Emergencies preparedness, response

Ebola virus disease – Democratic Republic of the Congo

Disease outbreak news: Update
28 May 2020

From 20 to 26 May 2020, no new cases of Ebola virus disease (EVD) have been reported from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (Figure 1).

Since the resurgence of the outbreak on 10 April 2020, seven confirmed cases have been reported from Kasanga, Malepe and Kanzulinzuli Health Areas in Beni Health Zone. Investigations into the origin of the last cluster of cases in Beni Health Zone are ongoing. To date, no definitive source of infection has been identified.

From 20 to 26 May 2020, an average of 2715 alerts were reported per day, of which 2709 (over 99%) were investigated within 24 hours. Of these, an average of 404 alerts were validated as suspected cases each day, requiring specialized care and laboratory testing to rule-out EVD. In the past two weeks, there was a slight decrease in overall and validated alerts in Beni Health Zone. Timely testing of suspected cases continues to be provided from eight laboratories. From 18 to 24 May 2020, 3065 samples were tested including 2313 blood samples from alive, suspected cases; 331 swabs from community deaths; and 421 samples from re-tested patients. Overall, laboratory activities increased by 7% compared to the previous week.

On 22 May, two historic probable cases reported in Mabalako and Lubero Health Zones were validated from people who had onset of symptoms in March 2019 and July 2019. As of 26 May 2020, a total of 3463 EVD cases, including 3317 confirmed and 146 probable cases have been reported. Of these, 2280 people died (overall case fatality ratio 66%) and 1171 survived. Of the total confirmed and probable cases, 57% \((n=1970)\) were female, 29% \((n=1002)\) were children aged less than 18 years, and 5% \((n=171)\) were health care workers.

On 14 May 2020, the Ministry of Health of the Democratic Republic of the Congo began the 42-day countdown to the declaration of the end of the EVD outbreak. Given the long duration and large magnitude of this outbreak and the fact that the virus is present in animal reservoirs in the region, there is a risk of re-emergence of the virus in the period leading...
up to, and beyond, the declaration of the end of the outbreak. It is crucial to maintain a strong and robust surveillance system in order to detect, isolate, test and treat new suspected cases as early as possible and to break possible chains of transmission. Continued coordination and communication among partners, authorities and affected communities along with EVD survivor advocacy remain essential in this outbreak response.

Figure 1: Confirmed and probable Ebola virus disease cases by week of illness onset by health zone. Data as of 26 May 2020*

*Excludes n=68/3463 cases for whom onset dates not reported. Data in recent weeks are subject to delays in case confirmation and reporting, as well as ongoing data cleaning. ‘Non-active zones’ indicate health zones that have not reported new cases in the last 42 days.

Table 1: Confirmed and probable Ebola virus disease cases, and number of health areas affected, by health zone, North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, data as of 26 May 2020**
**Total cases and areas affected during the last 21 days are based on the initial date of case alert and may differ from date of confirmation and daily reporting by the Ministry of Health.**

**Public health response**

For further information about public health response actions by the Ministry of Health, WHO, and partners, please refer to the latest situation reports published by the WHO Regional Office for Africa:

**Ebola situation reports: Democratic Republic of the Congo**

**WHO risk assessment**

On 14 April 2020, WHO revised the risk assessment for this event from High to Moderate at the national and regional levels, while the risk level remained Low at the global level. The risk assessment will be continuously reassessed in the coming days based on available and shared information.

For further information, please see the Statement on the meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee for Ebola virus disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 14 April 2020

**WHO advice**

WHO advises against any restriction of travel to, and trade with, the Democratic Republic of the Congo based on the currently available information regarding this EVD outbreak. Any requirements for certificates of Ebola vaccination are not a reasonable basis for restricting
movement across borders or the issuance of visas for travellers to/from the affected countries. WHO continues to closely monitor and, if necessary, verify travel and trade measures in relation to this event. Currently, no country has implemented travel measures that significantly interfere with international traffic to and from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in relation to this EVD outbreak. Travellers should seek medical advice before travel and should practise good hygiene. Further information is available in the WHO recommendations for international traffic related to the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

For more information, please see:

- WHO resources and information on Ebola virus disease
- WHO resources and information on Ebola survivors
- WHO recommended criteria for declaring the end of the Ebola virus disease outbreak
- Ebola response funding

Related links

- Ebola situation reports: Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Previous outbreaks of Ebola virus disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
- More about Ebola virus disease
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