

# Newsletter for the Post-Ebola Resilience Programme

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The Post-Ebola Resilience programme started its implementation in August 2015 and it has been progressing thanks to the hard work and commitment of the WPs leaders and the different project teams. We are excited to share with you the ongoing activities of the programme.

The team members of the **community engagement** WP are working on the EVD Museum and Data Archive project, an initiative supported by this programme. Visits in Sierra Leone to District Administrators and District Health Offices in Moyamba, Tonkolili, and Western Area have yielded access to key documents of archival interest. Interviews and casual conversations with Health Workers of Ministry of Health and Sanitation, and District Health Officers at community level health units (PHU), have aided in the construction of catalogued stories about the Ebola outbreak response. These stories will be of interest to both researchers, to better understand how to use archival data and to civilians, who wish to better understand the complex EVD response.



Dr Ger Steenberg, First Secretary of Health at RNE Ghana had a field visit to Sierra Leone in March. During his visit, Dr Steenberg visited the rainforest communities and gained inside on their local successful strategies to fight emerging diseases in their community. This information was shared in several newspapers (<http://www.nrc.nl/handelsblad/2016/04/09/hoeeen-dorp-zichzelf-van-ebolagenas-1608598>, and <http://213ou636sh0ptphd141fqi1.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/health/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2016/03/Noguchi-workshop-Njala-Sierra-Leone.pdf>)

This past March, the **laboratory strengthening** WP at Njala University in Sierra Leone successfully finished the training workshop on **Biosafety, Biosecurity and Good Laboratory Practices** for 14 participants of the laboratory's staff and future staff. It was a nine-day training with didactic lecture sessions. The training concluded with a visit to the under-renovation-laboratory. Certificates of attendance were awarded to all participants during the closing ceremony, which was attended by Ms Doris Harding, representative of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and Mr Paul Nguajah, representative of the University's secretariat.



In Guinea, Health Focus – implementing partner of WP on **RBF+**, has carried out the baseline data collection in Mamou district. The WP3 held a workshop in Conakry, in February to design the RBF model which will be tested in Mamou district. Other RBF programs from WB, EU, KfW, GIZ, UNFPA, and UNICEF joined the workshop and are interested in field-testing the same model. This activity also served as kind of “training on RBF” for national level and district level staff. It is important to highlight that the Ministry of Health of Guinea was leading this process. It is expected that together the MoH leadership and other programs following the same model will help sustain this programme beyond the two-year implementation period.

## Upcoming activities

The community engagement team will continue working on the Community Surveillance activities. Additionally, they will be working with IsraAid to coordinate forthcoming work that aims at documenting how communities perceived their own experiences of Ebola. Again, the EVD Museum is the final home of this important stories. The Njala University veterinary laboratory will be renovated and equipped at the end of April and the next training on project design and writing is planned for May. After this training the laboratory staff will submit proposals for “mini-projects” to gain experience with the implementation lab based research in the field of emerging diseases. These mini projects are planned to be executed in the second half of this year. The implementation cycle of the RBF+ model will be start in Mamou district as a pilot project in order to test the model developed during the workshop.

## The Programme

The two-year programme has three Work Packages (WPs) with the following overall objectives:

1. To enlarge the effectiveness of prevention, preparedness, and resilience to Ebola and other infectious diseases with an epidemic potential, through active community engagement and increased communication for cross-border regions in Sierra Leone and Guinea.
2. To strengthen the laboratory services including their quality assurance systems for improved preparedness and resilience of Ebola and other emerging infectious diseases.
3. To develop an approach for Performance Based Financing (PBF), contextualised to the health system of Guinea, more specifically to the preparedness of the Guinean health system to outbreaks of epidemics of infectious cause such as Ebola: “RBF+”.

## Consortium Partners and trilateral approach

The programme is funded through the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) in Accra (Ghana) and is developed and implemented by a consortium with KIT, Wageningen University (Netherlands) and Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (Ghana). A wide range of implementing partners participate in the project, i.e. Njala University (Sierra Leone), Health Focus (Guinea), HDP (Rwanda), and many others. The trilateral approach is rooted in the provision of technical expertise by countries from the region (Rwanda and Ghana) to organisations in Sierra Leone and Guinea

This project aims by the containment of infectious diseases with an epidemic potential, including Ebola, to use the One Health Concept (collaboration of the veterinarian, agricultural and the health sectors (One Health Concept).