

Ministry of Health-Ethiopia
Press Release

Ethiopian Support for Ebola Response in West Africa

Ethiopia to deploy 200 health professionals to boost the response in West Africa

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 24 October 2014-Despite all the efforts made to combat and control it, the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak continues to ravage the affected countries in West Africa and the transmission remains persistent and widespread especially in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. At this very moment there is unfortunately no end in sight to the end of this epidemic in spite of current efforts; and is expected to furiously worsen for the foreseeable future. The disease is a major public health threat of international concern which respects no borders and breaks economic and scientific barriers like no other epidemics of the past. The response demands a huge mobilization of both financial and human resources which are meager in the affected countries which are no match with the disastrous consequences of the disease. The African Union appealed last week to member states to urgently fill the critical and gaping gaps in the face of this disaster.

The situation as it exists today has an unprecedented pandemic potential as it has already crossed oceans and has raised the threat level for all countries in the world and bringing into focus a serious consideration to take all necessary measures to prevent occurrence of this dreaded disease in all countries including our own. In order to help fill the critical gaps in the response in the highly affected countries, the Government of Ethiopia is ready to deploy a volunteer health professionals mission of 200 to West Africa along with a financial support of ETB 10 million (USD 500,000). The professional mission comprises of medical doctors, nurses, field epidemiologists, environmental health professionals and public health specialists. They will engage in case management/treatment, surveillance, contact tracing, social mobilization, and community engagement, and will also assist the local national health system to continue its essential and basic health, food and WASH services.

Previously, following the call of the African Union Commission, the Ministry of Health of our country deployed volunteer field epidemiologists to join the AU support team.

This type of mutual assistance and support demonstrates the solidarity of African alliance in protecting our citizens and that of the world from such overwhelming pandemic threats. Ethiopia, as an African Union Member State and advocate for establishment of the African Union Center for Disease Control and Prevention (AU-CDC) which will have as a core mission of controlling and preventing such disease outbreaks is willing to take the responsibility to support sister countries in such crises.

The commitment of the Government and People of Ethiopia to support African brothers and sisters is not new; we have been the first to deploy over 12,300 soldiers as UNMIL peacekeeping mission to Liberia. The Ethiopian soldiers supported the Liberian people not only as UN

peacekeepers but also as brothers by sharing their expertise in construction of primary schools and primary health facilities for basic health services,as well as other innumerable missions.

This new commitment of deploying medical staff can be considered as continuation and commitment of Ethiopia's firm stand for African solidarity.Ethiopia shall and will continue to support all efforts until this dreadful crisis is over.

For further information contact:

Ahmed Emano, Director| Public Relation and communication Directorate |MoH| Tele: (+251) 115518031| Web: www.moh.gov.et