

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

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EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE OUTBREAK IN THE DRC: AFRICACDC OPTIMIZES SURVEILLANCE IN THE RESPONSE



Kinshasa, DRC 8 October 2018- The Africa CDC has acquired laboratory equipment used in the diagnosis of multi-resistant tuberculosis to strengthen the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) cases management. As part of the response to this tenth outbreak, 6 Genexpert machines offered to the Congolese Government are optimizing surveillance through alert areas including Goma (1), Kinshasa (1) and affected areas including Mangina (1), Beni (1) and Butembo (2) where in less than two hours, a reliable diagnosis, with quality control on both the sample collected and

the manipulation performed by technicians, is delivered daily to coordinate the response.



In the mobile laboratory installed at the Blood Transfusion Centre in Butembo, two Genexpert Machines are available. These devices, offered as a reinforcement by Africa CDC to the Ministry of Health, are used in molecular biology to detect target genetic materials in the structure of the EBOLA virus that strikes this part of North Kivu Province. Held by two technician biologist experts recruited by Africa CDC; this laboratory is vigorously involved in improving the response to the EBOLA virus disease outbreak.

"Samples are brought here for diagnosis. This means that others, at the level of surveillance, assume, but we confirm the cases. Thanks to the two GeneXperts made available to us, we have the ability to work on 24 samples per day and deliver the results directly. The sooner the precise results are known, the better the response is managed by the response coordination office through its commissions and sub-commissions," explains Joseph Nyombe, Head of the Mobile Laboratory of Butembo before specifying that these tools also provide the possibility of monitoring Ebola patients under treatment and those who have been cured, in particular through viral load control.

Installed about a month ago by the INRB, the BUTEMBO mobile laboratory has, since its establishment, analyzed more than 80 samples from all over the city.

Capitalization of assets

For the safety of personnel and the protection of the working environment, a whole arsenal of measures is required in this analysis structure supported by the Africa CDC. From the red zone (from which samples are received) to the engine room and the EBOLA virus inactivation zone before handling, no error is allowed because of the risk of negatively impacting the final result.

Under the watchful eye of Africa CDC Experts who supervise the exams; local health workers, recruited and trained, are working hard to exercise. Coming from most of the local health structures, medical and paramedical agents are proud of the experience and knowledge acquired so far.

"We are already able to manipulate the equipment used and even understand how the sample analysis process works via GENEXPERT which we are using for the first time in this EVD response. We are very satisfied with this support from Africa CDC through its volunteers who add more to our knowledge every day...", Mwanzo Wavindu, biologist attached to the central research laboratory of the Catholic University of the Graben, confided.

Assured by this new dynamic in which these premises are immersed, Servet Kimboza has the wish to see, in the long run, their companions from Butembo take up the possible epidemic situations that would be caused by the Ebola virus, in DRC.

ASEDCO Mission, a momentum of pan-Africanism affirmed

As part of its mission to support the response to the EBOLA virus outbreak in the DRC, the African Union, through Africa CDC, has provided, in addition to technical tools, qualified African health workers with different specialties across the affected areas of Beni and Butembo, as well as the alert area of Goma. The aim is, among other things, to support the DRC Government in curbing this epidemic, which is ravaging Congolese populations with a permanent risk of spreading beyond national borders, as quickly as possible.

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