

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

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Democratic Republic of the Congo celebrates end of 11th Ebola Virus Disease outbreak

The Minister of Health of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), H.E. Dr Eteni Longondo, today declared an end to the 11th Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak in the North-Western Province (Equateur) of the country, five months after the outbreak began.

“The ability of the DRC Government and partners to quickly and effectively bring an end to the 11th Ebola outbreak is a remarkable milestone, especially at this time that the world is struggling to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic”, said H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission. “I commend the resolute determination and coordinated effort of all the partners, healthcare workers and community members who have worked together to ensure an Ebola-free DRC. Their courage and gallant sacrifices will always be remembered”.

The outbreak was reported in 13 health zones in the affected province, with a total of 130 cases, 55 deaths (case fatality rate 42.3%) and 75 recoveries, including two healthcare workers who lost their lives while caring for EVD patients. The 11th outbreak started while the country was still responding to the 10th outbreak in the Eastern Provinces of Kivu and Ituri. The government had declared the outbreak on 1 June 2020, few weeks before declaring an end to the 10th outbreak and two months into the COVID-19 outbreak.

The African Union Commission, through the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), had deployed frontline workers and other personnel to support response to the 10th outbreak and some of them were also involved in responding to the 11th outbreak. In addition to providing laboratory and other forms of support, Africa CDC staff and volunteers supported active and passive surveillance and capacity building in event-based surveillance, particularly the detection of hemorrhagic fever related to EVD. They supported risk communication and engagement with community members to ensure a conducive environment for response. Through the Africa CDC ECHO platform, they supported knowledge and information sharing sessions to prevent cross-border transmission and prepare neighboring countries for immediate and active response if such transmission occurs.

“The DRC has shown good example by applying the knowledge gained from previous outbreaks to quickly fight and bring the 11th outbreak to an end. Africa CDC will continue to work with the Government of DRC and other partners to better coordinate our efforts in strengthening health systems in the DRC and across Africa”, said Dr John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC.

“The people of DRC recognize the support of the African Union through Africa CDC as well as other partners that have invested technical and financial resources to end the outbreak. We will ensure that these investments are effectively harnessed by preventing as much as possible a re-emergence of Ebola outbreaks in the DRC”, said Dr Longondo.

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