21 February 2019 - The Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak is continuing with moderate intensity. Katwa and Butembo remain the major health zones of concern, while simultaneously, small clusters continue to occur in various geographically dispersed locations. During the last 21 days (30 January – 19 February 2019), 79 new cases have been reported from 40 health areas within 12 health zones (Figure 1), including: Katwa (46), Butembo (15), Kyondo (4), Vuhovi (4), Kalunguta (2), Oicha (2), Biena (1), Mabalako (1), Manguredjipa (1), Masereka (1), Mutwanga (1), and Rwampara (1). [1]

No new cases have been reported from the Beni in the last three weeks. This is a significant achievement given the previous intensity of the outbreak in this area. Elsewhere, trends in the case incidence (Figure 2) have been encouraging; however, other indicators (such as the continued high proportion of community deaths, persistent delays in case detection, documented local travel amongst many cases, and relatively low numbers of cases among contacts under surveillance) suggest a high risk of further chains of transmission in affected communities. Response teams must maintain a high degree of vigilance across all areas with declining case and contact tracing activity, as with areas with active cases, to rapidly detect new cases and prevent onward transmission.

As of 19 February, 848 EVD cases[2] (783 confirmed and 65 probable) have been reported, of which 7% (485) were female and 30% (258) were children aged less than 18 years. Cumulatively, cases have been reported from 119 of 301 health areas across 19 health zones. Ongoing cleaning of case databases this past week corrected to the number of deaths and survivors discharged from Ebola Treatment Centres (ETCs) thus far; overall 529 deaths (case fatality ratio: 62%) and 257 survivors have been reported to date.

To complement ongoing response activities, the Ministry of Health is establishing a Strategic Coordination Centre in Goma. The new Centre will support the coordination and monitoring of the operations in close collaboration with sub-coordination teams working across all affected areas. The implementation of the Strategic Coordination Centre in Goma will not impact on the response capacity in the field, with WHO and partners continuing to maintain full-scale operations in Beni, Butembo and Bunia, as well as a strong presence in all affected Health Zones, to ensure the effectiveness of field operations.