

CDC in Sierra Leone



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The Center for Global Health and Prevention (CDC) began working in Sierra Leone in 2008 through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). CDC supports laboratory and surveillance capacity building activities for HIV and other infectious diseases and supports training to build disease detection and response capacity.

Staff

3 U.S. Staff
9 Locally Employed Staff

At a Glance

Population: 6,344,000
Per capita income: \$1,360
Life expectancy at birth
women/men: 46/45 yrs
Under 5 mortality:
1,750/1000 live births

Source: Population Reference, 2014

Top 10 Causes of Death

1. Malaria 17%
2. Lower respiratory infections 9%
3. Protein-energy malnutrition 9%
4. Pre-term birth complications 5%
5. Diarrheal disease 5%
6. HIV 4%
7. Cancer 4%
8. Stroke 4%
9. Tuberculosis 4%
10. Ischemic heart disease 2%

Source: GBD Compare
(<http://viz.healthmetricsandevaluation.org/gbd-compare/>), 2010



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In 2015, CDC established a country office in Sierra Leone to partner with the Government of Sierra Leone in developing and sustaining capacities to prevent, rapidly detect, and effectively respond to public health threats such as Ebola.

Ebola

In the past year CDC has deployed hundreds of staff to Sierra Leone to work closely with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, the National Ebola Response Center, UNICEF, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, Doctors without Borders, and other partners to respond to the 2014 outbreak of Ebola. Experiencing the highest number of confirmed or suspected cases in West Africa (a total of 13262, as of July 23, 2015), Sierra Leone has, with the help of CDC and other partners, strengthened infection, prevention, and control measures; contact tracing; health promotion; laboratory capacities; and Ebola treatment to dramatically reduce the number of cases and deaths.

CDC is currently helping Sierra Leone in "getting to zero" through the energized response of Operation Northern Push in Kambia and Port Loko and Operation Safeguard in Western Area. These initiatives deliver a speedy and quality response where it is needed most.

CDC is supporting the Sierra National Ebola Response Center and District Ebola Response Centers in applying as many resources as needed to identify, contain, and get rid of Ebola. Tactics include encouraging people to call the response line (117) for help with early symptoms, avoiding contact with sick people, practicing safe burials. These tactics have been working.



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CDC is providing key assistance to meet the goal of performing rapid, accurate, and complete contact tracing to find every single Ebola case and contact to prevent the disease from spreading.

HIV/AIDS

National Public Health Laboratory

CDC and PEPFAR partners assisted in establishing the Central Public Health Reference Laboratory (CPHRL) in 2011. The CPHRL offers serology, molecular, and microbiology public health services. Through Atlanta-based technical assistance, CDC assists the National AIDS Commission to institute and promote lab safety, quality control, and quality assurance in HIV/AIDS laboratory methods; supports the development of a laboratory information network protocol for HIV and related opportunistic infections; installs laboratory HIV diagnostic equipment; trains staff on current HIV diagnostic methods; and provides guidance to institute a phased national HIV proficiency testing program with support from WHO.

Monitoring and Evaluation

CDC conducted a pre-pilot evaluation to assess infrastructure, systems, and potentials for integration into the existing maternal and child health program and will develop guidelines to conduct an expanded pilot. CDC provided a national review, assessments, and technical assistance to the NAS and partners to address gaps in pediatric HIV services. CDC also established an in-country prevention of mother-to-child pediatric technical work group to harmonize activities in early infant diagnosis services.

Surveillance

CDC provided support and technical expertise in the expansion of the antenatal surveillance survey from 13 to 20 sentinel sites.

Immunization

CDC has deployed 36 public health professionals to work in Sierra Leone on immunization activities through the Stop the Transmission of Polio program since the program began in 1999. 25 of those have been field assignments. The others: 2 for communications, 6 for data management, and 3 for measles and rubella.

Impact in Sierra Leone

- Support of the global polio eradication initiative contributed to zero polio cases since 2010.

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For more country information: <http://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/countries/sierra-leone/>

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