1 November 2012 - The Ministry of Health (MoH) in **Mauritania** declared an outbreak of **Rift Valley Fever** (RVF) on 4 October 2012. From 16 September 2012 (the date of onset of the index case) to 30 October 2012, a total of 34 cases, including **17 deaths** have been reported from 6 regions. The last case was notified on the 27 October 2012 from Magta Lahjar in the Brakna region.

The 6 regions include Assaba, Brakna, Hodh Chargui, Hodh Gharbi, Tagant and Trarza. All the cases had history of contact with animals.

In humans, 25 samples tested positive by ELISA and PCR at the National Reference Laboratory of the National Institute of Public Health Research (INRS) in Nouakchott and at the Institut Pasteur in Dakar. In the animal population, analysis conducted by the National Veterinary Research Laboratory shows virus circulation in several regions of the country.

A multi-sector task force has been jointly established by the MOH and the Ministry of Rural Development to respond to this outbreak. WHO and partners, including the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), are working within the task force to strengthen epidemiological surveillance in both human and animal health, strengthen capacity in case management at health care facilities, strengthen health measures in slaughterhouses, and raise awareness among farmers.

A multi-sector investigation team has been deployed to conduct a detailed outbreak investigation among humans and animals in the affected areas. An international team of experts will be deployed to provide technical assistance from 3 to 10 November 2012.

Mauritania experienced an outbreak of RVF in 2010.

With regard to this outbreak, WHO does not recommend any travel or trade restrictions be applied.