



IOM Sierra Leone Emergency Response

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IOM's community-based social mobilizers are actively engaging flood victims at Atuga and Siaka Stevens Stadiums on signs and symptoms of cholera and diarrhea as well as taking place in registration of victims, provision of NFI's like blankets and mattresses and setting up hand washing stations. The social mobilizers are on the look out for a rise in waterborne illnesses throughout the rainy season.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

- The last 2 Ebola patients under treatment in Sierra Leone were released on Sunday, 27 September meaning Sierra Leone has begun its second countdown to 42-days in the midst of the flood response.
- There were 2 confirmed cases of Ebola virus disease (EVD) reported in the week to 20 September, both of which were in Guinea. Transmission of the virus has been geographically confined in Guinea and Sierra Leone, marking a transition to a third phase of the epidemic. A refined phase -3 response coordinated by the Interagency Collaboration on Ebola will build on existing measures to drive case incidence to zero, and ensure a sustained end to EVD transmission. Enhanced surveillance capacity to rapidly identify a reintroduction or re-emergence of virus from a survivor, improved testing and counselling capacity as part of a comprehensive package to safeguard the welfare of survivors, and the increased use of innovative technologies—from vaccines to rapid diagnostic tests—are central to the phase-3 response framework. No new confirmed cases were reported from Sierra Leone in the week to 20 September. Over 700 contacts have been identified in association with the previous week's case from Bombali. Preliminary findings suggest that transmission most likely occurred as a result of re-emergence of Ebola virus from a survivor.
- The *Ebola ça suffit!* ring vaccination Phase 3 efficacy trial of the rVSV-ZEBOV vaccine has now been extended from Guinea to Sierra Leone. Contacts and contacts of contacts associated with new confirmed cases and who meet the trial's eligibility criteria will therefore be offered the vaccine.

Highlights

- Beginning on 28 September, IOM-WHO-CDC will take part in a joint 9-day mobility mapping pilot exercise with over 30 participants focusing on category land border crossings in Kambia and seaports in Port Loko.
- IOM health screening and social mobilization staff will take part in a WHO psychological first aid training at Siaka Stevens Stadium on 28 September 2015.
- IOM IPC training staff conducted a 2 day training on Infection Prevention and Control for nurses at Atuga Stadium from 25-27 September.
- An IOM Camp Coordination and Camp Management specialist will deliver a 2-day training to key flood response personnel at the Office of National Security on October 1-2 ahead of a possible large scale population relocation for flood affected areas.
- A series of refresher trainings for community health monitors will be held in all 7 chiefdoms in Kambia district from 28 September to 7 October on the correct use of emergency interim care kits.
- IOM's Director General will meet with the President of Sierra Leone at the United Nations General Assembly today in New York.

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IOM meets with President Koroma over government relocation plan

On Friday 25 September 2015, IOM Head of Office Sanusi Savage together with IOM Emergency Coordinator Jon Baker met with His Excellency the President to discuss the government's proposed relocation of flood victims from low lying communities to Six Mile, an area roughly 20km from Freetown.



IOM Head of Office Sanusi Savage is received by HE President Ernest Bai Koroma on 25 September 2015.

The President assured IOM that flood victims and other slum dwellers have consented to be relocated to new and safer settlements after the Minister of Land unveiled a relocation plan on 24 September at the Office of National Security. The Government intends to move displaced people from the Siaka Stevens and Atuga Stadiums which have been acting as temporary displacement sites. Flood victims will be followed by communities from 28 vulnerable, flood-prone areas of Freetown. Kroo Bay community which has seen heavy flooding for 3 consecutive years may be used as a pilot community.

President Koroma made the statement while receiving updates from the Minister of Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs, Alhaji Moijueh Kaikai, on the current situation revolving around the flood response.

Work has started on the Six Mile site to prepare it for the initial move, and it is hoped that it will be ready on 10 October. As such, the response operation in the stadia will continue until at least mid-October. To maintain the timeline of the operation, there is a need to conduct an urgent review to identify any outstanding gaps at either location. There are valid concerns about the health and hygiene challenges for the population living in the stadia.

The Ministry of Land have a Chinese contractor who is planning to work the green site, and have given the preliminary estimate that they can build 1,000 houses in a month.

As Ebola is being brought under control, President Koroma disclosed that the flooding has created a new opportunity for government to relocate flood victims and other slum dwellers. We went on to say that the public is highly supportive of the Government's relocation initiative.

President Koroma instructed Minister Kaikai to coordinate with line ministries to ensure community ownership of the process, as victims are in readiness to be relocated.

While insisting on relocation of slum dwellers in the Western Area, President Koroma said Government will ensure a

better life for those who are relocated, by providing them with the necessary social facilities, including markets, schools and hospitals.

IOM Head of Office, Sanusi Savage informed President Koroma that his organization has been working in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs in coordinating the flood response at both Siaka Stevens Stadium and the Brima Attouga Mini-Stadium, where they have been providing screening for EVD and related infections, and providing registration, support and supplies to victims. Emergency Coordinator, Jonathan Baker reaffirmed IOM's cooperation with government in addressing the plight of flood victims, adding that they have so far provided support in communications, health care, protection, water, sanitation and hygiene provision.

IOM to support new border crossing points in Kambia

IOM has been supporting 47 International Border Crossing Points (IBCPs) to enhance the effectiveness of deployed security personnel within the health screening process and the regulation of people movement in Gbeleh Dixon, Samu and Bramaia Chiefdoms in Kambia District since June 2015. IOM also provides health screening supplies at all of these points.

6 new IBCPs have been identified as particularly strategic and as a result in a cross border meeting held this week, it was clarified that RSLAF have already deployed personnel to monitor operations in these areas. The Cross Border Team which includes IOM, SFAST, US CDC and other partners has agreed to extend screening re-supplies to these new points.

IOM begins operations at the Tagrin Wharf in Port Loko

IOM operations in Port Loko continue to be encouraged by the District Ebola Response Centre and partners at strategic vehicle control points (VCPs) within the district. Now that Port Loko is considered one of the most at risk districts given the recent slew of positive cases in neighboring Tonko Limba chiefdom in Kambia, it is imperative that IOM's presence be extended to all strategic entry points along the shoreline and to also conduct health screening. Particular attention is being directed at wharfs being used by travelers from Kambia and Guinea.

IOM began this new initiative by establishing a presence at the Tagrin ferry terminal and adjacent wharf through the deployment of two monitors and four community volunteer health screeners. IOM is also supplying health screening materials and seeking support from other partners to provide incentives to keep community volunteer screeners actively engaged at all strategic wharfs in Loko Masama and Kaffu Bullom chiefdoms. There are nine strategic wharfs in Loko Masama and 15 in Kaffu Bullom and a minimum of 90 screeners are needed to meet this challenge.

High level Ebola response delegation visits from Guinea

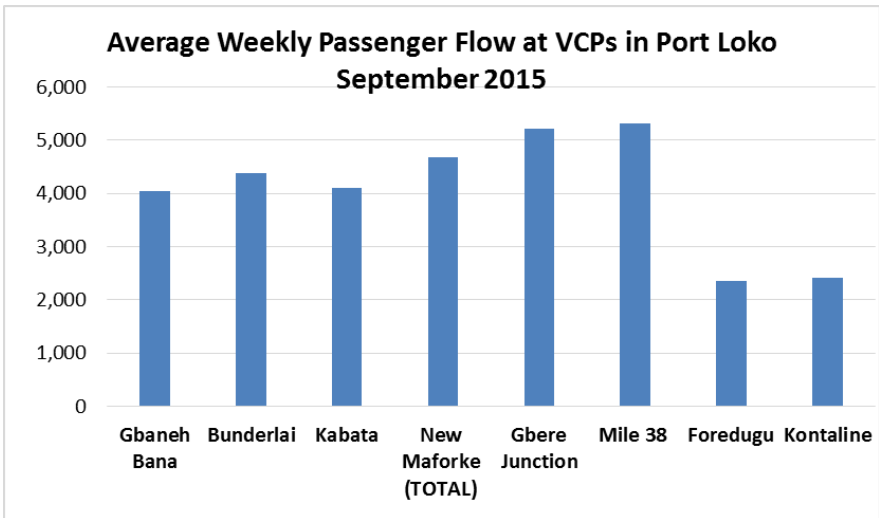


A high level visiting delegation from Guinea joined by the Kambia district coordinator and the UN field coordinator outside of Sella Kafta community.

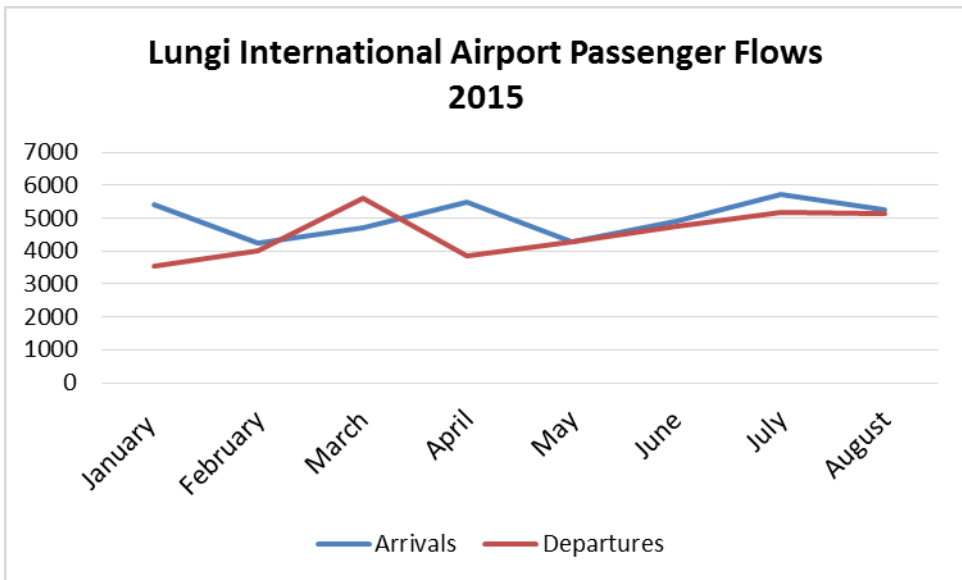
The outbreak in Sella Kafta community in Tonko Limba Chiefdom, Kambia District drew major interventions from NGOs and UN agencies including IOM which set up and manned health screening posts at all 4 entry and exit routes surrounding Sella Kafta.

The week of 18 September saw a high level visit from the CEO of the National Ebola Response Center, Palo Conteh and the Ebola Response Crisis Manager from Guinea, Dr Sakouba Keita and his team. IOM’s team were redeployed to the area following the outbreak from other areas in Kambia. IOM’s intervention spanned stock re-supply, monitoring of the health screening process and analysis of traveler data moving into and out of the community.

Sella Kafta operations scaled down last week, with only a few residual personnel to monitor high risk contacts and social mobilizers to sensitize the community.



There has been steady passenger traffic with a gradual rise passing through Lungi International Airport during the course of 2015.



This is a good show of confidence by airlines in the health screening systems in place at the airport to reduce the risk of exporting Ebola and maintaining the safety of passengers and staff alike. According to data collected from the health declaration forms administered to all travelers passing through the airport, arrivals have been generally higher than departures in recent months. More airlines are expected to resume service in the autumn.

IOM trains social mobilizers on cholera, waterborne illness identification after flooding

IOM social mobilizers are actively involved in disseminating hygiene messages, registration of flood victims and providing IPC support at both Siaka Stevens and Atuga stadiums.

After torrential rains on 16 September, roughly 14,000 persons have been displaced throughout the city of Freetown. Given that many of the worst affected communities are low lying coastal slums where unsanitary conditions made many times worse by floods can easily cause a rise in waterborne diseases like cholera and watery diarrhea all IOM social mobilizers have now been trained on relevant seasonal illnesses that typically affect 1000s of persons every year in Sierra Leone.

A one day training on 23 September 2015, at the Aberdeen community center for 32 social mobilizers was held on cholera, diarrhea and other common waterborne diseases in order to empower them to come to the aid of affected communities.

The objectives of the training were to help the SMs:

- Identify signs and symptoms of cholera, diarrhea and other common illnesses during the rainy season or stemming from unsanitary conditions;

- Disseminate to the communities appropriate messaging on the causes, preventative measures and control of these diseases.

- Sensitize communities on appropriate hand washing methods.

During the training, several topics were discussed including; how cholera is transmitted; Signs and symptoms of the diseases; Incubation period of the virus; Who is at risk; Laboratory diagnosis and treatment of cholera.

During a 10 minute interval, Mangeh Sesay, IOM National Project Officer gave a talk on the roles and responsibilities of the SMs within communities.

The question and answer session was very interactive and at the end of the training, all of the social mobilizers were able to individually perform correct hand washing techniques and answer all evaluation questions that were asked by IOM IPC trainer Gildo Okure.



IOM Social Mobilizers at Siaka Stevens Stadium on 25 September 2015.

BEST of the WEB (click links for story):

[Sierra Leone begins new 42-day countdown, VOA, 28 September](#)

[IOM responds to flash flooding in Freetown, Sierra Leone, IOM, 22 September](#)

[Thousands displaced by floods in Freetown, VOA, 18 September](#)

[Freetown Kroo Bay slum floods for third year in a row, SwitSalone, 17 September](#)

[10 Critical mistakes during the Ebola outbreak, Economic Times, 20 September](#)

[US will stop Ebola screenings for passengers from Liberia, TIME, 19 September](#)

[The slow steady battle for Guineans' trust in the Ebola vaccine, Globe & Mail, 27 September](#)

[Japan supports IOM's Ebola prevention activities in Guinea, Relief Web, 25 September](#)

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