

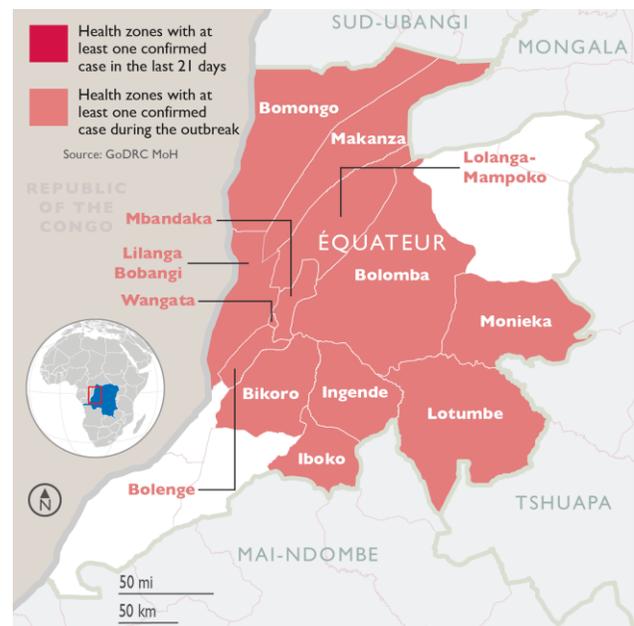
# Democratic Republic of the Congo – Ebola Outbreaks

December 18, 2020

## SITUATION AT A GLANCE



- The MoH declared the end of the Équateur EVD outbreak on November 18, concluding more than two years of coordinated EVD response efforts in the DRC.
- USAID continues to responsibly scale down some response activities in Équateur while providing additional post-outbreak support for surveillance, rapid response capacity, and EVD preparedness.
- USAID has contributed more than \$373 million to support EVD preparedness and response activities in the DRC and neighboring countries since 2018, including nearly \$25.5 million for the Équateur outbreak response.



<b>TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING</b> For the DRC Ebola Outbreaks Response in FY 2021	USAID/BHA <sup>1</sup>	\$5,957,542
	USAID/GH <sup>2</sup>	\$1,500,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,457,542</b>

*For complete funding breakdown with partners, see funding chart on page 5*

<sup>1</sup>USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA)  
<sup>2</sup>USAID's Bureau for Global Health (USAID/GH)

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

### GoDRC and Response Actors Welcome End of Équateur Outbreak

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (GoDRC) Ministry of Health (MoH) declared the end of the Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak in northwestern DRC's Équateur Province on November 18, approximately 170 days after it began on June 1. As of November 18, the MoH had reported no new EVD cases since September 28, and 42 days—corresponding to double the maximum incubation period of EVD—had elapsed since the last confirmed EVD-positive individual received a second negative test result, marking the conclusion of the MoH's countdown to the end of the outbreak. Overall, the MoH reported 130 confirmed and probable EVD cases, including 55 related deaths and 75 survivors, across 13 of the province's 18 health zones during the course of the outbreak. Bikoro Health Zone proved to be the largest hotspot of the outbreak, accounting for approximately 25 percent of all confirmed and probable cases and nearly 35 percent of deaths, followed closely by Mbandaka Health Zone, with nearly 20 percent of cases and more than 30 percent of deaths. The overall mortality rate for the Équateur outbreak was approximately 43 percent, significantly lower than the 66 percent mortality rate for the August 2018 to June 2020 eastern DRC EVD outbreak. Response actors report that the lower mortality rate in Équateur may be due in part to the deployment of therapeutic treatments for EVD, as well as likely unreported community deaths—EVD-positive individuals who died of the disease outside of health facilities—that were never included in the official fatality count for the outbreak. The end of the Équateur outbreak marks the conclusion of more than two years of coordinated EVD response efforts in the DRC.

USAID and other response actors have welcomed the official end of the Équateur outbreak, while urging continued caution during the ongoing 90-day enhanced surveillance period, which began on November 18, as health actors continue to monitor for signs of potential new EVD cases. Though four weeks have elapsed since the end of the outbreak and no additional cases have occurred, a risk of post-outbreak EVD transmission remains due to possible undetected transmission chains, relapse cases, or sexual transmission, the UN World Health Organization reports. In recent weeks, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator David McLachlan-Karr and several response actors have increasingly emphasized the importance of scaling up surveillance activities and strengthening EVD alert systems as critical components that will determine the success of the post-outbreak period.

### USAID Maintains Support for Post-Outbreak Activities

In response to the end of the Équateur outbreak, USAID is working with partners to responsibly scale down and close out some activities, while continuing to provide essential support for the 90-day enhanced surveillance period and other post-outbreak activities. Since the outbreak's end, USAID/BHA partners—including Alliance for International Medical Action (ALIMA), FHI 360, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF)—have provided additional support for community-based surveillance efforts, as well as risk communication and community engagement activities to complement existing surveillance efforts through formal health care facilities. USAID/BHA partner the UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) also plans to continue transporting surveillance staff and test samples in the coming months, further enhancing response actors' ability to detect potential new EVD cases. Meanwhile, USAID/BHA case management partners ALIMA and International Medical Corps (IMC) plan to maintain rapid response capacity for the next several months to provide immediate assistance should additional EVD cases occur, while reducing some case management activities.

In the longer term, USAID also remains committed to providing post-outbreak support to mitigate the risk of future EVD outbreaks in Équateur and throughout the region. For example, USAID/GH is continuing its support for preparedness activities in at-risk health zones in Équateur and neighboring provinces in the DRC, as well as some areas of the Republic of the Congo (RoC). These activities include strengthening infection prevention and control (IPC) measures in health facilities, supporting community-based surveillance, building the capacity of frontline health care workers and health facility staff, and enhancing risk communication. Additionally, USAID/BHA continues to support efforts to strengthen local health systems, as well as a variety of other critical health interventions in other areas of the DRC. To date in FY 2021, USAID has contributed nearly \$7.5 million to the Équateur outbreak response, bringing USAID’s total contribution for the response to nearly \$25.5 million. Since 2018, USAID has provided more than \$373 million for EVD preparedness and response activities in the DRC and neighboring countries.

## KEY FIGURES



**\$16.7 Million**

In FY 20 and FY 21 USAID/BHA support for health activities for the Équateur EVD outbreak response



**\$5.3 Million**

In FY 20 and FY 21 USAID/BHA funding for logistics support for the Équateur EVD outbreak response

## U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

### HEALTH

USAID/BHA has provided more than \$16.7 million since the beginning of the Équateur outbreak to support ALIMA, FHI 360, IFRC, IMC, Internews, IOM, and UNICEF to provide a range of health services in the province.

USAID/BHA partners have operated EVD treatment units and integrated transit centers, which provide appropriate care and treatment to EVD-positive patients and a place for individuals exhibiting EVD symptoms to safely isolate while awaiting test results. USAID/BHA partners are also continuing risk communication and community engagement activities, and working with local populations to ensure they continue to receive accurate information regarding EVD prevention and treatment. Additionally, USAID/BHA partners continue to engage in surveillance activities to monitor for possible new cases during the 90-day enhanced surveillance period, as well as support safe and dignified burials to ensure that individuals exhibiting EVD-like symptoms are buried in a manner that reduces the risk of disease transmission while respecting local customs. Moreover, USAID/BHA continues to support partners to enhance IPC standards at health facilities across Équateur by distributing water, sanitation, and hygiene kits, providing safe drinking water, and rehabilitating sanitation infrastructure.

### LOGISTICS

USAID/BHA has provided nearly \$5.3 million to UNHAS for logistics support since the beginning of the Équateur outbreak in June. During the outbreak, USAID/BHA funding allowed UNHAS to operate a helicopter to transport response personnel to remote areas of the province to conduct surveillance and treat EVD patients. With the end of the outbreak, UNHAS plans to continue using its helicopters to transport test samples from these remote regions to labs in central areas of Équateur, strengthening essential surveillance activities during the 90-day enhanced surveillance period. In addition, UNHAS is maintaining capacity to transport response staff to

Équateur’s capital city of Mbandaka from other parts of the DRC. Earlier in the response, USAID/BHA support also allowed the UN World Food Program to establish base camps to host response personnel in Équateur and provide them with essential lodging and work facilities.

## CONTEXT IN BRIEF

- EVD is a rare and deadly disease caused by infection with the Ebola virus. Scientific evidence suggests that bats are the most likely reservoir hosts for Ebola virus and that people are initially infected through contact with an infected bat or a non-human primate. Subsequently, the virus can spread from person to person, resulting in an outbreak. In humans, the virus is transmitted through close physical contact with infected body fluids, such as blood or vomit, and infection can result in symptoms such as fever, body aches, diarrhea, and severe bleeding. Scientists discovered the Ebola virus in 1976, near the Ebola River in what is now the DRC; to date, the country has experienced 11 EVD outbreaks.
- The MoH declared the most recent EVD outbreak in Mbandaka on June 1, 2020, with subsequent cases identified in other parts of Équateur. Prior to the outbreak, Équateur already faced poor development conditions, including widespread poverty and a lack of basic infrastructure in much of the province. It was also the site of two previous EVD outbreaks, including DRC’s ninth EVD outbreak in 2018. In July 2020, the most recent outbreak surpassed the number of cases reported during either of the province’s previous outbreaks.
- U.S. Ambassador to the DRC Michael A. Hammer re-declared a disaster due to the humanitarian impact of the EVD outbreak in Équateur on October 16, 2020. In response, the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) is coordinating USG efforts to support EVD response interventions in the province.

### USAID HUMANITARIAN FUNDING FOR EVD OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE IN FY 2021<sup>1</sup>

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
<b>FUNDING IN THE DRC FOR EVD OUTBREAK RESPONSE</b>			
<b>USAID/BHA</b>			
Internews	Health	Équateur	\$745,916
IOM	Health	Équateur	\$1,888,612
UNHAS	Logistics Support	Équateur	\$3,267,354
	Program Support		\$55,660
<b>TOTAL USAID/BHA FUNDING IN FY 2021</b>			<b>\$5,957,542</b>
<b>FUNDING IN THE DRC AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES FOR EVD OUTBREAK PREPAREDNESS</b>			
<b>USAID/GH</b>			
UNICEF	Health	Équateur, Mai Ndombe, Mongala, Tshuapa	\$1,150,000
UNICEF	Health	RoC	\$350,000

<b>TOTAL USAID/GH FUNDING IN FY 2021</b>	<b>\$1,500,000</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID FUNDING FOR EVD RESPONSE &amp; PREPAREDNESS IN FY 2021</b>	<b>\$7,457,542</b>

<sup>1</sup> Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of December 18, 2020.

## **PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION**

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [interaction.org](https://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietarily, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
  - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [cidi.org](https://www.cidi.org)
  - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [reliefweb.int](https://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/BHA bulletins appear on the USAID website at [usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work](https://www.usaid.gov/humanitarian-assistance/where-we-work)