

AFRICA CDC RESPONSE TO EBOLA IN DR CONGO

Emergency Response Digest

An official publication of the Africa CDC Issue 1, Volume 1 June 2019



Since August 2018, African Union – through Africa CDC – has been supporting the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in responding to its tenth Ebola outbreak.

CURRENT SITUATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF CASES: 2325



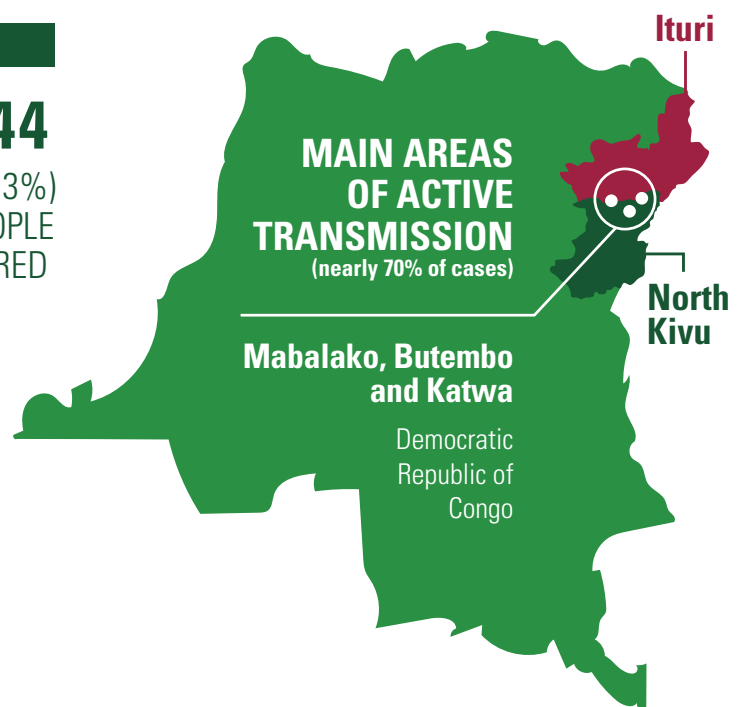
CASE FATALITY RATIO **67.2%**

126
HEALTH WORKERS
INFECTED



with 40 deaths, accounting for 5% of total cases reported

AFFECTED AREAS



CURRENT NEEDS



Strengthening security in and around treatment units and for responders.



Mobilizing funds to strengthen and sustain ongoing response efforts.



Reinforcement of infection prevention practices at health care centres and more training for responders.



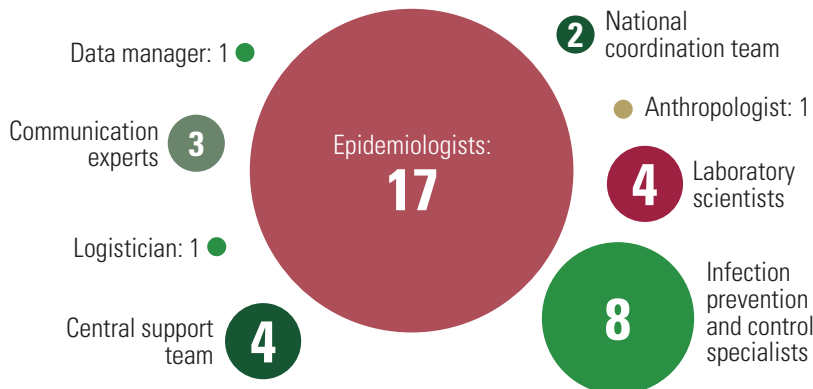
Increased advocacy and more community dialogue to dispel rumours and misconceptions.



Provision of additional equipment to support diagnosis and testing.

AFRICA CDC RESPONSE SUPPORT

41 Public Health Experts Deployed



Training



More than 800 local health care workers and community volunteers trained in disease surveillance, laboratory diagnosis, risk communication and infection prevention and control.

Laboratory Services



- ▶ Supplied six GeneXpert machines and more than 3000 cartridges.
- ▶ Supporting laboratory diagnostic services in 6 health zones, of which 4 are fully run by Africa CDC teams.

Contact Tracing and Surveillance



- ▶ Africa CDC making significant contributions to surveillance and investigation of alerts. More than 127,000 people have been registered as contacts in all the health zones.
- ▶ In the villages, 17 epidemiologists and 8 infection prevention experts involved in finding and following up cases and contacts.
- ▶ Supporting close monitoring of field operations and field missions.

Infection Prevention and Control



- ▶ Trained 469 health care workers, traditional healers and teachers in infection prevention and control.
- ▶ Supplied personal protection equipment to 13 health centres and hospital.
- ▶ In collaboration with other partners, evaluated the state of hygiene in several health centres and provided handwashing facilities in schools and churches.
- ▶ Produced a video on handwashing that was broadcast on national television and other national media.

Cross-border Surveillance



- ▶ As of 29 June 2019, more than 70 million people screened at border crossings in collaboration with other partners.
- ▶ Trained 350 individuals in point of entry screening in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health.
- ▶ A cumulative total of 770 alerts notified, 320 of which were validated and 9 confirmed to be Ebola virus disease.

Vaccination



- ▶ Africa CDC mobilizing contacts for vaccination. Nearly 136,000 contacts vaccinated.



Key Challenges

- ▶ Insecurity and violence, including attacks on volunteers, service providers and treatment centres:
 - » In February and March 2019, three Ebola treatment units in Butembo and Katwa were burnt and the facilities and equipment looted. One security officer was reported killed and partners chased out.
 - » In April, two Africa CDC health care workers were attacked, sustained broken bones and were medically evacuated to Kinshasa.
 - » A point of entry surveillance unit in Ituri was burnt in June 2019.
 - » As a result of these incidents, partners are reducing the number of responders and this is compromising achievements so far. For example, contact tracing and follow-up of contacts has reduced to less than 60% from more than 80%.
- ▶ Reluctant contacts who refuse decontamination, hygiene measures, vaccination and contact follow-up.
- ▶ Constant mobility of populations in and out of the affected areas (and even between the DRC and neighbouring countries), which is now being addressed through partnerships to strengthen community-based and cross-border surveillance.
- ▶ Increasing number of health care workers getting infected, thus increasing the risk of health facility-based exposure.

MAJOR RISK

DRC shares borders with 9 countries with a total population of over 290 million (including DRC), the spread of the virus to any of the neighbouring countries would have huge social, economic and political consequences.