



The Republic of Sierra Leone



High-level Summary and Recommendations

Development of the National Action Plan for Health Security:

Sierra Leone

7-10 November 2017

Context

The magnitude and frequency of disease outbreaks and health emergencies in Africa, new emerging risks such as Zika, the expansion of known diseases like Cholera and Ebola and the re-emergence of others such as yellow fever, demonstrate the urgent need for sustained preparedness and capacity building in WHO Member States. Sierra Leone is no exception, having experienced an unprecedented outbreak of Ebola in 2014-2015, as well as ongoing public health threats such as Cholera, Yellow Fever, Lassa, flooding and mudslides, each adversely impacting the country and contributing to high morbidity, mortality, and socio-economic inequities.

WHO Member States have agreed to work together to prevent, detect and respond to public health emergencies under the International Health Regulations (2005). A World Health Assembly (WHA) decision in May 2016 requested WHO to develop a global implementation plan that includes immediate planning to improve delivery of the International Health Regulations (2005). The Global Action Plan recommends that Member States, with the support of WHO and development partners, develop and implement 5 year national action plans. In August 2016, the AFR Regional Strategy for Health Security and Emergencies was adopted by the Regional Committee in Addis Ababa. It sets the framework and milestones for ensuring health security in the WHO African region. Member States have also agreed to work towards Universal Health Coverage and to build resilient health systems which can adapt and respond to challenges posed by outbreaks and other emergencies.

Sierra Leone, like other Member States in the WHO/AFR region, is committed to implementing the WHO IHR Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. This includes the voluntary Joint External Evaluation (JEE) of IHR core capacities that should be followed with a national action plan to achieve and sustain core capacities. Since adoption of the International Health Regulations, Sierra Leone has carried out several assessments of country capacity to prevent the likelihood and reduce the consequences of outbreaks and other public health hazards, and build national capacities for early detection and effective response to public health emergencies and other events of public health concern. To fulfil Article 54 of the IHR 2005, Sierra Leone conducted its first Joint External Evaluation (JEE) of 19 technical areas in November 2016 to identify the most critical gaps within their human and animal health systems, prioritize opportunities for enhanced preparedness and



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response, and engage with current and prospective partners and donors to effectively target resources.

Sierra Leone National Action Plan Workshop

The main objective of the workshop was to finalize and cost a 5-year National Action Plan for Health Security, based on the JEE recommendations and other complementary assessments and national strategic plans. Priority activities were framed taking into account One Health, health system strengthening and whole of government approaches. The Ministry of Health and Sanitation, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Environmental Protection Agency, Immigration services and other stakeholders reviewed previous planning documents to finalize proposed activities and ensuring they link with on-going national strategies and guidelines, such as the National Health Policies, Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans, the National Health Laboratory Strategic Plan, the proposed National Public Health Agency plan, REDISSE, the One Health strategy, the GHSA roadmap and ongoing Workforce Development plans.

Over 60 multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral experts attended the 4-day meeting organised by on behalf of the Government of Sierra Leone. Representatives from UN agencies (WHO, IOM, FAO), NGOs (APHL, Ehealth, MRI Global, PREDICT) and donors and other technical partners (PHE, DFID, US CDC, USAID) contributed technical expertise to the development of the plan and overall meeting execution.

The meeting highlighted the commitment of the Government of Sierra Leone to strengthen health security, the importance of sustainable financing, the role of community engagement, private sector engagement and the importance of resilient health systems in health security. The meeting further emphasised strong country ownership, WHO leadership and active partnerships to develop and implement the National Action Plan and to match resources to gaps.

The main outcome of the meeting was the draft Sierra Leone National Action Plan for Health Security and the estimated cost related, with key priorities and cost drivers identified for detailed costing and time bound milestones and targets for a phased implementation.

The National Health Security Plan will be a coordination platform to map and ensure interplay between multiple sectors and other existing plans at all administrative levels of the country. The plan will be implemented under the guidance of the Ministry of Health and Sanitation. A National Multi-agency Coordinating Committee (NMCC) with representatives from all relevant line ministries, is proposed to be established to administer the plan, and monitor its implementation.



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The government, donors and technical partners expressed their solidarity and support to take forward the Action Plan for Health Security in Sierra Leone.

Recommendations

Government of Sierra Leone:

1. Prioritize the finalization of the National Action Plan for Health Security: both the narrative and the costed work plan, aligning high level objectives with costs.
2. Align activities to the desired objectives of each indicator and review outcome indicators to have measurable data for monitoring and evaluation of the plan, while at the same time strengthening capacities.
3. Cross-check and integrate relevant elements from legal instruments and national guidance tools, with the One Health approach, into the final NAPHS.
4. Formalize and ensure the functionality of integrated multi-sectoral high level and technical platforms for the implementation of the plan.
5. Map resources and responsibilities with line agencies, including designated names of focal points.
6. Establish a robust monitoring, exercising and evaluation mechanism to ensure timely and effective implementation of planned activities and milestones; document and share best practices to be shared over the implementation of the plan.
7. Advocate at the highest levels for sustainable financing of the plan.
8. Review existing national and international funding mechanisms such as Global Fund, Global Health Security, etc., to determine where resources can support the implementation of the National Action Plan for Health Security.

WHO and Partners:

1. Support the Government of Sierra Leone in the finalization and implementation of the national action plan.
2. Advocate with national authorities for domestic financing of the NAPHS.
3. Provide technical guidance and resources to harmonize the implementation of the various initiatives, plans and budget.
4. Promote a coordinated forum for joint review of implementation of progress with the leadership of the national authorities.
5. Support the government of Sierra Leone to take ownership of the NAPHS costing tool, through training and share best practices with other countries.

Next Steps

1. Consolidate the NAPHS and finalize the narrative by 30 November 2017.



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2. Share costed plan internally and externally by 4 December 2017.
3. Prioritization meeting of NAPHS activities and Resource Mapping in January 2018.
4. Submit and obtain high level Government of NAPHS in February 2018.
5. Launch and initiate resource mobilization efforts for NAPHS in April 2018.
6. Submit the NAPHS and budget for inclusion in 2019 national budget in June 2018.
7. Implement, Monitor and Evaluate NAPHS: 2018-2022.