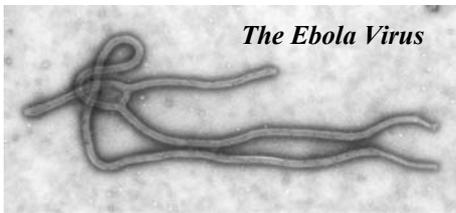


The Ebola Crisis

Yambio, June 2004



Emmanuel, Gibson and Dominic were diagnosed and treated for Ebola at the local hospital. They are now the biggest advocates for communities to fight the spread of Ebola.

How father and son are fighting Ebola!

Emmanuel's mother, Hosanna, was a well respected clinical officer at the hospital. Hosanna contracted the disease from her husband Dominic who was nursing very sick people before Ebola was confirmed. She then passed on the disease to her son Emmanuel. Unfortunately, she did not survive and died on 18th May.

Both Dominic and Emmanuel were treated at the hospital and survived.

"I began feeling ill with headache and fever. I was also vomiting and had diarrhoea. I was so scared because I thought I would die." He continues, "The hospital staff looked after me very well, and although I am so sad because my mother has gone, I am happy that I am still alive and able to do something to help others."

"People should realize that the only cure for Ebola is in preventing the spread and everyone has a part to play", says Dominic, "If I can persuade a single individual that they should come for treatment I will be happy.... That is why I am speaking at churches, markets and going house-to-house. I hope that those who doubt the seriousness of the situation will be convinced".

The Facts: What you need to know NOW

What is Ebola and how is it transmitted?

Ebola is a disease caused by a very, very tiny organism that is carried by dead and living animals. The disease is spread with direct contact of the body fluids of a very sick person, such as saliva, vomit, diarrhoea, sweat, semen and blood. The quickest way to catch Ebola is to have direct contact with a sick person who has Ebola or the body of a person who has died of Ebola.

Not a lot of people have died so should we be worried about it?

Ebola is a serious, acute and extremely contagious disease. Everyone living in Yambio is at risk and everyone should take preventative measures to make sure that Ebola is not spread. The stronger everybody takes these measures, the quicker the crisis will be over and people can resume normal lives.

The quick response and alertness of the county authorities and WHO staff ensured that Ebola was diagnosed within days. A specialist team arrived in Yambio to support the hospital staff and county health staff. An isolation ward was set up and the correct procedures for control were followed. Without such a quick response many more people could have died. The risk is still high. This is the most critical time to maintain prevention measures until it is safe again.

How can we protect ourselves and our families?

By following the simple advice below, you can play your part in making sure this crisis is over as quickly as possible:

- 1. If you are feeling sick, stay at home and call medical staff or the hospital within 24 hours.**
- 2. If you are very sick, do not go to meetings, gatherings or ceremonies as you will definitely pass Ebola on to other family members and relatives.**
- 3. If you are looking after a sick person before the specialist team is called, do not directly touch any body fluids.**
- 4. Do not sleep with or directly touch any dead person.**

The isolation ward at Yambio hospital



Patients have a special area with their own utensils and latrines. They can walk around these areas.

They can also see and talk to their family because the fence is not very high.

The sooner very sick people are treated, the more likely they can recover.

REMEMBER

1. **If you are feeling sick, stay at home** and call medical staff or the hospital. There is an Ebola Control Team active in your communities so tell them to call help. **DO NOT WAIT.** It may cost you your life and put others at risk. Call someone within the first 24 hours.
2. **If you are very sick, stay at home. Do not go to meetings, gatherings or ceremonies** as you will definitely pass Ebola on to other family members and relatives.
3. **If you are looking after a sick person before the specialist team is called, protect yourself first. Do not directly touch any body fluids.** If you have to touch them, use gloves if you can and keep children away from them. Avoid sharing any utensils such as cups as this will pass on the virus.
4. **Do not greet people with hand-shaking,** avoid body contact with others until the crisis is over.
5. If you attend a burial, **do not sleep next to or touch the dead body.** If the person had Ebola, this is the quickest way to pass it on to others. Please protect each other.

Additional advice

- Make sure food is cooked properly, even dried meat.
- Avoid picking up dead animals found in the forest.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water.
- Do not share utensils with sick people – keep their cups separate.