

**Annex 4**

**SIERRA LEONE ACCELERATED  
EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE  
OUTBREAK RESPONSE PLAN**



**GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SANITATION**

**July – December 2014**



## Introduction

On Monday 25 May 2014, the Government of Sierra Leone through the Ministry of Health and Sanitation declared an outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in Sierra Leone following the laboratory confirmation of a suspected case from Kailahun district. The district is located in the eastern region of Sierra Leone sharing borders with Guinea and Liberia. This outbreak appears to be a spillover from the on-going outbreak in Guinea and Liberia since March 2014. As of 20<sup>th</sup> July 2014 a total number of 409 cases have been confirmed positive for EVD and 139 confirmed deaths in seven districts (Kambia, Kailahun, Kenema, Port Loko, Bo, Bonthe and Western Area).

| District     | Confirmed cases | Confirmed deaths |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Kailahun     | 282             | 97               |
| Kenema       | 111             | 40               |
| Bo           | 7               | 1                |
| Kambia       | 1               | 0                |
| Port Loko    | 4               | 0                |
| Bonthe       | 1               | 0                |
| Western Area | 3               | 1                |

The national authorities have been working with partners to establish and implement the outbreak response measures for EVD. Despite the implementation of these measures the EVD outbreak continues to spread.

## Challenges

Major challenges contributing to the on-going outbreak include:

1. Inadequate understanding within the communities of the EVD as this is the first major outbreak reported in Sierra Leone.
2. Lack of experience among healthcare workers and limited capacities for rapid response.
3. High exposure to Ebola virus in the communities through household care and customary burial procedures. This has resulted in a high level of community deaths leading to panic and anxiety.
4. Denial, mistrust and rejection of proposed public health interventions arising from misinterpretation of the cause of the new disease.
5. Fear of the disease by frontline health workers leading to either suboptimal care for patients or substandard implementation of protective measures.
6. Close community ties and movement within and across borders has led to difficulties in tracing and following up of contacts for the three countries.
7. The magnitude and the geographical extent of the EVD outbreak in Sierra Leone require significant and robust response capacities and structures. This outbreak poses serious challenges in terms of human capacity, financial, operational and logistics requirements and threatens national and international health.

The WHO Regional Office for Africa convened a two-day emergency ministerial meeting on EVD outbreak in Accra, Ghana: from 2nd to 3rd July 2014. The main goal of the meeting was to bring together Ministers of Health and key stakeholders to obtain

consensus on the best way of interrupting the on-going Ebola Virus transmission in West Africa.

The outcome of the above Ministerial meeting is a strategy which reflects the discussions, actions identified and best practices from previous Ebola virus outbreaks in Uganda, and Democratic Republic of Congo.

## Goals of the strategy

The goals of the strategy are to:

1. Stop transmission of Ebola virus in the affected countries through scaling up effective, evidence-based outbreak control measures;
2. Prevent the spread of EVD to the neighboring at-risk countries through strengthening epidemic preparedness and response measures.

## Pillars of the strategy

Based on the current epidemiological profile of the EVD outbreak, the technical and operational knowledge available, this strategy will address three major pillars:

1. Immediate outbreak response interventions
2. Enhance coordination and collaboration
3. Scaling-up of human and financial resources mobilization

The strategies and interventions described under the three pillars have been divided into two parts:

- a. the first part addresses immediate actions to be implemented in the EVD affected countries (Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone) to contain the epidemic;
- b. the second part highlights urgent interventions needed in the neighboring at-risk countries to ensure that adequate epidemic preparedness measures are undertaken to prevent the occurrence of an outbreak.

## Development of the national operational plan in Sierra Leone

A two day workshop was conducted with participation of a wide spectrum of stakeholders in the health sector to develop the prioritized national accelerated EVD operational plan. The stakeholders included district medical officers from all the 13 districts, Minister and Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation, members of the national Ebola disease outbreak taskforce, representatives from other line ministries, the district task force teams, the hospitals serving as observation/treatment centers and all partners involved in the outbreak response including civil society, UN and health development.

The workshop was conducted within the framework of the national taskforce and its technical subcommittees which correspond to the following thematic areas:

1. Coordination/finance/logistics.
2. Epidemiology/surveillance and laboratory.
3. Case management, infection control and psychosocial support.
4. Social Mobilization/public information.

Two participants were divided into 2 groups based on the blueprint from the inter-ministerial meeting in Accra:

1. Districts currently affected and
2. Districts currently non-affected.

The groups identified priority activities and the resources required for the implementation of these activities. The activities were costed with the support of the budget expert from WHO. The draft plan was presented at a stakeholders meeting and the plan was revised taking into consideration the inputs from the stakeholders meeting. This plan covers a period of six months from July to December 2014.

### **The goal of the operational plan**

The goal of the operational plan is to reduce morbidity and mortality due to Ebola through prompt identification, notification and effective management of cases, effective social mobilization and coordination of the epidemic response activities. The plan takes into consideration activities to be implemented at district level to break the chains of transmission of the virus to new communities in Sierra Leone and neighboring countries. The detailed district implementation plans are in annexes

### **Specific objectives of the operational plan**

1. To ensure effective coordination of the outbreak response activities at all levels
2. To strengthen early detection, reporting and referral of suspected cases through active surveillance and outbreak investigation
3. To institute prompt and effective case management of all suspected cases
4. To create public awareness about EVD, the risk factors for its transmission, its prevention and control among the people

The proposed activities in the various thematic areas are detailed in the annexes.

1. Consolidated for all the districts and the national requirements from the central level
2. Disaggregated by areas of work
3. Disaggregated by district and
4. Gap analysis taking into account the pledges by government and partners

## Budget

The cost of the budget of the national operational plan for a period of six months is estimated to be \$25,817,130. The amount pledged or committed by partners is \$7,658,180, by the Government of Sierra Leone is \$ 10,00,000 and the current gap is \$ 8,258,949.

| <b>Thematic area</b>  | <b>Amount (USD)</b> | <b>Pledged (USD)</b> | <b>Gap (USD)</b> |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| <b>Coordination, finance and logistics</b>  | 6,253,943           | 2,071,087            | 4,182,856        |
| <b>Epidemiology and laboratory</b>  | 5,597,040           | 1,923,875            | 3,673,165        |
| <b>Case management and infection prevention and control; Psychosocial support</b> | 8,490,611           | 3,061,557            | 5,429,054        |
| <b>Social mobilization/ Public Information</b>                                    | 5,575,536           | 601,661              | 4,973,874        |
| <b>Government Pledge</b>  |                     | 10,000,000           |                  |
| <b>Total (USD)</b>  | <b>25,817,130</b>   | <b>17,658,180</b>    | <b>8,258,949</b> |