Since 2014, over 110 countries have received support to strengthen public health response capacities in relation to Ebola virus disease.

The Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak has highlighted the challenges that countries face in promptly detecting and responding to public health crises. This outbreak underscores the need for countries to intensify implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005) and undertake health systems strengthening.

Fourteen priority countries in the African region have been identified to receive accelerated preparedness support. EVD preparedness strengthening teams, led by the World Health Organization and comprising experts from WHO and partner organizations, have completed assessment missions to all priority countries.

These countries have developed budgeted national EVD preparedness and response plans, tested their systems and taken measures to strengthen their response capacities. Since October 2014, WHO has deployed over 230 individuals to support preparedness efforts in priority countries. As of May 2015, seven of the fourteen priority countries have successfully achieved a heightened level of preparedness, according to WHO assessment criteria.

Preparedness efforts continue to expand in all WHO regions to strengthen capacity to respond to EVD and encompass the wider range of public health security risks.
WHO supports Member States in strengthening their capacities to respond to public health emergencies

Preparing

WHO has identified 14 countries currently at risk and is therefore accelerating preparedness activities in support of these priority countries. In all countries, public health preparedness covers the full range of stakeholders from the public health system, including health care institutions, communities and individuals.

Guiding

WHO develops an extensive range of training materials and technical guideline documents to support EVD preparedness efforts. A comprehensive EVD Preparedness Checklist has been developed which outlines the preparedness requirements for countries. It includes minimum and additional preparedness requirements.

Networking

Partnerships and collaboration are central to WHO’s efforts in supporting Member States to strengthen their public health capacities. WHO works together with a wide range of stakeholders from the international community, including United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and government agencies.

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