Experts to assess mental health impact of Ebola

Monrovia, Liberia, 10 June 2015 – The Ebola outbreak that began in Guinea in March 2014 not only caused more than 27 000 cases and over 11 000 deaths in West Africa, it also left thousands of survivors, orphans, family members, health care workers and other support workers who require mental health and psychosocial support.

Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone are looking to build and improve mental health services and psychosocial support after Ebola. Experts from the affected countries and the World Health Organization (WHO) are meeting in Monrovia, Liberia, this week to see what lessons have been learned and to draw a map for how to develop and recover these systems. Experts and partners will create a response framework for mental health and psychosocial support, based on recent experiences in West Africa.

The consultation will include case studies and lessons learned from the affected countries, said Dr Mark van Ommeren, who leads WHO’s mental health efforts in emergencies. Participants include staff from Ministries of Health and Social Welfare, national and international NGOs, donor agencies and staff from the three WHO country offices, Regional Office for Africa and headquarters.

Interviews with experts can be arranged at the conclusion of the meeting, 11 June, which is being held Monrovia, Liberia from 10 – 11 June 2015.

For further information and interview requests, please contact:

Melissa Winkler, Media Relations
Mobile: +231 770 496 162
Email: winklerm@who.int

Mark van Ommeren, Spokesperson
Mobile: +41 79 475 55 20
Email: vanommerenm@who.int

Fahmy Hanna, Spokesperson
Mobile: +41 79 945 08 24
Email: hannaf@who.int

Janet Kincaid, Media Relations
Email: kincaidj@who.int