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## Information bulletin

# Guinea: Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

<b>Date of disaster</b> 16 February 2021	<b>Date of issue:</b> 18 February 2021
<b>Host National Society:</b> The Red Cross Society of Guinea has 20,400 volunteers covering the entire national territory, including 8,000 active workers. The headquarters is in Conakry and services are provided by 33 prefectural committees, 5 communal committees in Conakry and 264 sub-prefectural committees throughout the country	
<b>Number of people affected:</b> 10 suspected cases in Guinea, 3 confirmed cases and 5 deaths.	
<b>Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners actively involved in the operation:</b> IFRC, Danish Red Cross, French Red Cross, British Red Cross	
<b>N° of other partner organizations involved in the operation:</b> National Service for Humanitarian Action (SENAH), National Health Security Agency (ANSS), WFP, UNICEF, FAO, Catholic Relief Service (CRS), Plan International Guinea, UNDP	

*This bulletin reflects the current situation and details available as of 17 of February 2021. The **Guinea red Cross Society and other neighbouring countries National Societies** with the support of the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and its members**, is already responding to this emergency and boosting up preparedness measures while continuing to support the national authorities in assessing the extent of the damage. IFRC has allocated CHF 290,210 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) and an emergency appeal is underway.*

### The situation



*Guinea, 2015: In the village of Klalantou, Guinea, Forecariah district, Red Cross volunteer Nabilou Camara shares with a local community educational messages about hygiene and the Ebola virus. (Archive Photo Tommy Trenchard, IFRC)*

The first confirmed case of EVD was reported in Guinea on 14 February 2021, with the origins of the outbreak currently unknown, and probable cases dating back to at least January. The known cases (seven as of 16 February 2021) are reportedly within the same family who attended the burial ceremony of a nurse from Gouécké health centre. The nurse died on 28 January 2021 and was buried on 1 February 2021. Of the seven cases, four are men and three are women (ages 25 and over), with three deaths (2 women and 1 man). The known outbreak is currently centred in Gouécké community in the N'Zérékoré prefecture in Guinée Forrestière Region. Gouécké is one of ten sub-prefectures that make up N'Zérékoré prefecture. It is located 42 kilometres from central N'Zérékoré with a total population of approximately 23,458 inhabitants in 3,364 households.

One of the suspected cases was transported to Conakry Hospital without isolation procedures, which raises concerns of possible nosocomial transmission and spread during transportation. While contact tracing and isolation of contacts and suspected cases are in place and scaling up, risk of unidentified chains of transmission and contacts could pose risk of further spread. Prefectures most at risk for the moment include, **Guékédou, Macenta, Lola, Yomou and Beyla, all part of Guinée Forrestière Region.** In addition, there is significant cross-border movement, at official and unofficial border crossings, for trade, healthcare-seeking (traditional and clinical) and family links. Surveillance system at the borders is still weak and not formalised, which could facilitate spread of the virus. The poor hygiene conditions and limited access to potable water are another trend to further spread of the virus.

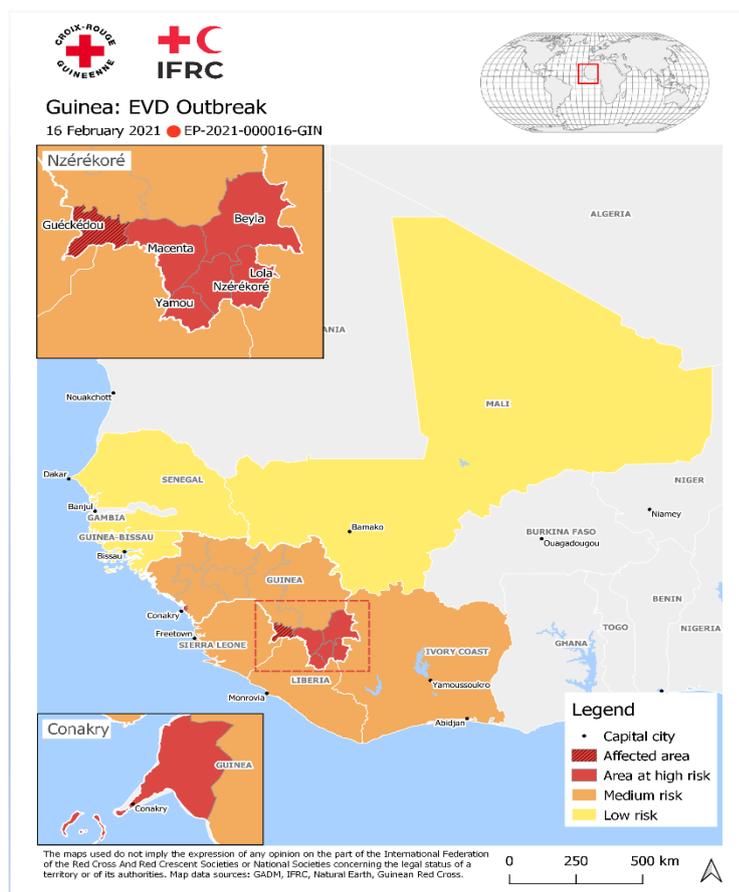
The 2014–2016 outbreak in West Africa was the largest and most complex Ebola. The deadly epidemics had spread between countries, starting in Guinea then moving across land borders to Sierra Leone and Liberia. Hence, the recent EVD outbreak is very concerning as it poses several risks in midst of COVID-19 pandemic.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

### Red Cross Society of Guinea (RCSG)

The Red Cross Society of Guinea has experience with management of an EVD outbreak from 2013 to 2016. Based on this experience, its services were requested by the health authorities of N'zérékoré upon notification of the cases. As such, 40 volunteers out of the 725 available to the Prefectoral/Provincial Committee of the Red Cross (CPCR) of N'zérékoré were mobilized to conduct safe and dignified burials (SDB) of two bodies, disinfect the regional hospital of N'Zérékoré, and begin social mobilization in the urban commune of N'Zérékoré and in the sub-prefecture of Gouécké. Furthermore, in coordination meetings with Ministry of Health and other partners, the Guinea RCS was tasked to prepare for implement activities related to:

- Management of safe and dignified burials (SDB)
- Household and public disinfection
- Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) in affected and at-risk communities
- Psychosocial support (PSS) for infected and affected people
- Contact tracing and Community-based surveillance (CBS)
- Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH).



In the neighbouring countries, National Societies activated branches and are engaging with national authorities to define the preparedness and readiness plans in view of supporting decrease the risk of and /or contain a possible outbreak.

#### **Sierra Leone Red Cross Society (SLRCS)**

The SLRCS team participated in meetings convened by the Government in coordination with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and partners. Two hundred (200) volunteers working on Community Epidemic and Pandemic Preparedness (CP3) project in Kambia and Kailahun districts have been alerted to heighten passive surveillance activities. In addition, an alert was sent in the remaining four district branches (Kono, Koinadugu, Western Area and Pujehun) bordering Guinea and Liberia, where 100 volunteers are preparing effective social community engagement activities.

#### **Red Cross Society of Cote D'Ivoire (CRCI)**

The Ministry of Public Health started working on awareness and preventive measures to avoid the spread into its territory. Three regions of the country are at high risk due to proximity with Guinea: Odienne, Touba and Mann. The Emergency Operations Centre has been reactivated, while an Ebola Treatment Centre has been reopened in Mann (one of the regions close to the Guinean border). The Ivorian Government has also set up community-based surveillance systems and announced maintaining controls of entry points in Côte d'Ivoire. Public awareness messages have been circulated, reminding the public to respect both COVID-19 and Ebola prevention measures.

#### **Liberian Red Cross Society (LNRCS)**

The National Society has participated in the Incident Management System's (IMS) meetings conducted by the MoH and the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) held twice a week. The Chapters along the borders with Guinea, where the outbreak is reported, have begun mobilizing volunteers at major land-crossing points and placed them on alert. The at-risk Chapters include Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Cape Mount, and Gbarpolu counties, where volunteers are currently conducting awareness in communities. LNRCS headquarters has started mobilizing the deployment of PPE into the region.

#### **Mali Red Cross (MRC)**

To prevent the spread of EVD into the country, Mali Red Cross (MRC) is preparing a plan in synergy with National authorities, that will focus on epidemiological surveillance in border points, including the installation of hygiene equipment, awareness raising in bordering communities and through radio spots, and establishment of an early warning system between branches. To achieve that, training packages to volunteers will be delivered in the coming weeks.

#### **Senegalese Red Cross Society (SRCS)**

SRCS is working with the Ministry of Health and partners to define the preparedness plan and increasing surveillance capacity in border areas, while mobilizing its branches and volunteers to revamp awareness.

### **Collaboration from Movement Partners**

The Sahel Cluster office in Dakar supports the Guinean Red Cross as part of capacity building. Currently, it is represented by a delegate who supports the NS in the implementation of the community epidemic and pandemic preparedness program (CP3).

The French Red Cross is present in N'zérékoré with one staff and has mobilized two additional persons from Conakry to support NS response actions. The Danish Red Cross is also present in country. The British Red Cross Society is providing bilateral support to the NS through disaster management and health programs, although it is not physically present in Guinea.

In view of the above, it is key for IFRC to mobilize international support/resources to ensure quick and adequate positioning of Guinea Red Cross in the overall response.

### **International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

IFRC is in the process of launching an emergency appeal (EA) seeking CHF 8.5 million to support the National Societies.

To start up the response operation, IFRC has already mobilized CHF 290,210 for its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) on 17 February. This DREF will allow the National Society to support prevention and reducing morbidity and mortality resulting from the Ebola haemorrhagic fever outbreak in Gouecké and neighbouring health

Zones in Guinée forestière region of Guinea. The NS will target 423,951 (60,564 households) in the affected and at-risk districts of Nzérékoré, Guékédou, Macenta, Lola, Yomou and Beyla Prefectures with Risk Communication and Community engagement (RCCE), active case finding, Safe and Dignified Burials (SDB), Psychosocial Support (PSS) and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC). This DREF will also allow for one-month deployment of seven Surge members including the Head of Emergency Operations, public health in emergencies specialist, logistics, communications, RCCE/CEA, Finance and Security.

The table below shows the surge deployment plan as of 17 February 2021.

Profile	Location	Duration	Progress as of 16 Feb
<b>Head of Emergency Operations</b>	Guinea	3 Months	- Person identified Deployment underway
<b>Public Health Coordinator</b>	Guinea	1 Months	Regional and Global Alert issued
<b>Logistics and supply</b>	Guinea	3 Months	Regional and Global Alert issued – Person identified
<b>Communications</b>	Guinea	1 month +	Regional and Global Alert issued
<b>Community Engagement and Accountability</b>	Guinea and neighbouring countries	3 Months	Regional and Global Alert issued
<b>Mental Health and Psychosocial Support</b>	Guinea	1 Month	Regional and Global Alert issued
<b>Support service /Finance &amp; Admin-1</b>	Guinea	3 Months	Identified and deployment underway
<b>Ops Coordination -multi country (outposted by RO)</b>	Dakar reporting to RO	3 Months	Process underway

A detailed deployment plan is being prepared.

## Contact information

**For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.