

GLOBAL CONTEXT

On August 1st, 2018, an Ebola outbreak was declared in Eastern DR Congo. As of 21st August, there were 27 probable and 76 confirmed cases, with seven suspected cases currently under investigation. There have been 55 deaths (according to the Ministry of Health Situation Report, 22nd August). Under the leadership of the Congolese Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation, Medair and other partners are working to prepare and respond.

WEEKLY UPDATE

From 15th August to 21st August:

- There have been 37 new confirmed cases, and 15 deaths.
- Mabalako health zone remains the place where the majority of cases are emerging.
- The Ituri Province response mechanism was activated on Wednesday, August 15th. The response is organised in the same way as the Beni coordination, with eight working groups.
- Vaccinations have gathered momentum. So far 2,179 people have been vaccinated.

MEDAIR RESPONSE SUMMARY

Medair supports 51 health facilities in Eastern DR Congo, with Health, Nutrition, and WASH related interventions. Medair's first priority is to ensure that suspected Ebola cases can be safely identified, isolated and referred at these health centres, in order to:

- 1) Ensure suspected Ebola patients receive timely care
- 2) Prevent further spread of Ebola Virus Disease
- 3) Enable affected populations to continue to access quality primary health care in a safe environment

Beginning with areas where the risk is most elevated, Medair is ensuring that supported health centres are equipped to triage patients at the entrance to the health centre before isolating suspected Ebola cases in a temporary isolation area, while arranging for referral.

Health centre staff are being trained on how to consistently implement screening, isolation and referral without exposing themselves or other patients to the risk of being infected with Ebola Virus Disease. To support this, they are being equipped with personal protective equipment and receive instruction - derived from the WHO guidelines for responding to Ebola in DR Congo - on how to safely screen and isolate suspected Ebola patients.

In addition to support health centres covered by pre-existing projects, Medair has begun working in five health centres where there is the highest risk of suspected cases emerging. This includes a package of infection prevention and control (IPC) measures, and water, sanitation, and hygiene support both in the health facilities and surrounding communities.

The health centres that Medair supports are included as an annex.



Medair Logistician Jean loads wooden stakes and stands for hand washing points. These are essential components of screening equipment for Ebola Response.

PROGRESS UPDATE: BENI

- Two members of Medair's Global Emergency Response Team and three Goma-based staff members (supporting Logistics and Communications) and three Kirumba-based staff members (support Health and WASH project work) have transferred to Beni. New international and national hires will add to staff capacity for the response.
- Team members have continued to engage in coordination meetings with WHO, Ministry of Health, and other partners, in addition to meetings the overall response focal point, and UNICEF and ECHO response focal points.
- The team are in the process of seeking support for WASH and IPC in key health facilities, schools, and communities. Between top up funding and new opportunities, there are three separate streams that would aid response work in the immediate vicinity of the outbreak.
- Implementation of screening and isolation facilities and training at priority health facilities is underway, with four facilities covered so far.

PROGRESS UPDATE: BUNIA

- Medair attended the response launch meeting on Wednesday August 15th, and is a participating member of key Ebola response commissions.
- All 13 health centres supported from Bunia have now received briefings on Ebola symptoms and prevention, and evaluations of preparedness.
- The model isolation and screening facility built at the Bunia base has been modified based on recommendations from the Provincial Health Department. This will be used to help guide

decision-making and advocacy for furnishing supported health centres with screening and isolation facilities that reflect their level of risk.

- Stock for screening and isolation is being prepared, with plans to begin implementing at the end of this week.

PROGRESS UPDATE: NATIONAL / GLOBAL LEVEL

- An emergency Ebola Response Coordinator has been hired to support the Ebola response. She has arrived in-country, and will travel to Beni on 23rd August.
- Goma logistics have chartered a flight from Nairobi to bring in essential supplies. This should fly on August 25th.
- The Goma team are finalising a project to support WASH Ebola prevention measures in Goma city.
- Medair's HQ-based Marketing & Relationships are creating a landing page for the Ebola response, that will feature the latest updates.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

Following announcement of the outbreak, Medair's planning has focused on ensuring the safety of its staff working in the field, enabling the health centres we support to continue safely providing primary health services.

Medair will support the response at health centres covered under its existing projects by establishing Ebola-specific infection prevention and control protocols and equipping staff to screen patients at supported health centres and to safely isolate and refer suspected Ebola cases. Prioritisation of health centres depends on their proximity to the epicentre of the outbreak. So far, 62 out of 76 confirmed cases have come from Mabalako health zone, Beni Territory. Interventions in Mabalako and surrounding health zones will continue to be the highest priority for Medair and other partners, in the coming week.

In addition to the health facilities Medair supported before the outbreak, five health facilities in the highest risk areas have been added, with evaluations of these health facilities beginning on 15th August. Safe screening and isolation has already been established in the largest of these health facilities.

Medair is participating in the coordination the Ebola response, helping to ensure coverage and avoid duplication of activities. It is liaising closely with partners to ensure that its work achieves its objective of stopping disease spread and complements that of other humanitarian organisations.

CHALLENGES & NEEDS

- **External coordination:** this continues to be challenging. A parallel coordination mechanism was established in Mabalako health zone, overwriting some coordination done in Beni and causing confusion. Commission meetings in Beni start at 1700hrs and continue to be long (often finishing after 1900hrs). Improved meeting management would avoid this, by ensuring that all the information given is succinct and relevant for all participants. There are already some efforts being made in this regard.

- **Internal coordination:** in sorting out various opportunities and potential funding streams, relevant staff have sometimes been unsure what to prioritise, or unable to devote time to proposal writing while simultaneously managing response activities. Consequently, submissions of concept notes and budgets have not been as early as expected.
- **Complementary systems:** while Medair can train and equip health centres to screen and isolate suspected Ebola cases, the effectiveness of this work relies on the specialised Ebola ambulance service being able to collect patients speedily. There have been instances in the past week that have demonstrated that the ambulance service is not responding quickly enough in some locations, and families are taking referral into their own hands, transporting patients unprotected, by motorbike.
- **Supplies:** Specialised equipment is only available locally or from partners sporadically, and in small quantities. It is difficult to procure internationally, as imports subject to the same customs restrictions and processing times, regardless of the outbreak. This is particularly true of personal protective equipment (PPE). The challenge is not specific to Medair: in the past week, a decontamination team from a partner organisation working alongside Medair arrived at the health facility in question without gloves or chlorine. Thankfully, Medair had brought these stocks and were able to share them with the team, enabling them to proceed with their work.
- **Staff:** Staff involved in the response are over-stretched. They need support and breaks, in order to avoid becoming tired or ill. Both are especially dangerous during an Ebola crisis, as tiredness can lead to poor decision-making / teamwork, and illness can lead to being isolated as a suspected Ebola case, trying to access services that aren't being provided at normal levels, or going to health facilities and increasing one's risk of catching Ebola Virus Disease. Happily, two Global Emergency Response Team members have arrived in Beni, two Goma-based staff are now supporting the response in Beni, three staff members from Kirumba have transferred to Beni, and further international and national hires will add to staff capacity for the response.
- **Medair's other projects and work on planning and proposals** continue as normal. Keeping up with the pace of that is difficult when many of the same staff members are heavily implicated in the Ebola response.

Medair is a humanitarian organisation striving to relieve human suffering in some of the world's most remote and devastated places. We bring relief and recovery to people in crisis, regardless of race, creed, or nationality. In Eastern DR Congo, Medair is supporting 51 health centres, with funding from OFDA, ECHO, SDC, the Common Humanitarian Fund and private funders.

Annex I: Health centres supported by Medair's current projects¹

#	Province	Health Zone	Health Area	Trained on case definition & surveillance?	Can screen, isolate & refer?			Funding Partner
1	Ituri	Lita	Katoto	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
2	Ituri	Lita	Bahwere	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
3	Ituri	Lita	Zumbe	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
4	Ituri	Fataki	Jina	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
5	Ituri	Fataki	Bule	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
6	Ituri	Nizi	Iga Barrière	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
7	Ituri	Komande	Luna	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
8	Ituri	Gety	Bukiringi	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
9	Ituri	Gety	Kagaba	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
10	Ituri	Boga	Tchabi	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
11	Ituri	Rethy	Rethy	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
12	Ituri	Rethy	Mola	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
13	Nord Kivu	Oicha	Kainama	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
14	Nord Kivu	Oicha	Mbau	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	OFDA
15	Nord Kivu	Oicha	Masosi	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	OFDA
16	Nord Kivu	Oicha	Kitevya	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
17	Nord Kivu	Beni	Mukulya	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
18	Nord Kivu	Beni	Paida	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	OFDA
19	Nord Kivu	Kalunguta	Butuhe	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
20	Nord Kivu	Kalunguta	Mabuku	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
21	Nord Kivu	Kalunguta	Kalunguta	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
22	Nord Kivu	Kalunguta	Vurondo	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
23	Nord Kivu	Kalunguta	Kivethya	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
24	Nord Kivu	Mutwanga	Lubiraha	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
25	Nord Kivu	Mutwanga	Luolo	Yes	No	No	No	OFDA
26	Nord Kivu	Kayna	Mulinde*	Yes	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC
27	Nord Kivu	Alimbongo	Bingi*	Yes	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC
28	Nord Kivu	Alimbongo	Kalungu	Yes	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC
29	Nord Kivu	Alimbongo	Alimbongo	Yes	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC
30	Nord Kivu	Alimbongo	Bunyatenge	Yes	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC
31	Nord Kivu	Alimbongo	Lunyasenge	Yes	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC
32	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Bukununu*	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
33	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Baraka	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund

¹ High priority health centres are highlighted in orange. Further health facilities will be identified as 'priority' depending on the direction of outbreak spread.

34	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Kagheri	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
35	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Kaghuli	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
36	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Kasima	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
37	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Kasalala*	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
38	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Katolo	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
39	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Kipese*	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
40	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Kisima*	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
41	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Kiviriri	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
42	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Lubero Cité	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
43	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Mubana	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
44	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Vukendo	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
45	Nord Kivu	Lubero	Kisaka	Yes	No	No	No	Pooled Fund
46	Nord Kivu	Kibirizi	Bulindi	Yes	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC
47	Nord Kivu	Kibirizi	Kilambo	Yes	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC

All health facilities are primary health centres, unless indicated with a * (referral centres)

Annex II: New health centres to be supported as part of Ebola response

#	Province	Health Zone	Health Area	Trained on case definition & surveillance?	Can screen, isolate & refer?			Funding Partner
1	Nord Kivu	Oicha	Oicha*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	ECHO-SDC
2	Nord Kivu	Mabalako	Linzo	No	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC
3	Nord Kivu	Beni	Rwangoma	No	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC
4	Nord Kivu	Beni	Sayo	No	No	No	No	ECHO-SDC
5	TBD	TBD	TBD	-	-	-	-	ECHO-SDC