



# EAC Health Communication in the Media 2018





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Support to Pandemic Preparedness in the EAC Region Projekt

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## May 2018: Media Coverage about the EAC Press Release – Ebola Outbreak in DRC

Source: eNews Channel Africa; 18 May 2018

### EAC states on high alert after DRC Ebola outbreak

Five out of six EAC partner states share borders with the DRC and all of them maintain close trade relations with high border traffic. There are also direct flights between the DRC and individual East African partner states. These factors have caused the EAC to be on high alert," the statement said.

Meanwhile, humanitarian organisation Doctors without Borders has intensified its response to the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The recent outbreak has claimed 23 lives so far, forcing the government and the World Health Organisation to hold an emergency meeting.

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"If you remember from the previous outbreak, it took a whole lot for the International community to understand it's a dangerous disease...Today it seems as if as soon as the first case was declared at least a lot of people are coming in to help," said Axelle Ronsse of the organisation.

"The major thing we have to do is put a lot of human resources to avert it from spreading. We have to take care of the patients, we have to inform the community..."

Source: Algérie Patriotique; 18 May 2018

### Ebola refait son apparition au Congo : l'Afrique de l'Est en état de haute alerte

La Communauté d'Afrique de l'Est (EAC), dont cinq Etats membres sur six sont voisins de la République démocratique du

Congo, confrontée à une épidémie de fièvre Ebola, s'est déclarée ce vendredi en état de «haute alerte». L'EAC



regroupe le Kenya, la Tanzanie, l'Ouganda, le Soudan du Sud, le Rwanda et le Burundi. Seul le Kenya n'a pas de frontière avec la RDC.

L'organisation sous-régionale a rappelé dans un communiqué que «cinq des six Etats membres de l'EAC partagent une frontière avec la RDC et tous entretiennent des échanges commerciaux avec d'importants trafics transfrontaliers». «Ces facteurs font que l'EAC se trouve en état de haute alerte», même si aucun cas d'Ebola n'a encore été identifié dans la région, poursuit-elle. «Les Etats membres ont mis en place une série de mesures de sécurité», incluant

l'examen rapide de personnes arrivant de la RDC, la mobilisation des personnels de

santé, la mise en place et le renforcement des capacités de centres ad hoc ainsi que la sensibilisation des populations. L'EAC, en Ouganda notamment, a déjà été frappée dans le passé par la fièvre Ebola. Selon un nouveau bilan de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé (OMS), le nombre de morts dus à Ebola en RDC s'élève à 25 morts, sur un total de 45 cas, dont 14 confirmés. L'épidémie est apparue au début du mois de mai dans une zone rurale du nord-ouest de la RDC, avant de se propager à Mbandaka, ville d'environ 1,5 million d'habitants située sur le fleuve Congo et reliée à Kinshasa par de nombreuses liaisons fluviales. Un comité d'urgence de l'OMS doit décider vendredi à Genève si la situation constitue «une urgence de santé publique de portée mondiale».

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Source: News24; 18 May 2018

## East Africa on high alert over Ebola: regional bloc

The East African Community regional bloc said in a statement on Friday it was on "high alert" following an Ebola outbreak in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo.

"Five out of six EAC partner states share borders with the DRC, and all of them

maintain close trade relations with high border traffic. There are also direct flights between the DRC and individual East African partner states. These factors have caused the EAC to be on high alert," the statement said.

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Source: Le Monde; 18 May 2018

## **Ebola en RDC : l'OMS affirme que le risque pour la santé publique est très élevé Le risque régional, englobant les voisins de la République démocratique du Congo, passe de « modéré » à « élevé », selon l'Organisation mondiale de la santé.**

L'arrivée d'Ebola dans une zone urbaine est très préoccupante », selon le docteur Matshidiso Moeti, directeur régional de l'OMS pour l'Afrique. Mark Naftalin / AP

**L'Organisation mondiale de la santé (OMS) a relevé, vendredi 18 mai, d'un cran son évaluation du risque lié à l'épidémie de fièvre hémorragique Ebola en République démocratique du Congo (RDC). Selon un dernier bilan publié par l'OMS, le nombre de morts dus à l'épidémie s'élève à 25, sur un total de 45 cas, dont 14 confirmés.**

L'agence de santé publique des Nations unies considère désormais que le risque pour la santé publique posé par l'épidémie est « très élevé », contre « élevé » dans sa précédente évaluation. De même, le risque régional, englobant les voisins de la RDC, passe de « modéré » à « élevé ».

Cette réévaluation est la conséquence de la confirmation d'un premier cas urbain de la maladie, dans la ville de Mbandaka, annoncée mercredi soir par le ministère congolais de la santé. « L'arrivée d'Ebola dans une zone urbaine est très préoccupante et l'OMS et ses partenaires travaillent ensemble pour intensifier rapidement la recherche de tous les contacts du cas confirmé dans la région de

Mbandaka », a déclaré le docteur Matshidiso Moeti, directeur régional de l'OMS pour l'Afrique.

### **Plus de 300 personnes en contact direct ou indirect**

« Nous estimons à plus de 300 personnes [ceux] qui ont été en contact direct ou indirect avec des personnes contaminées par le virus Ebola à Mbandaka », a déclaré pour sa part un médecin d'un hôpital général de la ville. Le gouvernement provincial de l'Equateur a fait état vendredi de « trois cas suspects » à Mbandaka, « dont deux se trouvent à l'église du Temps de la fin » et « un cas typique à l'église Makapela », dans un quartier de la périphérie de la commune de Wangata.

Situé dans le nord-ouest, la ville de Mbandaka, qui compte un peu plus d'un million d'habitants, est un important centre urbain au carrefour d'axes de circulation routière, fluviale et aérienne majeurs, souligne l'OMS.

C'est la neuvième fois que l'actuelle RDC est confrontée à une épidémie de virus Ebola. La maladie a fait sa première apparition connue près de la rivière Ebola



dans le nord du pays dans les années 1970.

### **L’Afrique de l’Est en état de « haute alerte »**

La Communauté d’Afrique de l’Est (EAC) s’est déclarée en état de « *haute alerte* ». Cette organisation sous-régionale regroupe le Kenya, la Tanzanie, l’Ouganda, le Soudan du Sud, le Rwanda et le Burundi. Seul le Kenya n’a pas de frontière avec la RDC.

*« Cinq des six Etats membres de l’EAC partagent une frontière avec la RDC et*

*tous entretiennent des échanges commerciaux avec d’importants trafics transfrontaliers », a dit l’EAC dans un communiqué. « Ces facteurs font que l’EAC se trouve en état de haute alerte », même si aucun cas d’Ebola n’a encore été identifié dans la région, poursuit-elle.*

*« Les Etats membres ont mis en place une série de mesures de sécurité », incluant l’examen rapide de personnes arrivant de la RDC, la mobilisation des personnels de santé, la mise en place et le renforcement des capacités de centres *ad hoc*, ainsi que la sensibilisation des populations.*

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Source: Afriquemedia; 18 May 2018

## **La Communauté d’Afrique de l’Est (EAC), dont cinq États membres sur six sont voisins de la République démocratique du Congo confrontée à une épidémie de fièvre Ebola, s’est déclarée vendredi en état de haute alerte**

L’EAC regroupe le Kenya, la Tanzanie, l’Ouganda, le Soudan du Sud, le Rwanda et le Burundi. Seul le Kenya n’a pas de frontière avec la RDC.

“Cinq des six États membres de l’EAC partagent une frontière avec la RDC et tous entretiennent des échanges commerciaux avec d’importants trafics transfrontaliers”,

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“Les États membres ont mis en place une série de mesures de sécurité”, incluant





l'examen rapide de personnes arrivant de la RDC, la mobilisation des personnels de santé, la mise en place et le renforcement des capacités de centres ad hoc, ainsi que la sensibilisation des populations.

L'EAC, en Ouganda notamment, a déjà été frappée dans le passé par la fièvre Ebola.

Selon un nouveau bilan de l'Organisation mondiale de la Santé (OMS), le nombre de morts dus à Ebola en RDC s'élève à 25 morts, sur un total de 45 cas, dont 14 confirmés.

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Source: Newspaper24; 18 May 2018

## EAC states on excessive alert after DRC Ebola outbreak

NAIROBI – The East African Neighborhood (EAC) regional bloc stated in an announcement Friday it was on “excessive alert” following an Ebola outbreak within the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). “5 out of six EAC accomplice states Share borders with the DRC and all of them keep shut commerce relations with excessive border site visitors. There are additionally direct flights between the DRC and particular person East African accomplice states. These components have precipitated the EAC to be on excessive alert,” the assertion stated.

In the meantime, humanitarian organisation Docs without Borders has intensified its response to the Ebola outbreak within the Democratic Republic

L'épidémie est apparue au début du mois de mai dans une zone rurale du nord-ouest de la RDC, avant de se propager à Mbandaka, ville d'environ 1,5 million d'habitants située sur le fleuve Congo et reliée à Kinshasa par de nombreuses liaisons fluviales.

Un Comité d'urgence de l'OMS doit décider vendredi à Genève si la situation constitue “une urgence de santé publique de portée mondiale”.

of Congo. The current outbreak has claimed 23 lives to date, forcing the federal government and the World Wellbeing Organisation to carry an emergency assembly.

“For those who bear in mind from the earlier outbreak, it took an entire lot for the Worldwide group to grasp it's a harmful illness...In the present day it appears as if as quickly as the primary case was declared not less than lots of people are coming in to assist,” stated Axelle Ronsse of the organisation.



“The main factor we have now to do is put a number of human sources to avert it from spreading. We now have to handle

the sufferers, we have now to tell the group...”

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Source: L’Orient le jour; 18 May 2018

## **Ebola en RDC: l'Afrique de l'Est en état de haute alerte**

La Communauté d'Afrique de l'Est (EAC), dont cinq États membres sur six sont voisins de la République démocratique du Congo confrontée à une épidémie de fièvre Ebola, s'est déclarée vendredi en état de "haute alerte".

L'EAC regroupe le Kenya, la Tanzanie, l'Ouganda, le Soudan du Sud, le Rwanda et le Burundi. Seul le Kenya n'a pas de frontière avec la RDC.

"Cinq des six États membres de l'EAC partagent une frontière avec la RDC et tous entretiennent des échanges commerciaux avec d'importants trafics transfrontaliers", a rappelé cette organisation sous-régionale dans un communiqué.

"Ces facteurs font que l'EAC se trouve en état de haute alerte", même si aucun cas d'Ebola n'a encore été identifié dans la région, poursuit-elle.

"Les États membres ont mis en place une série de mesures de sécurité", incluant

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Source: Mapexpress; 18 May 2018

## Ebola en RDC: Les États membres de l'EAC en état de haute alerte

La Communauté d'Afrique de l'Est (EAC) s'est dite, vendredi, en état de "haute alerte" après la flambée de l'Ebola dans la

République démocratique du Congo (RDC) qui partage les frontières avec cinq des six pays membres de ce groupement régional.

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Source: The Citizen; 19 May 2018

## EAC issues alert to member states over Ebola outbreak

In a statement released to the media, the EAC said five out of the six EAC Partner States shares borders with the DRC and all of them maintain close trade relations with high border traffic.

Dar es Salaam. The East African Community Secretariat yesterday asked member countries to remain on high alert following an outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

In a statement released to the media, the EAC said five out of the six EAC Partner States shares borders with the DRC and all of them maintain close trade relations with high border traffic.

"These factors have caused the EAC to be on high alert," reads the statement.

The World Health Organisation (WHO), Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), the

International Committee of the Red Cross and other international organisations are on the ground in DRC supporting the fight against the outbreak.

"To-date, no cases of Ebola have been detected in the EAC region," confirmed the EAC Secretariat, adding: "People should seek medical attention when the following symptoms are observed: sudden fever, fatigue, muscle pain, headache and sore throat. This is often followed by vomiting, diarrhoea, and skin rashes."

"It can be accompanied with internal and external bleeding. The public is also urged to continue cooperating with health workers at their nearest health facilities by availing themselves of information about Ebola," it added. The secretariat said it would continue monitoring the situation together with the EAC Partner States to



detect any occurrence of EVD in the region at the earliest possible time.

Ebola is a zoonotic virus disease that is transmitted from animals to humans. Experts believe that bats are the reservoir for the pathogen. While they do not get sick, the Ebola virus causes a severe, often fatal illness in humans. So far, at least 44 people are thought to have been infected with the deadly virus and 23 deaths are being investigated.

The virus causing Ebola spreads in the human population through human-to-human transmission, via direct contact with the blood, secretions, organs or other bodily fluids of infected people and through contaminated surfaces and materials, such as bedding or clothing.

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Source: Abisezerano; 19 May 2018

## **EAC: Ebola en RDC, l’Afrique de l’Est en état de haute alerte**

Les autorités congolaises ont confirmé “trois nouveaux” cas de maladie à virus Ebola à Mbandaka, dans le nord-ouest de la République démocratique du Congo portant à 43 le nombre de cas présentant des symptômes de la maladie, selon un communiqué du ministère congolais de la Santé samedi.

The EAC region has experienced a number of Ebola outbreaks in the past, and some 500 East African experts assisted in the fight against Ebola in West Africa in 2014-2016, when the disease killed more than 11,000 out of almost 30,000 infected people.

The EAC said it has a unique pool of professionals from different disciplines, all with hands-on experience in responding to EVD outbreaks.

“They can be mobilised at short notice to join the common effort of preventing the disease to spread into the EAC” it says.



point sur la situation épidémiologique de la maladie.

Au même moment, “quatre nouveaux cas” se sont ajoutés à Iboko un village de la région de Bikoro et quatre autres nouveaux cas à Wangata, quartier de Mbandaka, parmi lesquels les trois testés positifs au virus Ebola, a-t-il poursuivi.

“Au total, 43 cas de fièvre hémorragiques ont été signalés dans la région (de l’Équateur) dont 17 confirmés, 21 probables et 5 suspects”, affirme le communiqué.

Mbandaka, ville de 1,2 million habitants, et Bikoro (200.000 habitants), sont situées à respectivement 700 et 600 km au nord de Kinshasa.

Vendredi, le gouvernement avait annoncé avoir activé le plan de riposte contre cette épidémie “de portée nationale et internationale” tandis que l’OMS a considéré que l’épidémie actuelle ne constituait pas une urgence de “portée mondiale”.

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Source: NAM News Network; 20 May 2018

## Tanzania joins other EAC nations in taking precautions against Ebola

ARUSHA, TANZANIA, May 20 (NNN-DAILY NEWS) -- Tanzania has joined the other members of the East African Community (EAC) in taking precautions against Ebola, following the latest outbreak of the highly contagious disease which has no cure in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), which shares a border with five of the six EAC member countries.

Already, sensors and medical personnel to man them have been

put into operation at the Kilimanjaro International Airport, according to the Acting Managing Director of Kilimanjaro Airports Development Company (KADCO), Christopher Mukoma.

The EAC Secretariat in Arusha is also following suit. All EAC member states maintain close trade relations with high border traffic and a statement from the EAC Headquarters here, reveals that there are also direct



flights between the DRC and individual EAC nations.

These factors have caused the EAC to be on high alert with its member States putting safety measures in place, ranging from screening people arriving from the DRC at the border posts for signs of the disease to alerting health personnel, enhancing diagnostic capacities at major research centres, and informing citizens of the risk and of preventive measures.

To date, no case of Ebola has been detected in the EAC.

On May 8, 2018, the DRC Ministry of Health declared an outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in the

Bikoro Health Zone of Equateur Province in the western part of the country. By 15 May, 2018, a total of 44 EVD cases (three confirmed) had been reported, with 19 deaths, including three healthcare workers.

As of May 16, 393 contacts had been identified and were being followed. A new confirmed case in the 1.2 million population city of Mbandaka now increases the risk of the disease spreading.

The World Health Organization (WHO), Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), the International Committee of the Red Cross and other international organizations are on-site and supporting the DRC in the fight against the outbreak, the ninth time one has occurred in that country.

[View article here](#)

Source: Voice of America: 22 May 2018

## **New Vaccine Might Be Game-Changer in DRC's Ebola Fight**

The Ebola outbreak that has killed more than two dozen people in northeastern Democratic Republic of Congo could be as devastating as the one that hit West Africa several years ago, if left unchecked.

But first responders say things are different this time. That's in large part

thanks to a vaccine they couldn't use in late 2013, when Ebola cases were first reported in Guinea.

The pharmaceutical giant Merck has shipped about 8,600 doses of its experimental vaccine, V920, to the site of the outbreak in Equateur province. The



drug has gone through Phase 3 trials, but has not yet received regulatory licensure in any country.

It will be administered in Congo by the World Health Organization, a Merck spokesperson told VOA.

### **'Ring vaccination'**

Having an effective vaccine isn't enough, the head of policy and health diplomacy at the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr. Benjamin Djoudalbaye, told VOA by phone from Geneva.

V920 isn't designed for mass vaccination. People who have come in contact with a patient must be identified and given the drug.

"But the difficult part," Djoudalbaye said, "is to properly list down all the contacts and press them in such a way that they (understand they) can benefit from the vaccine and it will stop the spread of the disease."

The WHO will follow the "ring vaccination" approach, wherein anyone who has come into contact or may come into contact with an infected person is vaccinated to contain the threat. This could include family members, funeral workers, health workers and others in close contact with a patient.

So far, V920 has prevented everyone vaccinated from contracting the virus. In a 2015 trial, none of the 5,837 people who received the vaccine became sick.

A Merck spokesperson said in an email that the company plans to file for licensure in 2019, but it has made the vaccine available due to the Congo outbreak.

The WHO has requested an additional 8,000 doses, and Merck said it is working to fulfill that request.

### **Spread to neighboring countries?**

On May 18, the East African Community regional bloc warned its members that the virus could potentially spread from the DRC due to direct flights between the countries and extensive trade relations.

"Five out of six EAC partner states share borders with the DRC, and all of them maintain close trade relations with high border traffic," the statement alerted.

The WHO has not declared a state of emergency, and travel to and from the DRC has not been restricted.

But Djoudalbaye, who just returned from the DRC, said there are no sure things in disease control. It's just a matter of lowering the risk as much as possible. "The risk 'zero' doesn't exist," he said, "That is what we need to have all keep in mind." But strong action from the government can limit the disease from spreading, he added.

Djoudalbaye says health officials, NGOs and governments learned many lessons from the West Africa Ebola outbreak in 2014 and 2015, including the importance of a health-response infrastructure to support rapid intervention.



Key to that effort has been the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, which opened in early 2017.

Existing systems and earmarked resources have enabled a speedy response in the DRC, Djoudalbaye said. “After the declaration of the Ebola outbreak in DR Congo on the eighth (of May), by the tenth, we were on the ground.” V920 isn’t new. A team of scientists led by University of Manitoba researchers Steven M. Jones and Heinz Feldmann invented the vaccine in 2003 at the Public Health Agency of Canada, in Winnipeg. Initial tests showed promise. Just one shot of the vaccine prevented macaque monkeys exposed to high levels of Ebola from getting sick.

But development of the drug faltered. Lengthy, expensive clinical trials didn’t happen, until the worst Ebola outbreak in recorded history unfolded more than a decade later, in 2014 and 2015. By then, the vaccine had been licensed to Merck, and its effectiveness in humans had been established.

More than 11,000 people died in the West Africa outbreak four years ago, and nearly 30,000 cases were recorded, mainly in

Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Trials of V920 in the outbreak region helped reduce the caseload and ultimately stop the epidemic.

### **Ongoing funding**

Keeping the virus contained and the death toll as low as possible will require ongoing funding, experts say.

“If funding is cut, it will really be pulling the rug out from under health security. And countries that look to other countries that can help will be left alone again as these things will continue,” said Cyrus Shahpar, the director of the Prevent Epidemics team at the Resolve to Save Lives initiative, a New York-based organization working to manage disease threats.

“The spread hasn’t gone away. Obviously we have this new Ebola outbreak, but I think that the memory of what happened in West Africa has kind of waned a bit, and so funding is also starting to wane. And I think it’s absolutely the wrong thing to do,” Shahpar said.

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## June 2018: Media Coverage about the EAC Press Release – Rift Valley Fever Outbreak

Source: Xinhua; 22 June 2018

### EAC issues radical measures to control Rift Valley Fever

ARUSHA, Tanzania, June 22 (Xinhua) -- The East African Community (EAC) on Friday urged the partner states that are not yet affected by Rift Valley Fever (RVF) to step up surveillance to detect any spread of RVF at an early stage.

Owora Richard Othieno, EAC Head of Department of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs, called on member countries to inform the public about the risk and preventive measures.

So far, at least 26 people in two north-eastern counties in Kenya are suspected of having contracted the disease. By June 16, seven of these cases were confirmed and six of the people had died, according to the World Health Organization.

[View article here](#)

Source: Daily Monitor; 23 June 2018

### EAC sends alarm over rift valley fever

Livestock movement within the East African Community (EAC) partner states will be restricted to limit the spread of the Rift Valley Fever (RVF), a viral disease endemic to the region.

The EAC also urged owners of livestock, people working with wildlife and citizens in the region to be on alert and comply with the following precautionary measures.

"Livestock farmers should contact the veterinary services authorities in the respective partner states for information on vaccinating their animals against RVF and restrict animal movement to limit the spread of RVF," said Othieno.

Rift Valley fever is a mosquito-borne viral disease that is endemic in parts of Africa. It affects both humans and livestock and spreads through infected blood, milk or the bite of infected mosquitoes.

This was one of the measures announced today by the secretariat of the regional organization after a ministerial meeting which discussed the recent outbreak of the pandemic.



At least 26 people in two Kenyan counties of Wajir and Tana River, are suspected to have contracted the infectious disease caused by the virus identified as 'Phlebovirus' type.

By Saturday last week seven of the cases were confirmed by the World Health Organization (WHO) and six of the cases have since died.

In Rwanda, the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources confirmed cases of RVF among cattle after samples were tested at the laboratory.

South Sudan, another EAC member country with large number of livestock after Tanzania and Kenya, reported the outbreak of RVF in March this year. Reports had it that it has since been contained.

Tanzania's minister for Agriculture Dr Charles Tizeba attended the meeting in Arusha to discuss the crisis while Uganda was represented by the minister for Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries, Vincent Ssempijja.

No case of RVF has lately been reported in Tanzania but the government has called for heightened surveillance, especially in

the livestock-rich northern regions which border Kenya.

Following the ministerial meeting on Thursday, the EAC secretariat has been tasked to closely monitor the outbreaks and the countries not yet affected, like Tanzania, to step up surveillance.

The EAC region suffered considerably from the outbreak of RVF in 2006/2007. Several deaths were reported in the rift valley regions in Kenya, Tanzania's Arusha and Manyara regions bordering Kenya.

RVF is essentially transmitted by infected mosquitos and is associated with heavy rainfall which resulted in widespread flooding, which has been the case this year.

It is spread by either touching infected animal's blood, breathing in the air around an infected animal being butchered, drinking raw milk from an infected animal, or from infected mosquitoes.

The meeting resolved that emerging and re-emerging diseases as a permanent agenda item in the subsequent meetings of the Sectoral Council on Agriculture and Food Security of the six-nation EAC.

[View article here](#)



Source: The Citizen; 24 June 2018

## East Africa Community restricts livestock movement to curb Rift Valley fever spread

**Arusha.** The East African Community (EAC) has ordered a restriction on livestock movement within the region as part of new measures to limit the spread of the endemic rift valley fever.

This was announced yesterday by the secretariat after a ministerial meeting held here on Thursday to discuss the recent outbreak of the pandemic.

At least 26 people in two counties in Kenya are suspected to have contracted the infectious disease caused by the virus identified as 'Phlebovirus' type.

By last Saturday seven of the cases were confirmed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and six of the suspects have since died.

In Rwanda, the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources confirmed cases of RVF among cattle after samples were tested at the laboratory.

Some of the three districts affected in Rwanda border Tanzania, Burundi and Uganda.

South Sudan, another EAC member country with large number of livestock after Tanzania and Kenya, reported the outbreak of RVF in March this year. Information is scanty on the situation in

the world's newest nation (South Sudan) but reports indicated it has ever since been well contained.

Agriculture minister Charles Tizeba who attended the Arusha meeting on the crisis could not be reached to comment on the situation in Tanzania where no case has been reported although the government has called for heightened surveillance.

Following the ministerial meeting on Thursday, the EAC secretariat has been tasked to closely monitor the outbreaks and the countries not yet affected, like Tanzania, to step up surveillance.

Early this week, the Livestock and Fisheries Development ministry said the disease had not crossed into Tanzania.

But it also issued a number of directives to regional and local authorities to take measures to keep the Rift Valley fever out.

"Councils should start educating pastoralists on scientific ways to fight the fever," the Livestock permanent secretary, Dr Marry Mashingo, said.

The EAC region suffered considerably from the outbreak of RVF in 2006/2007. Several deaths were reported in the Rift Valley regions in Kenya and Arusha and Manyara in Tanzania.

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Source: AllAfrica; 24 June 2018

## East Africa: Dar Still Safe as Rift Valley Fever Threatens Region

The eleventh meeting of the Sectoral Council on Agriculture and Food Security (SCAFS) which has just concluded here has directed the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat to address the issue of Rift Valley Fever promptly.

SCAFS urged the EAC to urgently convene a meeting of the Technical Working Group on Transboundary Animal and Zoonotic Diseases (TADs), to address the issue of Rift Valley Fever outbreak, which has been reported in the region.

The meeting of the Sectoral Council was attended by the Minister of Agriculture, Dr Charles Tizeba and Uganda's Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries,

Mr Vincent Bamulangaki Ssempijja, among other delegates.

They directed the Secretariat to include emerging and re-emerging diseases as a permanent agenda item in the subsequent meetings of the Sectoral Council on Agriculture and Food Security.

Tanzania is, however, not affected by the outbreak. At least 26 people in two north-eastern counties in Kenya are suspected of having contracted Rift Valley Fever (RVF). By 16 June, 2018, seven of these cases were confirmed and six of the people had died according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

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## September 2018: Media Coverage about the EAC Table Top Exercise

Source: WHO; 05 September 2018

# PanPrep Project: First Cross Border Simulation Exercise in United Republic of Tanzania

WHO is working with the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) under the “Support to Pandemic Preparedness in Region” (PanPrep) project to examine methods of testing preparedness assumptions through the use of cross-border simulation exercises.

WHO has been selected to plan, coordinate, implement and evaluate a two simulation exercises, including one tabletop and one full-scale exercise. Both exercises are designed to test cross border preparedness measures in the EAC region. The first – table top - exercise took place in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, on 4 and 5 September.

The exercise focused on the capacity to prepare for and respond to Rift Valley

Fever outbreak, a common but complex illness in ruminants that can cause a form of Haemorrhagic fever in humans which is often fatal. The exercise gathered approximately 110 including participants, observers and facilitators. The core areas that need attention and strengthening in the future are the following: coordination, material support, strengthening of reporting systems from local to regional and national levels, understand better the animal/human health pathways, enhance multi-agency collaboration and set up sentinel systems through veterinary systems and human health monitoring.

Following the exercise, a meeting was convened to look at the lessons learnt and begin the planning for the follow-up exercise which will take place in June 2019.

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Source: mfc Mediaforce; 05 September 2018

## EAC Secretariat, World Health Organization, GIZ

More than 100 EAC experts, citizens and guests gathered in Arusha on 4-5 September 2018 as part of a table top exercise (TTX) to identify opportunities for

improvement in emergency preparedness and response. A TTX is a role-playing activity, which uses a fictitious story to



test processes and mechanisms during an emergency.

In the TTX, the fictitious story focused on an imaginary outbreak of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) on the border of Kenya and Tanzania. In addition to Kenyan and Tanzanian representatives, three of six EAC Partner States – Rwanda, South Sudan and Uganda – participated as observers.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) facilitated the exercise, with support from the government of Germany through the

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Source: The Citizen; 16 September 2018

## EAC confident of combating fever

One approach to be used in case of outbreak is called Table Top Exercise (TTX) in which all players in the health sector and levels of administrations will be mobilised to counter it.

Arusha. The East African Community (EAC) is well prepared in the case of a full-blown outbreak of rift valley fever (RVF).

“We have identified opportunities for improvement in emergency preparedness and response,” the regional organisation said yesterday.

One approach to be used in case of outbreak is called Table Top Exercise (TTX) in which all players in the health sector and levels of administrations will be mobilised to counter it.

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

### TERMS OF REFERENCES

Production of video snippets during a 2-day Table Top Exercise on Rift Valley Fever at the Mt Meru Hotel in Arusha, Tanzania. Video snippets should rather convey an emotional than a mere technical atmosphere. As they will be used in the context of Lessons Learned they should also convey a clear and easy to understand message.

The editing of the videos is still ongoing...

“Our region is frequently impacted by outbreaks of RVF and other diseases of animal origin, including Ebola,” said Dr Michael Katende of the EAC Secretariat.

Speaking during a gathering of health experts from the region, the official said mechanisms have been developed in case of RVF or Ebola emergencies.

The exercise has been facilitated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) with the support of the German government through its aid agency, GIZ.

Dr Katende said being a disease that impacts both animals and humans, RVF also requires ‘One Health’ approach, “which integrates both human health and animal health expertise”.



Under TTX and ‘One Health’ approaches, he explained, “we work together to address our shared regional concerns, including risk and crisis communication and logistics”.

The gathering in Arusha attracted about 100 representatives from the six partner states from different sectors including tourism and trade, animal and public health and ports of entry.

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Last month, the EAC secretariat announced that livestock movement within the bloc would be restricted to limit the spread of the disease which is endemic to the region.

Two months ago, 26 people in two counties in Kenya were suspected to have contracted the infectious disease while in Rwanda samples taken from cattle tested positive.