

UPDATE PRA EBOLA

September 2019

1.1. SIGNAL FOR UPDATE

On 14 September 2019, the Tanzanian Ministry of Health reported that there is no Ebola in Tanzania. This was in response to a death from an unknown illness on which WHO started to investigate after having been alerted by a rumor. According to media quoting health authorities, the presumptive Ebola case, as well as another suspected case, laboratory-tested negative for Ebola Virus Disease. The patient has been buried and Tanzanian health authorities did not consider it necessary to send a blood sample to a WHO reference centre for further validation.

1.2. BACKGROUND

- Ongoing in North Kivu province since August 2018
- 10th outbreak of Ebola virus disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) with more than 3000 cases in 39 health zones in 3 provinces with a case fatality rate reaching nearly 70%
- Largest-ever outbreak reported in the country
- Second largest in the world
- Declared Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 17 July 2019 by WHO

1.3. THREATS

Main obstacle: prolonged humanitarian crisis, unstable security situation and resistance among the population.

Borders with Rwanda, South Sudan, Burundi and Uganda. There a lot of commercial activities across these borders.

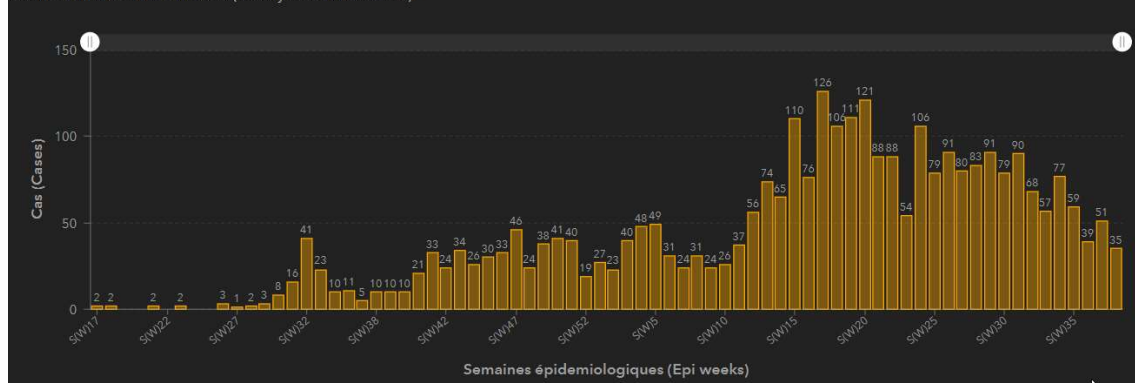
Exported cases from DRC to Uganda: 3 in June and 1 in August.

In July 2019, cases were identified in Goma, a city with 2 million inhabitants on the border with Rwanda: first case mid-July, second case begin august and the 3rd and 4th cases were contacts of the second. The 3rd and 4th cases recovered.

1.4. RISKS

1.4.1. Epidemiological evolution in DRC seems to slow down but too early to confirm the decline

Variation hebdomadaire des cas (weekly variation of cases)



<http://who.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/e70c3804f6044652bc37cce7d8fcef6c>
<https://ecdc.europa.eu/en/ebola-virus-disease-outbreak-democratic-republic-congo-ongoing>

1.4.2. No report of autochthonous transmission in Uganda

1.4.3. Control measures applied at borders and in the neighboring countries

1.4.4. No border between affected zone and Tanzania

1.5. CONCLUSION

No cases of Ebola so far in Tanzania but there are rumors about two cases. WHO is unsatisfied with the information provided by Tanzanian Health authorities. Tourism in Tanzania is very important and retention of information could exist by fearing the potential economic impact if Ebola cases should be confirmed. But it remains a presumption only.

Since June, more attention is given from the EU perspective due to cases identified in Goma and exported cases to Uganda.

Nevertheless at this point, considering:

1. What we know from previous outbreaks;
2. That bordering countries have put preventive measures in place like entry screening and control measures in case of identification of a suspected case;
3. That tourists have few contacts with the local population;
4. That if there currently were to be cases in Tanzania, it should be then very few;

The RAG is assessing that the risk for Belgium remains unchanged by the Tanzanian uncertainty.

A person coming back from Uganda or Tanzania with fever should not be considered as a possible Ebola case.

Belgium has to stay in stand-by while following the epidemiological situation, updating or completing the procedures/measures/coordination to in case of suspected case

As of 12 September 2019, the WHO assessment for DRC states that risk remains very high at national and regional levels but still low at global level.

Up to now, ECDC didn't modify the assessment of the threat neither.