



# IOM Sierra Leone Ebola Response

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*IOM's Kamakwie sub-office head Alusine Suma (center, back) and staff members from one of IOM's Health and Humanitarian Border Management monitoring teams crossing the Little Scaries River in Bombali district. Operations in Bombali which borders high transmission areas in Kambia, Port Loko and Guinea will scale up after the opening of IOM's new Kamakwie sub-office last week.*

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

- A total of 14 confirmed cases were reported from Freetown, Kambia, and Port Loko in the week to 12 July. This is the highest total since 14 June.
- For the first time in several months the majority of cases in Sierra Leone were reported from Freetown. Eight of the 10 cases were registered contacts residing in quarantined homes in the Magazine Wharf area of the city, which has been a focus of transmission for several weeks. The remaining 2 cases have an epidemiological link to the Magazine Wharf chain of transmission, but were identified after post-mortem testing of community deaths, and represent a high risk of further transmission.
- In Kambia, 2 cases were reported from Samu chiefdom on the northern border with Forecariah, Guinea. Both were known contacts of a previous case. The remaining case was reported from a quarantined home in Tonko Limba chiefdom, and was also a registered contact of a previous case.
- The single case from Port Loko was reported from the chiefdom of Marampa, and the source of infection is still under investigation. As of 19 July 3 additional cases are being reported from Marampa.
- All but 1 of the 14 cases reported from Sierra Leone in the week to 12 July were either registered contacts of a previous case or have an established epidemiological link to a case (2), although 4 cases were only identified as a result of post-mortem testing of community deaths.

## Weekly Highlights

- IOM is sustaining its Magazine Wharf outbreak response support to 8 Peripheral Health Units into week 4 after a call by the NERC for all partners to continue operations through September.
- IOM clinicians have begun Infection Prevention and Control training support, ward mentorship and advanced screening at Connaught, Princess Christian's Maternity and Ola During Children's Hospitals in collaboration with the Ebola Response Consortium in Freetown. Rokupa, Macauley Street and Port Loko Hospitals have also requested support.
- IOM has set up a new sub-office in Kamakwie town, northern Bombali district, as an operations center for all cross border interventions in Sella Limba and Tambaka chiefdoms which border Kambia and Guinea.
- In collaboration with the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), 19 IOM monitors and 80 staff of the Passenger Welfare Organization (PAWEL) have deployed at 47 Village Crossing Points (VCPs) in 3 chiefdoms - Samu, Gbileh Dixon and Bramaia in Kambia district.

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## **IOM establishes Bombali sub-office to coordinate interventions on northern border**

Although Bombali district has gone over 100 days with no new EVD cases, it shares a border with high risk Kambia and Port Loko districts and the Republic of Guinea where transmission is ongoing and mobility plays a major factor. The District Coordinator for Bombali says that “strengthening cross border interventions and coordination is our best chance of preventing Ebola from coming back to Bombali and stamping out the disease once and for all.” IOM has been mandated by the District Ebola Response Center (DERC) in Bombali to lead coordination with other partners to strengthen border management initiatives along Bombali’s border with Guinea and at the international crossing at Sanya where a roving monitoring team of 7 is working to forestall the possibility of new EVD cases despite heavy cross border movement.



**Bombali IOM sub-office in Kamakwie on 12 July 2015.**

Last week, IOM set up a new sub-office in Kamakwie town, in northern Bombali as an operations center for all cross border interventions in Sella Limba and Tambaka chiefdoms which border Kambia and Guinea. IOM’s increased presence has attracted the attention of major stakeholders on the ground including staff from DERC who paid a courtesy call on the sub-office this week. The Chief of Staff at the DERC, Major MBS Kamara said that “It is wonderful to have an IOM presence here in Bombali.”

### **IOM recruits 31 staff at Lungi Airport**

In an effort to augment the health screening process at the Freetown International Airport, IOM through its collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation recruited 31 new community health officers (CHO) and community health assistants (CHA).



**A category B village crossing point at Kalangba on the Kambia border with Guinea. RSLAF units deployed to similar crossings will be reinforced by IOM and PAWEL monitoring staff. Above, IOM’s Kambia sub-office head Alpha Kamara speaks about screening procedures with RSLAF troops.**

The health screeners reported to duty on 15 July 2015 and were given an orientation on the operations of the airport and what is expected of them in the performance of their duties.

### **89 IOM monitors and PAWEL staff deploy at Village Crossing Points in Kambia**

In collaboration with the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), 19 IOM monitors and 80 staff of the Passenger Welfare Organization (PAWEL) have deployed at 47 Village Crossing Points (VCPs) in 3 chiefdoms - Samu, Gbileh Dixon and Bramaia in Kambia district. VCPs are classified as category B and C crossings defined as semi-permanently manned with no formal infrastructure or a completely informal crossing point and may take the shape of a track through a forested area.

Kambia district daily epidemiological reports indicate Ebola infections have been on the rise over the last 4 weeks and the 3 chiefdoms bordering Guinea have been the hardest hit. This new staff deployment will scale up health screening/monitoring and ensure resupply of necessary materials like thermometers, buckets, water and soap for handwashing. Perhaps most importantly head-count data will be collected on the migratory flows at the crossing points in order to gain a better understanding of who crosses when and where and for what reasons. This information will be shared with the Government and will inform ongoing efforts to curb the spread of Ebola. Of the 8 active transmission chains in Sierra Leone 5 originate in Guinea, a statistic that demonstrates the mobility of the population on the border.



### Magazine Wharf micro-surge continues

Entering the week of 20 July, IOM will continue to deploy 8 training staff to the 8 Peripheral Health Units surrounding the Magazine Wharf community of Freetown in support of RING Infection Prevention and Control in collaboration with Concern Worldwide, GOAL, Save the Children, the UK Department for International Development, the US AID/ OFDA and US CDC. The past 2 weeks has seen an ongoing and intensive transmission of new cases in the area totaling 15 cases with a total of 22 individuals being treated in the Police Training School ETU in Hastings or under observation in the holding center. Over 300 contacts are being followed up in Western Area Urban.

A rapid health and facility assessment tool including an inventory checklist is filled out daily and the results of the paper based forms are used to track staff progress and being compiled into a database to track regular supply requests from the Central Medical Store and other suppliers of medical equipment. IOM staff together with Concern Worldwide and other Ebola Response Consortium partners will look to sustain operations in the area until the end of September after a call by the National Ebola Response Center (NERC) to maintain activities levels in a bid to reach a resilient zero (42 days without a new case).

### IPC needs assessment presented to MOHS

After compilation of the final 14 district assessment in partnership with the International Medical Corps and the Christian Health Association of Sierra Leone (CHASL) and with support from the United Kingdom Department for International Development, IOM, IMC and CHASL presented the findings of the survey of IPC and WASH in 30 CHASL facilities to the Deputy Chief Medical Officer at the Ministry of Health and Sanitation last Wednesday. 10 facilities in greatest need of assistance will be selected for immediate support.

### Mobile Training on the Kambia/Guinea border

A 2-day basic IPC course was delivered to 57 trainees including police officers, RSLAF troops, community representatives, social mobilizers and health screeners who received training and simulations on “understanding Ebola”; “principles of ETUs and screening”; “hand washing”; “gloving techniques”; “chlorine preparation”; “environmental/spill clean up and waste management”; “donning and doffing of PPE”; and, “relevance of Ebola IPC knowledge to cholera and malaria”. Coupled with a presentation on social mobilization to give trainees an understanding of community engagement. Trainees were evaluated through pre- and post-tests and competence assessments on practical skills. The pre and post-test results showed a remarkable progression in understanding of key concepts as the average mark rose from 49% to 88%. All participants passed and were awarded certificates.



Mobile training in Gbalamuya, Kambia on 13 July 2015.

#### Cumulative Training Academy/Mobile Training operational data for 01 December 2014– 18 July 2015 (weekly numbers in brackets)

Course Name	Number of courses run	Total number of National students	Total number of International Students	Cumulative Total
3 day Ebola clinician IPC 2 day Simulated Patient care	23	589	355	944
1 day Ebola clinical IPC 2 day Simulated patient care	4	26	59	85
1 day clinical augmentation	2	25	41	66
3 day basic IPC/PPE/3 day WHO Ebola basic IPC	66	5,850	51	5,901
Mobile Training 3 day IPC/PPE/Clinical Decontamination/2 day modified IPC	32 (1)	1,207 (57)	0	1,207
1 day clinical pilot/RING IPC	2	65	33	98
<b>Total</b>	<b>128 (1)</b>	<b>7,762 (57)</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>8,301</b>

**IOM responds as high case count continues in Magazine Wharf, expands to other areas**

Over the past 2 weeks the high density low income coastal area of Magazine Wharf, home to approximately 10,000 has had 15 confirmed Ebola cases. Out of 17 total wharfs in Western Area Urban which includes Freetown, 16 have been identified under a social mobilization team security review as having high to medium threat ratings based on the number of boats operating at these wharfs, their links to other districts, especially Kambia and Port Loko as well as the Republic of Guinea, ongoing fishing and transportation activities and the absence of adequate surveillance and social mobilization in those areas.

Since January, IOM has employed 32 local community social mobilizers in 8 low income coastal communities in the Freetown area including Magazine Wharf to spread the latest social messaging on hygiene promotion, Ebola sensitization, early reporting of symptoms and awareness in times of outbreaks within their own communities. The social mobilizers are also trained on the use of emergency care kits, and how to recognize, manage and refer individuals who show signs of illness.

A number of high profile escapes of Magazine Wharf cases from an ETU and holding center in Hastings last week has seen new spillover cases in Lumley and Gode-rich communities.

**WHI's social mobilizers man 18 key checkpoints**

World Hope International is continuing community sensitization on EVD prevention in Bombali district. Community-based mobilizers and rapid response teams scope of intervention has been extended to communities bordering Port Loko and Kambia. Social mobilizers work in task forces in 6 border chiefdoms at 18 key checkpoints which have been revitalized and strengthened with weatherized shelters and resupply of materials to properly conduct screening activities such as buckets for water and soap, gloves, and non-contact thermometers.

**WBA conducts EVD sensitization at schools in Kono**

The Wellbody Alliance team in Kono district have been visiting schools in Nimiyama and Sandor chiefdoms in order to educate school children and authorities about EVD transmission, symptoms, and how to stay safe during the rainy season. Wellbody community health workers continue to work on early identification of disease cases particularly measles and malaria to ensure suspect cases seek proper medical attention. Staffers have also been working with the District Health Management Teams (DHMTs) in raising community awareness on disease prevention and the continued importance of EVD vigilance especially in light of new cases in Liberia.

**Major News Headlines (click links for story):**

**IOM SL in the media: Ebola casts shadow over maternal health in Sierra Leone, Guardian, 17 July**

**Ebola cases rise in Sierra Leone capital, BBC, 14 July**

**Panic as Ebola patients escape in Sierra Leone, New Vision, 14 July**

**Ebola: "Fear, denial and fatigue fueling outbreak", BBC, 14 July**

**International Medical Corps nurse dies in Sierra Leone of Ebola, Guardian, 15 July**

**Liberia confirms second Ebola death in resurgent outbreak, New York Times, 15 July**

**Caring for children orphaned by Ebola, UNICEF Connect blog, 14 July**

**Guinea's president on global aid push: "Ebola forced us to change completely", Guardian, 12 July**

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**For more information on IOM's Sierra Leone activities please contact:**

**IOM Sierra Leone Response | [jbaker@iom.int](mailto:jbaker@iom.int) | Public Information/Project Development | [nbishop@iom.int](mailto:nbishop@iom.int)  
Please find IOM Sierra Leone on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/iomsierraleone](http://www.facebook.com/iomsierraleone) &  
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