



NEWS
RELEASE

MERCY CORPS: MORE RESOURCES AND REDOUBLED EFFORTS NEEDED TO END EBOLA EPIDEMIC IN DRC

Global organization issues stark warning as number of confirmed cases nears 600

ABOUT MERCY CORPS

- Leading global organization powered by the belief that a better world is possible
- Empowering people to survive through crisis, build better lives and transform their communities for good
- Meeting the urgent needs of today through emergency response and disaster preparedness
- Building a stronger tomorrow by connecting people to the resources they need to strengthen their community from within
- About 5,000 team members reaching nearly 22 million people
- \$436.6 million total operating revenue in FY2017; 87% channeled directly into programs in more than 40 countries

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January 15, 2019

GOMA, DRC—The global organization Mercy Corps is deeply concerned about the inadequate international response to the growing Ebola epidemic in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has killed 392 Congolese out of almost 600 confirmed cases in the last six months. More direct funding for NGOs on the frontlines of the crisis is needed, with a focus on prevention and infection control through community engagement.

Since August 2018, two people in DRC, on average, have died from Ebola every day. This number is expected to rise following recent election-related violence that saw two health centres supported by Mercy Corps burnt to the ground. The violence also caused the partial suspension of prevention activities and follow-up of contact cases (those who have been in contact with someone confirmed as having Ebola).

“We are rebuilding and restarting our programs but the situation remains dire and complicated,” says Jean-Philippe Marcoux, Mercy Corps Country Director for DRC. “International organizations urgently need more direct, flexible and longer-term support from global donors to fight this epidemic. Currently the resources and capacity are insufficient, slow to arrive and don’t even cover the needs of priority health facilities.”

Due to the recent suspension of response activities, Mercy Corps and other actors expect the number of Ebola cases to at least double to 12 new cases per day. Already in the Katwa health zone (district of Butembo), there have been 19 new cases confirmed over the past three days. As more people are infected and die, the expected increase in the number of unsafe burials in the next two weeks could make the epidemic even worse.

“If we don’t get a handle on this epidemic, it could get to the point that borders are closed and international trade is suspended,” says Marcoux. “For a country that already has 12.8 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, this would be disastrous.”

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