
EBOLA

PREPAREDNESS, PREVENTION AND RESPONSE COMMUNICATION PLAN

APRIL 2014

GHANA

Social Mobilisation and Risk Communication Thematic Group

At the recent meeting on the preparation for and Ebola outbreak several thematic groups were formed. The following is a brief action plan developed by the Social Mobilisation and Risk Communication Thematic group. The group was mandated through a TOR to;

- ✚ Determine point(s) of communications, frequency, requirements and cost
- ✚ Develop key messages for the general public and for health workers and define best ways to communicate with cost
 - ✓ Messages development
 - ✓ Press release
 - ✓ Media encounter (press briefing)
 - ✓ Use of Media- Radio, TV, Print
 - ✓ Posters, leaflets
- ✚ Establish advocacy requirements, tools and activities with cost

Key Considerations

During the development of this plan, it was identified that the following actions would have to be taken in order to support the prevention and control activities being undertaken. These included the following:

- ✚ Advocate for nationally coordinated action to address a comprehensive prevention strategy with an additional component looking into preparedness and response to;
 - ✓ Initially provide information
 - ✓ To address rumors and reduce panic, fear and stigmatization
 - ✓ Address key “at risk” audience groups (such as people who consume bat meat, antelope, monkeys and other primates in other words “bush meat”, those who frequently travel across borders, those handling the sick and the dead – if the outbreak occurs in Ghana)
 - ✓ Address key “risk behaviours” (consumption/preparation of “bush meat”, and other habits such as shaking hands, handling dead bodies, treating the sick etc)

- ✚ To ensure that the communication strategy is participatory to ensure that individuals, communities, organizations and policy makers are all active partners in achieving the change at the various levels.
- ✚ Strengthen capacity and skills of agencies and institutions responsible for Ebola response and prevention
- ✚ Support the frontline health workers including other frontline partners at the district and regional levels with appropriate communication materials including audio visuals to enable them carry out targeted activities to ensure that enough awareness is created about the disease to ensure that people minimise the risk of contracting and spreading the disease.

Goal

The main goal of this plan is to reduce the threat of an outbreak of Ebola in Ghana by addressing “at risk groups” and “at risk behaviours” among the Ghanaian population. The aim is to increase the level of knowledge on the causes, symptoms and modes of prevention of the disease including on what needs to be done if one suspects that they are ill with Ebola. As the strategy needs to be of national scope with specific focus on key risk groups everybody in Ghana needs to be knowledgeable of a possible outbreak of Ebola in the country, and as such the total population in communities, become crucial actors in responding to mitigate such an outbreak.

The priority behaviours that would be promoted are:

- ✚ Avoid hunting, handling or eating “bush meat” such as bats, antelope, monkeys, gorillas, chimpanzees etc.
- ✚ Washing hands with soap and plenty of water at key times
 - ✓ After coming home (from work, school, market etc.)
- ✚ Treatment of Ebola during an outbreak
 - ✓ Report to the nearest health facility/ or stay at home and inform the nearest health facility, when you have any of the following symptoms along with a sudden onset of high fever
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhoea
 - Headache
 - Skin rash and red eyes
 - Bleeding through the body openings, i.e eyes, nose, gums, ears and anus
 - ✓ Care givers to protect themselves and avoid direct contact with the bodily fluids of sick individuals and keep children away from sick family members and do not share utensils and clothes of sick family members
 - ✓ Traditional practices of touching, cleaning and caring for dead bodies to be avoided during an outbreak.

The main actors to be targeted as agents of change are:

- ✚ Media
- ✚ Households – All family members but particularly men and women and carers of the young. As men engage in hunting while women engage in the handling and preparation of the meat.
- ✚ Other contact/carers of patients (**who are normally left out of education/ hygiene promotion activities**) e.g. taxi drivers who transport the patients to the hospitals/health centres –
- ✚ Schools – pupils, Teachers, SHEP Coordinators and Circuit Supervisors
- ✚ Food vendors (Chop Bars), restaurants, hoteliers and chop bar operators/cafeterias

- ✚ Market traders especially market women who sell food smoked meat or bush meat both seaters and roamers
- ✚ Hunters
- ✚ Community leaders /chiefs and queen mothers /religious leaders /assembly men
- ✚ Community Based organisations
- ✚ Organisers of Funerals and durbars and other gatherings (particularly in light of the upcoming Easter celebrations)
- ✚ District Assemblies – health services /environmental health

The Channels for the key messages are:

- ✚ **Mass Media channels:** such as television, radio, printed press,
- ✚ **Institutional channels:** including recognized public and private bodies such as the Government Ministries with outreach workers (e.g. MLGRD/EHSD, Ghana Health Service, Ministry of Education/GES, National Disaster Management Organisation etc), networks of development workers, NGOs, etc., for the dissemination of correct and timely information on Ebola towards a coordinated response including enforcement of regulations and by-laws.
- ✚ **Social media channels:** such as the use of the Internet, SMS text messages etc.
- ✚ **Socio-traditional and socio-cultural channels:** Opinion leaders (customary chiefs, queen mothers, religious leaders, notables, intellectuals, organized groups etc.) and other informal networks through the various forms and opportunities of traditional popular communication such as durbars, community/village meetings, collective work in the fields, vigils and wakes, talks, baptisms, markets, marriages, funerals, naming ceremonies, marriage ceremonies, journeys in public transports, churches and mosques etc.
- ✚ **Inter personal communication (IPC) channels** – through Community Based Volunteers, CSOs e.g. Ghana Red Cross (GRC), Mothers Clubs and Assembly Agents in workshops, Group discussions, Forum Theatre, Door to door outreach, Peer to Peer outreach etc.
- ✚ **Proximity Media channels:** such as Community Information Centres (CIC) - PA systems, Mobile Vans – videos and community outreach, Community Radio (Talk shows with phone-ins and Jingles, life presenter mentioning), Posters depicting key desirable behaviours and information.

Communication Materials to be used for the campaign include:

- ✚ Posters
- ✚ Brochures
- ✚ Fact sheets
- ✚ SMS
- ✚ Radio/TV announcement
- ✚ Job aids (advocacy sheet for community leaders)

Monitoring of the activities

Budget

	Activity Description	Qty.	Amount (GHC)	Amount (GHC)
1.				

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Text to be used on Media and through other communication Channels)

This is an important message from the Ministry of Health:

There is an outbreak of Ebola in some West African countries. Ebola is a serious disease that kills within a very short time.

Signs and symptoms of Ebola include: a high temperature, abdominal pains, Diarrhoea and vomiting. Patients may also have other symptoms such as a body rash, blood spots in the eyes, blood in the vomit, bleeding from the nose, mouth, rectum, eyes and ears.

One can get Ebola by coming into contact with body fluids like saliva, blood, urine, faeces and the sweat of an infected person, or by using sharp skin piercing instruments like razorblades and safety pins that have been used by an infected person or by coming into contact with bodies of persons who have died from Ebola. Ebola is also spread by animals infected with the virus. Consuming or coming into contact with bush meat such as bats, monkeys, antelope and other primates can infect people. So, STOP hunting and eating these animals until it is safe to do so again!

To prevent Ebola:

- ✓ Avoid contact with bush animals including bats, monkeys, antelopes and porcupines
- ✓ Report a suspected case of Ebola to your nearest health centre as soon as possible
- ✓ Avoid contact with the person suspected to be suffering from Ebola
- ✓ Wash your hands frequently with soap, under running water and strong detergent after attending to a person suspected of suffering from Ebola
- ✓ Use strong detergents on any vomit or diarrhoea of a person suspected of suffering from Ebola before cleaning

This Announce from the Ministry Of Health in collaboration with MoFA and NADMO.

For Further information Please contact Telephone Numbers. **XXX(GHS)**

KEY MESSAGES AND SMS

1. **Symptoms**

There is an Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Ebola is a serious disease that kills quickly. Signs & symptoms: high fever, stomach pain, diarrhoea & vomiting. There may also be bleeding from the nose, mouth, rectum, eyes & ears.

2. **Spread**

Ebola spreads through contact with saliva, blood, urine, faeces & sweat from infected people. People with Ebola are most contagious in the later stages of the disease. BE SAFE – avoid all contact

3. **Spread**

Avoid contact with bush animals like bats, monkeys, antelopes & porcupines. Avoid buying or eating bush meat

4. **Prevention**

To PREVENT Ebola: report suspected cases to health centre, limit contact, no contact with bush meat, wash hands frequently with soap & water. Use strong detergents on vomit or faeces of those infected

5. **Prevention**

Follow infection-control procedures. Health workers must wear protective clothing e.g. gloves, masks, gowns & eye shields. Keep infected people isolated from others.

6. **Prevention**

Don't handle remains. The bodies of people who have died of Ebola are still contagious. Special trained teams should bury the remains, using appropriate safety equipment.

7. **Reporting**

Report all suspected Ebola cases to the District Health Officer (DHO)

BROCHURE

What you need to know about EBOLA

- ✓ Cause
- ✓ Transmission
- ✓ Signs and symptoms
- ✓ Prevention

Introduction

There is an outbreak of Ebola in some West African countries which are also closer to the borders of Ghana. These countries have been affected and many people have been diagnosed with the disease and many of them have died. Although this disease is serious and kills in a short time, it can be prevented. This brochure provides information on what Ebola disease is, how it spreads and how it can be prevented.

What is Ebola?

Ebola is a killer disease caused by a virus. It spreads quickly from person to person, kills in a short time BUT can be prevented.

How is Ebola spread?

It is spread through;

- ✓ Direct contact with body fluids like blood, sweat, saliva, vomitus, urine, stool and wounds, of a person suffering from Ebola or splashing of such fluids from an infected person into another person's eyes
- ✓ Using skin piercing instruments such as needles, razors that have been used by an infected person
- ✓ Direct physical contact with a person who has died of Ebola
- ✓ Hunting, handling and Eating animals that carry the virus especially monkeys, bats, porcupine and antelope.

What are the signs and symptoms of a person suffering from Ebola

A person suffering from Ebola presents with sudden onset of high temperature or fever with any of the following:

- ✓ Vomiting
- ✓ Diarrhea
- ✓ Headache
- ✓ Skin rash and red eyes
- ✓ Bleeding through the body openings, i.e. eyes, nose, gums, ears, and anus may or may not be present.

What should be done to someone suffering from Ebola?

- ✓ Patients should be handled with care using protective wear like gloves, goggles, and masks
- ✓ The person should be taken to the nearest Health facility immediately for proper treatment and management.
- ✓ Clothing and beddings of the person should be disinfected with strong detergent to avoid infecting others in the house

Who is at risk?

- ✓ Since the virus spreads through direct contact with blood and other body secretions of an infected person, people living with and caring for the patients are at a higher risk of getting infected. Where possible, use gloves when handling these patients to avoid contact with patients' body fluids. During feeding, holding or caring for the patient, family members and friends should cover themselves properly with protective wear, such as gloves
- ✓ Persons who have died due to Ebola can also be infectious if not properly handled with the appropriate protective wear
- ✓ Hunters or those who come into contact with or eat bush meat such as bats, monkeys antelope are also at great risk.

How can Ebola be prevented?

- ✓ Avoid direct contact with body fluids, blood, saliva, vomitus, urine, and stool of infected persons by wearing protective materials like gloves and goggles.
- ✓ Do not touch wounds of an infected person with unprotected hands
- ✓ Do not use skin piercing instruments that have been used on a patient suffering from Ebola
- ✓ Avoid hunting, handling and eating of bush animals like monkeys, bats porcupines and antelopes.
- ✓ Persons who have died of Ebola must be handled with strong protective wear and buried immediately to prevent spread of the disease; avoid feasting and the funeral should take place immediately after death
- ✓ After handling a patient suffering from Ebola, you must wash your hands thoroughly with soap under running water.

POINTS TO REMEMBER

- ✓ Ebola is a serious disease, it kills in a short time BUT can be prevented
- ✓ Ebola spreads from one person to another through physical contact with body fluids of an infected person
- ✓ Ebola can be prevented through:
 - Reporting of any suspected case of Ebola to the nearest health Facility
 - Prompt management of all persons suffering from Ebola, by seeking early medical help
 - Proper protection using gloves, goggles and masks where possible, when handling patients suffering from Ebola
 - Regular washing of hands with soap and water after touching a suspected person
 - Proper burying of people who have died of Ebola immediately after death
 - Avoid communal washing of hands during funerals.
 - Avoid hunting, handling and eating bush animals like monkeys, bats, antelope and porcupines.

For further information contact

- * the nearest health facility or
- * the District Director of Health Services or
- * these Telephone numbers **XXX (GHS)**

JOB AID

Ebola Fever

JOB AID FOR COMMUNITY MOBILIZERS

1. What is Ebola Fever?

- ✓ Ebola Fever is a disease caused by the Ebola virus.
- ✓ It is transmitted through direct or indirect contact with an infected people and by contact with infected animals.
- ✓ Ebola Fever is responsible for the death of 50% to 90% of the sick individuals who show clinical symptoms
- ✓ No effective treatment or vaccine is currently available.
- ✓ The natural reservoir for this virus seems to be in the forests and savannahs of Central and West Africa.
- ✓

2. What are the signs of a case of Ebola Fever?

- ✓ Ebola Fever develops 2 to 21 days after infection, its symptoms include:
 - High fever,
 - Headaches,
 - Intense weakness,
 - Joint or muscle pains,
 - Sore throat,
 - Nausea and vomiting,
 - Diarrhea,
 - Skin rash,
 - Internal and external bleeding in the form of: nosebleed, bleeding gums, red eyes, vomiting of blood, bloody stools, red spots on the body,
 - Impaired kidney and liver function.

3. How is Ebola Fever transmitted?

- ✓ Ebola virus is transmitted through direct contact with the blood, urine and stools, vomit and saliva, sperm, sweat and vaginal fluid of infected individuals.
- ✓ The disease can also be transmitted through contact with the soiled clothing or bed linens of a sick patient. It is therefore necessary to disinfect them before handling them.
- ✓ Funeral rituals, during which parents and friends come into contact with the corpse, play a critical role in the transmission.
- ✓ Ebola virus can be transmitted to humans when handling contaminated animals, alive or dead: bats, monkeys, chimpanzees, gorillas and forest antelope.

- ✓ Transmission to health-care workers caring for sick patients has often happened where appropriate infection control measures were not observed and strict barrier nursing techniques and procedures were not implemented.

4. How do we avoid contamination by Ebola Fever?

a. Avoid all contact with an Ebola patient or the corpse of a deceased patient, as well as with all bush meat found in the forest.

- Avoid all direct contact with blood, urine or stools, vomit and saliva, sperm, sweat, organs or biological fluids, soiled clothes or linens of sick individual by using protection.
- During the funeral of those who have died of Ebola:
 - Do not wash, dress, apply make-up, touch or caress the body of the deceased
 - Do not display the corpse on a bed or mat
 - Do not sit around the corpse or lean over the coffin
 - Do not handle or keep the deceased's everyday objects
 - Do not wash hands in a common basin after the burial
 - Do not keep the corpse, bury the body immediately using protective clothes
 - Do not clip nails, cut hair or take off the clothes of the deceased to bring into the village
- Avoid transferring suspected cases and sick individuals from one health center to another
- Avoid all contact with suspected cases
- Isolate sick patients and rigorously implement strict barrier nursing techniques (wear protection equipment and disinfect equipment)
- Avoid hunting, handling or eating meat bush meat such as monkeys, bats, antelopes and porcupines.

b. Avoid traditional practices which favor transmission

- Avoid sacrifices involving animal blood
- Avoid multiple-use of rectal bulb syringe

c. Follow general hygiene measures

- Wash hands regularly using soap under running water
- Use boiled water or sterilized with chlorine tablets
- Use latrines always
- Burn or Dispose of household trash at the prescribed dump site
- Isolate suspected cases or people who have been in contact with the disease (in school, during events, etc.)

NB: As the primary mode of person-to-person transmission is through contact with contaminated blood, bodily or biological fluids, all individuals who have had a physical contact with sick patients should be kept under a close watch: their temperature should be taken twice a day, with immediate hospitalization and strict isolation should a fever appear.

All hospital personnel who have been in close contact with sick patients or contaminated material and who have not implemented strict barrier nursing techniques should be considered exposed and kept under strict medical surveillance.

5. What should community leaders do to promote health in the context of the Ebola Fever response?

a. Mobilizing the community together

- Activate and mobilise community members
- Accept and implement measure to fight the Ebola Fever epidemic as recommended by the epidemics response committee;
- Disseminate, exchange information on prevention using songs, theater, sketches and word of mouth;
- Mobilize local resources to support field interventions and workers;
- Strengthen community-based surveillance in collaboration with health professionals;
- Identify and quickly report any suspected cases, rumors, sick individuals or cases to the closest health center;
- Agree to stop all hunting activities;
- Avoid all social gatherings and meetings
- Welcome and accept volunteers to assist in the community
- Do not trust hurtful beliefs, and rumors, but follow the epidemics response committee's instructions and advice to stop the epidemics

b. Support sick patients and their families

- Help maintain the nutritional status of sick patients by providing adequate food;
- Provide material assistance, and moral and psychosocial support to the affected families;
- Avoid exclusion, rejection and stigmatization of the healthy members of the affected families who are under surveillance;
- Improve knowledge on the disease, ease the reintegration of the members of families who have had cases of the disease;

FACT SHEET FOR MEDIA

Facts About EBOLA

What is Ebola?

- ✚ Ebola is a killer disease, which presents with high temperature and bleeding tendencies.
- ✚ It is very infectious, kills in a short time BUT can be prevented.

- ✚ The signs and symptoms of Ebola are
 - ✓ High Temperature (Fever)
 - ✓ Vomiting
 - ✓ Diarrhea
 - ✓ Abdominal pains
 - ✓ Headache
 - ✓ Measles like rash
 - ✓ Red eyes
 - ✓ Bleeding from body openings(nose, gums, ears and anus) may or may not be present

- ✚ How is it spread?
 - ✓ Ebola is spread through direct physical contact with body fluids like blood, saliva, stool, vomitus, urine, and sweat of an infected person and soiled linen used by an infected patient
 - ✓ Splashing of body fluids from an infected person into the eyes of another person
 - ✓ It can also be spread through using skin piercing instruments that have been used by an infected person
 - ✓ The Virus can also be gotten through contact with persons who have died of Ebola
 - ✓ The virus can also be gotten through eating dead or infected animals especially monkeys, bats, antelope and porcupine that carried the Ebola virus.

- ✚ How can it be prevented?
 - ✓ Avoid direct contact with body fluids of a person suffering from Ebola by using protective materials like gloves, goggles, and masks
 - ✓ Disinfect the beddings and clothing of an infected person with Strong disinfectants
 - ✓ Persons suspected to be suffering from Ebola should be taken to the nearest health facility immediately for prompt attention.
 - ✓ Persons who have died of Ebola must be handled using strong protective wear and buried immediately; avoid feasting and funerals ceremonies
 - ✓ Report any suspected cases of Ebola to the nearest health facility immediately

- ✓ Wash your hands with soap under running water after handling a patient or the body of a person who has died of Ebola
- ✓ Avoid communal washing of hands during funeral rites
- ✓ Avoid hunting, handling and eating bush animals especially monkeys, bats, antelopes and porcupines.

For further information contact:

INFECTION CONTROL POSTER

INFECTION CONTROL IN SCREENING EBOLA SUSPECTED CASES AND CONTACTS IN HEALTH FACILITY ENTRY CLINICS



