Sierra Leone**

* + Sierra Leone reported 58 new confirmed cases this past week, down from 81 the week before. Bombali, Kambia, Western Rural and Port Loko continue to experience persistent transmission, as does the capital, Freetown (27 this week). Although the majority of cases are in the western part of the country, there are still cases surfacing in the eastern districts of Kenema and Kono.
  + The Red Cross Ebola Treatment Centre (ETC) in Kono district continues to see regular caseloads. It can host 40 patients and has, to date, admitted 196 patients and discharged 116.
  + Activity at the Kenema ETC has slowed, following the opening of the ETC in Kono, and achievements in raising awareness of safe burial practices. For the past few weeks, patient admissions have been in the single digits. The 60-bed Kenema ETC has, to date, admitted 596 patients and discharged 290.
  + **There have been 11,619 suspected, probable and confirmed cases in Sierra Leone with 3,629 deaths.** Red Cross teams continue to bury between 400-500 people per week. (380 this past week).
  + **1,873 trained Red Cross volunteers** have been involved in the response this past week, raising awareness, social mobilization, monitoring and tracing people who have come into contact with Ebola patients, counselling Ebola survivors and relatives, and conducting safe and dignified burials. They are among the 2,269 Red Cross volunteers who have been trained on Ebola in Sierra Leone.
  + The Red Cross has a total of 54 safe and dignified burial teams active nationwide, constituting approximately 45 per cent of all teams across the country. To date, Red Cross teams have buried **8,852 bodies**.
  + The **emergency appeal of 40.4 million Swiss francs** is currently **118 per cent** funded.

**Liberia**

* + For the third consecutive week, Liberia has reported no new confirmed cases. The last patient has been discharged from the treatment centre,and if there are no new confirmed cases for 42 days, Liberia will be officially declared Ebola-free.
  + In the first four days of March, there were 90 suspected cases reported, none of whom tested positive. A total of 102 contacts were being monitored. Clear indications that vigilance is being. maintainedd.
  + There were 12 safe and dignified burial teams operating over the past week. Red Cross teams have buried 3,600 bodies since the outbreak began. The Liberian Red Cross Society is the lead agency in safe and dignified burial activities in Montserrado county. **There have been 9,343 suspected, probable and confirmed cases in Liberia, with 4,162 deaths.**
  + **1,954 trained** volunteers with the Liberian Red Cross Society were involved in the response this past week, raising awareness, monitoring and tracing people who have come into contact with Ebola patients, counselling Ebola survivors and relatives, and conducting safe and dignified burials.
  + The emergency appeal of **24.5 Swiss francs** is currently **89 per cent** funded.