



EU Response to the Ebola epidemic

ECHO FACTSHEET

Facts & Figures

Number of suspected, probable and confirmed cases:

- **In 2018 in DRC:** 19 suspect, 20 probable and 3 confirmed
- **In 2013-2016 in West Africa:** more than 28 600

Number of deaths in West Africa:

More than 11 300

End of Ebola transmission in West Africa:

- **Sierra Leone:** 17 March 2016
- **Guinea:** 1 June 2016
- **Liberia:** 9 June 2016

European Union's response (Commission and Member States): close to €2 billion

Commission funding: close to €870 million

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Volunteers of the Red Cross Society in Guinea were trained to disinfect homes & health facilities infected by the Ebola virus disease. The EU funded this crucial work. © afreecom/Idrissa Soumaré

Key messages

- The European Union, together with its Member States, provided close to **€2 billion in financial aid to help West Africa** contain and recover from the outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) that devastated the region in 2014-15. The following year, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared an end of transmission in West Africa.
- During the outbreak in West Africa, the Commission coordinated EU support and provided **humanitarian aid**, technical expertise, longer-term **development assistance**, funding for vaccine research and evacuation means for international humanitarian workers.
- Activation of the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** enabled the rapid, coordinated deployment of emergency supplies and experts offered by the Member States.
- On 8 May 2018, a **new outbreak of Ebola virus disease** was declared by the Minister of Public Health of the **Democratic Republic of Congo** (DRC). The outbreak occurred in a remote and hard to reach area and is so far limited to locations in the province of Equateur in western DRC.
- As an immediate response, the European Commission announced a package of €1.7 million in emergency aid. The aid contains €1.5 million for logistics support to WHO, €200 000 to support life-saving interventions with the Congolese Red Cross and the air service 'ECHO Flight' to transport medical experts, emergency staff as well as equipment to the affected areas.

Background

Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone were the countries where the virus took the heaviest toll on life. Beyond the human tragedy, the disease had devastating effects on the security, economies and health care systems of the whole region. The European Union was active in the response to the Ebola emergency from the start. It mobilised all available political, financial, and scientific resources to help contain, control, treat and ultimately defeat Ebola.

The EU's assistance

The financial contribution of the EU to fight the epidemic in West Africa amounts to close to €2 billion, including funding from the Member States. The European Commission allocated close to €870 million for emergency measures and longer-term support.

Humanitarian Aid

Since March 2014, the European Commission provided close to €70 million in humanitarian aid to address the most urgent needs in West Africa. These funds were channelled through humanitarian partner organisations, including the UN, international organisations and NGOs. EU humanitarian aid contributed to epidemic surveillance, diagnostics, treatment and medical supplies; deployment of doctors and nurses and training of health workers; awareness-raising among the population and promotion of safe burials.

As part of its coordinated response, the EU provided emergency supplies and sent experts to the affected countries. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism facilitated the delivery of material support from the Member States through the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC). EU Member States provided mobile laboratories, treatment centres, ambulances and field hospitals. The EU organised logistical support including multiple airlifting operations and supports the deployment of navy ships to transport emergency supplies provided by the Member States, such as food aid, medical kits, clean blankets, and chlorine for sanitations.

Development Aid

In addition to existing development partnerships, the European Commission provides €660 million in development and early recovery assistance to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone to reinforce the capacity of governments to deliver vital public services and facilitate a smooth transition to recovery. Development funds are used to strengthen food security and improve water and sanitation and to finance mobile laboratories for the detection of the virus and the training of health workers.

Medical Research

An Ebola research programme was launched by the EU in 2014 with a budget of nearly €240 million for vaccine development, diagnostic tests and treatments. The EU is also involved in the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership programme, with a budget of €2 billion over the next ten years.

Advocacy, coordination and diplomatic outreach

From the onset of the crisis, the EU was in constant contact with the United Nations, relief agencies on the ground, the governments in the region, and with regional organisations. The creation of an EU Ebola Task Force further strengthened the coordination amongst European institutions, Member States, and other international and regional organisations.

The European Union co-chaired a high-level international conference on Ebola in March 2015 to take stock of the response against Ebola and coordinate further action.

