- The Ministry of Health (MoH) of Guinea has notified WHO of a rapidly evolving outbreak of Ebola hemorrhagic fever in forested areas south eastern Guinea.

- As of 25 March 2014, a total of 86 cases including 59 deaths had been reported. The cases have been reported in Guekedou, Macenta, Nzerekore and Kissidougou districts.

- Six of seven blood samples tested at Institut Pasteur in Lyon, France were positive for

Ebola virus by PCR, confirming the first Ebola haemorrhagic fever outbreak in Guinea. The Ebola species is confirmed to be Zaire.

- Seven additional cases were confirmed by Institute Pasteur laboratory deployed from Dakar. The deployment of Dakar's lab to the capital was facilitated by WHO.

- In Guekedou, MSF Swiss has set up an isolation ward in local hospital. The EU Mobile Lab deployed through WHO alert and response network is also being based in this hospital

- Two suspect cases in Conakry were tested negative by the Institut Pasteur Dakar team deployed in Guinea to support Conakry VHF Lab.

- Initial reports suggest that the suspect case in Canada who travelled to Liberia was also tested negative. Confirmation will be made by Canadian health authorities

- Two samples from six suspect cases including five deaths from Liberia have being taken and are to be investigated

- The Ministry of Health (MoH) together with WHO and other partners have initiated measures to control the outbreak and prevent further spread. The MoH has activated the national and district emergency management committees to coordinate response

- Multidisciplinary teams have been deployed to the field to actively search and manage cases; trace and follow-up contacts; and to sensitize communities on the outbreak prevention and control.

- Beside facilitating deployment of 2 labs, WHO is sending two logisticians, three epidemiologists and one medical anthropologist.

- The situation is rapidly evolving and reported figures are likely to change.

EBOLA BACKGROUND

- The Ebola virus causes severe Ebola Virus disease (EVD) outbreaks in humans.

- Ebola Virus disease outbreaks have a case fatality rate of up to 90%.

- Ebola Virus disease outbreaks occur primarily in remote villages in Central and West Africa, near tropical rainforests.

- The virus is transmitted to people from wild animals and spreads in the human population through human-to-human transmission.

- Fruit bats of the Pteropodidae family are considered to be the natural host of the Ebola virus.

- There is no treatment or vaccine available for either people or animals.

- The incubation period (interval from infection to onset of symptoms) varies between 2 to 21 days.

- EVD is a severe acute viral illness often characterized by the sudden onset of fever, intense weakness, muscle pain, headache and sore throat. This is followed by vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, impaired kidney and liver function, and in some cases, both internal and external bleeding.