

# The Ebola outbreak – what lessons for global health

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# Expertise

- District Medical Officer Burkina Faso 1988-1993
- Since then worked as epidemiologist specialising on Ebola, Marburg, Lassa for Institutes of Tropical Medicine in Heidelberg, Antwerp, London and Berlin
- 1999: Marburg HF DRC, outbreak investigation & response
- 2000: Ebola HF Uganda, outbreak investigation & response
- 2005: Marburg HF Angola, evaluation of Médecins Sans Frontières intervention
- 2014: Ebola HF Guinea, investigation of people's resistance against control measures
- 2015: Ebola HF Liberia, advisor to International Rescue Committee on implementing Ebola Treatment Centre

# Lesson from Ebola outbreak

**We ought to respond to Ebola outbreaks  
adequately and timely**

We should not rely on Ebola outbreaks to be  
“self-limiting”

# More of the same, please (but not too little, too late)

Established response activities, if implemented timely in sufficient intensity and quality, will prevent the next Ebola outbreak from becoming a national or international emergency

These are:

- Case finding, isolation and treatment
- Contact tracing and follow-up
- Barrier nursing
- Safe and dignified burials
- Public mobilisation

The only innovative response activity that may revolutionise the Ebola response is (ring) vaccination

## How has the limited public health expenditure impacted on outbreak control?

- Low geographic coverage of health facilities, low number of health staff in rural areas, low perceived quality of care
- Weak capacity for outbreak investigation and control
- Have funds for post-war reconstruction been used in the best possible way? Lessons to be learned here?

## Which drivers of outbreak beyond lack of outbreak control capacity and lack of trust between health services and population?

- Population's lack of trust included central government and local/traditional authorities
- Text messages etc. played crucial role in spreading destructive rumours
- Epicentre in border triangle with artificial borders and official language barriers
- Highly mobile population, taking advantage of recently reconstructed road network
- **Delayed and – for a long time – inadequate national and international response**

Outbreak not going into million cases and not spreading massively into neighbouring countries  
– a success of international aid?

- Prediction of mega-outbreak unlikely scenario
- Containment success indeed, but joint effort of international and national efforts
- Non-spread to neighbouring countries to some degree good luck

# Which other countries at risk of Ebola and other outbreaks?

- Ebola outbreak: countries with suitable ecology, particularly problematic if health system weak
  - in addition to the known ones e.g. Guinea Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Central African Republic
- Ebola importation: worldwide
- Other outbreaks: worldwide



# What could global community and countries learn from outbreak?

- Act
  - Faster and more pro-actively
  - More flexibly to changing epidemiology
  - More humanely and culturally sensitive
- Prepare
  - Investigation and response
  - Research

## How should the lessons learnt from this outbreak be considered in EU global health policy and management of EU aid

- Strengthen health systems in vulnerable countries
- ? Support good governance ?
- Increase rapid investigation and response activity, e.g. by complementing GOARN through a reserve of competent and available individuals
- Fund researchers to prepare research protocols even if unclear whether and when implemented

# Acknowledgements

- Almudena Marí-Sáez, anthropologist with Charité
- Thomas Kratz, physician, ex-MSF, now Robert-Koch-Institute

# Liberia



Daily Talk

Ebola Experimental Vaccine Suffering  
- Due To Corruption, Public Fear In Lib.



EBOLA  
Vaccine

vs

Public  
Fear

1

4

Health NEWS: From stories done by Daily Talk & some other  
media institutions in L.B., there is an enormous price for a vaccine

NEWS HEADLINES



After  
treated  
talks at S/Court  
& Executive Ministry  
Warrior Seaman  
certificated finally

About 800,000 full  
people are in Lib.  
Says report.

MRU States view to  
visit sub-region  
Ebola-free in 60 days



Whistle  
blower  
Michael  
every  
found an 8th of beach  
in Mon. Police to come



prepare  
to start  
Ebola-free  
in Lib.  
Says  
UNMIL Boss but fails  
to talk on UN peace  
keeper kidnapping, a 16  
yr. old Liberian girl

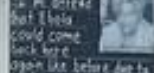
Gov't announces March  
2015 deal with S/C  
for reopening of schools,  
but yet to distribute  
anti-Ebola materials to  
schools in Lib. promise  
of the 2.2 Million USD

"War Memory"  
Year: 1997  
After  
looting  
& eating  
in this  
house in  
Some Co., these LURD  
robbers posed for



After  
looting  
& eating  
in this  
house in  
Some Co., these LURD  
robbers posed for

State, Feb 28-29, 2015  
Ebola headlines  
Ebola victims  
in streets  
but Ebola  
could come  
back here  
open like before due to  
high costs in Liberia as  
around Liberia

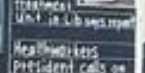


Pres. Sirleaf quits  
2,400 USD to continue  
at Capital Building as  
"cold water" for good  
pastors of all people  
& "be stealing"

Publicity battle  
found by new  
code in some Co. with  
public outcry of corrupt  
court system in Lib.

County Meet may  
not hold due to Ebola.

Gov't  
announces  
Ebola  
treatment  
UN- in Lib says report



Health Minister  
President calls on  
Gov't to pay salary  
& benefits of health  
workers across the  
country despite  
blame on the fault

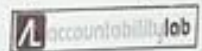
Gov't announces  
UNMIL 1,100 soldiers  
despite public  
condemnation of the  
Ebola outbreak as  
Pres. Sirleaf reads  
all. barista's open.

"Governor Sirleaf  
to make Ebola  
report to US Pres  
Obama this week

tion  
the  
Editor  
Editor

Alfred Sirleaf  
Founder  
Year - 2000  
Tel: 0886473067

In partnership with



# Guinea



# Guinea

Qu'est ce qu'il faut faire pour éviter la maladie?



Ne mangeons pas d'animaux de brousse comme la chauve souris, le singe, les rongeurs qui sont des réservoirs de virus



Ne touchons pas les corps, le sang, les urines, les selles, les vomissures, la salive, la sueur, les habits et tout objet utilisé par le malade.



Évitons de procéder aux pratiques traditionnelles favorisant la transmission de la maladie: les rituels funéraires, les repas collectifs avec ou sans lavage des mains au savon, l'exposition, la conservation et le transport des corps des personnes mortes d'Ebola.



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