

U.S. Assistance to Mali in Combatting Ebola

Updated December 18, 2014

The Government of United States is working with the Government of Mali (GOM) and international partners to prevent the spread of Ebola in Mali. As President Obama noted, “This disease can be contained. It will be defeated. Progress is possible. But we’re going to have to stay vigilant and we’ve got to make sure that we’re working together.”

The United States’ whole-of-government approach in Mali includes the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Health and Human Services - the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Peace Corps.

On November 17, 2014 the Chargé d' Affaires a.i. in Mali Andrew Young formally declared the situation a disaster. In accordance with this declaration and request for assistance, USAID’s Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance has dispatched a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to begin addressing immediate critical needs. U.S. Government assistance so far to Mali includes support in tracing approximately 300 people who were in contact with EVD cases, testing of suspected Ebola specimens, additional trainings such as provisions for safe burial practices and expanding emergency medical services where available.

U.S. assistance to Mali to date includes:

- The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** is assisting the Malian Government with activities related to the Ebola Outbreak. CDC has greatly reinforced its local team in Bamako, who have been deployed across the country. The teams are involved in contact tracing and surveillance, airport screening and border control measures, communications, training, and logistics.
- To date, the **CDC** has trained 50 contact tracers, who have been deployed to assist in monitoring persons having had contact with infected persons. CDC also has provided technical assistance in contact tracing data entry and data analysis. CDC team members are embedded in contact tracing teams and are assisting the Government of Mali with public information campaigns. They are providing data management support for contact tracing and case data.
- The **CDC** border health team is collaborating with the Malian Ministry of Health, Port Liaison, Airport Authority, the French health authorities, WHO and the International Office for Migration (IOM) on airport screening measures. Activities include developing recommendations for quality assurance measures, training for medical screeners and airport staff, data management and communication messages for travelers.
- The **CDC** communications team is working with various Malian ministries, the U.S. and French Embassies in Bamako, other U.S. Government agencies, Islamic leaders and other public, private, and non-profit organizations to raise Ebola awareness and conduct community education and sensitization activities in Mali. The team is also

providing guidance and advice to partners on Ebola strategies and messaging. In addition, the team is supporting the work of the entire CDC Ebola Response Team to help conduct training sessions and produce factsheets on various Ebola-related issues.

- The **National Institutes of Health** has trained researchers at its laboratory facilities in Bamako to do diagnostic analyses of suspected Ebola specimens, and provided the necessary equipment for these tests to be carried out safely and effectively.
- The **Department of State** (DOS) is providing up to \$75,000 for the purchase of equipment and office supplies necessary to furnish an Operations Center for the Malian Ministry of Health. The Center will operate as the Malian interagency coordination to respond to the current Ebola situation and build capacity in the GOM to address future health emergencies. More than two dozen journalists have been provided training to improve the content and accuracy of reporting on Ebola.
- Through its Office of Security Cooperation, the **Department of Defense** (DOD) has provided a total of \$46,500 for the purchase of Ebola related medical equipment for health care workers from the Malian Ministry of Health. DOD has provided technical support in putting in place Standard Operating Procedures for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- **U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)** physicians and public health experts have provided technical guidance in epidemic control since March when the outbreak was reported in Guinea. USAID/Mali sent three Malian government officials to the USAID/CDC Ebola Preparedness Workshops in Cote D'Ivoire just prior to Mali's first EVD case. The workshop provided needed technical assistance and enabled the GOM to finalize its preparedness plan which was presented to all partners in October.
- Since EVD was first declared, **USAID/Mali** has been at the forefront working closely with the Ministry of Health, the newly appointed Ebola Incident Manager, the WHO, UNMEER, UNICEF, other USG and other donors in social/community mobilization and infection control, and in establishing an Emergency Operations Center. USAID recently awarded two large health projects – \$45 million program to support Service Delivery with Save the Children and Jhpiego, and \$35 million to support Social Behavior Change Communication with Johns Hopkins University. Both programs will work to reinforce the Malian Health Sector while tackling urgent priorities, including EVD.
- In accordance with a disaster declaration and request for assistance, the **U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)**, through its **Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance**, has deployed a **Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART)** to begin addressing critical needs. As a first measure, OFDA/DART has allocated \$400,000 to UNICEF for Ebola social mobilization activities.
- Having recommenced its activities in Mali in September 2014, **Peace Corps** and 13 volunteers are engaged in outreach in host communities using local languages and accessible formats. Peace Corps Bamako is working with CDC to engage local staff in providing training and logistical support.