

[العربية](#)[中文](#)[English](#)[Français](#)[Русский](#)[Español](#)[About](#)[us](#)[Health](#)[topics](#)[News](#)[Countries](#)[Emergencies](#)[Home](#) / [News](#) / [Detail](#)

# WHO and partners working with national health authorities to contain new Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

11 May 2018 | News Release | Geneva/Brazzaville/Kinshasa



The World Health Organization (WHO) and a broad range of partners are in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) working with the Government to contain an outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) in Bikoro health zone, Equateur Province. The outbreak was declared three days ago. WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus will travel to the DRC over the week-end to take stock of the situation and direct the continuing response in support of the national health authorities.

As of 11 May, 34 Ebola cases have been reported in the area in the past five weeks, including 2 confirmed, 18 probable (deceased) and 14 suspected cases. Five samples were collected from 5 patients and two have been confirmed by the laboratory. Bikoro health zone is 250 km from Mbandaka, capital of Equateur Province in an area of the country that is that is very hard to reach.

“WHO staff were in the team that first identified the outbreak. I myself am on my way to the DRC to assess the needs first-hand,” said Dr Tedros. “I’m in contact in the Minister of health and have

assured him that we're ready to do all that's needed to stop the spread of Ebola quickly. We are working with our partners to send more staff, equipment and supplies to the area."

A multidisciplinary team including WHO experts, along with staff from the Provincial Division of Health and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), arrived in Bikoro on 10 May. This first group of responders is now gathering more data to understand the extent and drivers of the epidemic. The team will also set up an active case search and contact tracing, establish Ebola treatment units to care for patients, set up mobile labs, and engage the community on safe practices. WHO will also work with national authorities in planning further public health measures such as vaccination campaigns.

"WHO is supporting the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in coordinating this response; this is the country's ninth Ebola outbreak and there is considerable expertise in-country," said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa. "However, any country facing such a threat may require international assistance. WHO and its partners including MSF, World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Congolese Red Cross, UNOCHA and MONUSCO, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US-CDC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), are all stepping up their support."

The response plan to the outbreak includes surveillance, case investigation, and contact tracing; community engagement and social mobilization; case management and infection prevention and control; safe and dignified burials; research response including the use of ring vaccination and antivirals; and coordination and operations support.

"It is too early to judge the extent of this outbreak," said Dr Peter Salama, WHO Deputy Director-General for Emergency Preparedness and Response. "However, early signs including the infection of 3 health workers, the geographical extent of the outbreak, the proximity to transport routes and population centres, and the number of suspected cases indicate that stopping this outbreak will be a serious challenge. This will be tough and it will be costly. We need to be prepared for all scenarios."

In its latest Disease Outbreak News, WHO lists the risks to surrounding countries as moderate. WHO has however, already alerted those countries and is working with them on border surveillance and preparedness for potential outbreaks. WHO does not at this time advise any restrictions on travel and trade to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

ENDS

**Note to editors:**

**Current operations:**

The first multidisciplinary team comprised of experts from WHO, Médecins Sans Frontières and the Provincial Division of Health arrived in Bikoro on 9 May to strengthen coordination and investigations. More deployments of epidemiologists, logisticians, clinicians, infection prevention and control experts, risk communications experts and vaccination support teams should arrive in Bikoro on Saturday.

WHO is working with Government and key partners -- including Médecins Sans Frontières,

World Food Programme, the International Federation of the Red Cross, UNICEF and US-CDC -- to strengthen coordination of the EVD response at the national level and in the affected Bikoro health zone and is calling on its development partners to ensure a strong, comprehensive and rapid response to support the DRC Government to prevent and control the spreading of the disease.

Two mobile labs are planned to be deployed on 12 May.

Current bed capacity includes 15 beds in Bikoro. MSF currently establishing isolation on site and has also deployed four mobile isolation units (5 beds each)

WHO is coordinating a major flight plan with UNHAS/WFP to deploy experts, equipment and materials to the field and is working closely with other health partners to prevent further geographical spread, improve surveillance data and reduce deaths by improving treatment of Ebola patients in Bikoro and the epicentre of Ikoko-Impenge. The cost of the air bridge for 3 months is estimated at USD 2,4 million.

A logistician is expected to arrive in Bikoro this afternoon/evening to arrange accommodation/staff logistics. Additional information on access, transportation, and logistics requirements will be communicated tomorrow.

WHO is in the process of sending (Saturday) medical supplies to Bikoro to support the Ebola response, including:

- Personal Protective Equipment kits (PPE)
- Interagency Emergency Health Kit (IEHK)
- boxes for transportation
- body bags

WHO is helping with surveillance of cases by setting up community-based data collection to complement information provided by health facilities.

WHO has alerted neighbouring countries and is supporting the Central African Republic and Republic of Congo to strengthen surveillance in case of cross-border spread of the outbreak.

## Funding requirements

WHO released US\$ 1 million from its Contingency Fund for Emergencies to kick start the rapid response. Based on current assessment and response needs the estimated budget for the international response is US\$ 18 million for a 3-month operation. Wellcome Trust and UK Department for International Development (DFID) announced a commitment of up to £3 million to support a rapid response to the outbreak.

## Want to read more?

---

## Media Contacts

---

Tarik Jasarevic

Spokesperson / Media Relations

**Subscribe to newsletter →**

**Telephone:** [0041227915099](tel:0041227915099)

**Mobile:** [0041793676214](tel:0041793676214)

**Email:** [jasarevict@who.int](mailto:jasarevict@who.int)

**Sakuya Oka**

**Telephone:** [0022567419714](tel:0022567419714)

**Email:** [okas@who.int](mailto:okas@who.int)

**Mr Eugene Kabambi**

Communication Officer

**Telephone:** [00243817151697](tel:00243817151697)

**Email:** [Kabambie@who.int](mailto:Kabambie@who.int)

## News

---

**New Ebola outbreak declared in Democratic Republic of the Congo**

**8 May 2018**

**WHO Regional Director for Africa, Dr Matshidiso Moeti travels to Kinshasa to discuss Ebola outbreak response**

**13 May 2017**

**Statement on Ebola in the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

**12 May 2017**

## Fact sheets

---

### **Ebola virus disease**

**12 February 2018**

## Feature stories

---

### **Ebola vaccines for Guinea and the world: photos**

**16 May 2017**

### **Leaders gather in Guinea to celebrate Ebola vaccine successes**

**4 May 2017**

### **Ebola Then and Now - Daniel Bausch**

**12 January 2016**

## About us

[Overview](#)

[Director-General](#)

[World Health Assembly](#)

[Executive Board](#)

## Quick links

[Contact us](#)

[Frequently asked questions](#)

[Employment](#)

[Feedback](#)

## Regions

[Africa](#)

[Americas](#)

[South-East Asia](#)

[Europe](#)

© 2018 WHO

[Member states](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Eastern Mediterranean](#)

[Constitution and ethics](#)

[Email scams](#)

[Western Pacific](#)

[Site map \(Programmes\)](#)