

EU RESPONSE TO EBOLA BUNDIBUGYO OUTBREAK

22 July 2026

On 17 May 2026, following the detection of an Ebola Bundibugyo virus disease outbreak in the Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda, the World Health Organization (WHO) deems that constitutes a **public health emergency of international concern**. **The risk for the EU population remains very low** for the moment. However, this is the fastest growing Ebola virus outbreak to date, and it poses a **serious, cross-border risk for the affected region**. This requires coordinated international action to contain the virus and protect public health. Some of the challenges, in addition to the sociopolitical situation in the affected areas, include that there are currently no vaccines or treatments for Bundibugyo virus, nor swiftly usable diagnostics at scale, given the challenging health system context.

THE EU IS ACTING ALONG THREE PRIORITY STRANDS:

- **supporting the outbreak response** in Africa
- **ensuring rapid internal coordination** and **raising EU/ EEA preparedness levels** to respond to a potential cross-border health threat in our jurisdictions
- **increasing research efforts** to develop vaccines and treatments

Speed is decisive in outbreak response. The EU and its Member States (“Team Europe”) responded with immediate and comprehensive action to contribute to contain the outbreak and save lives. These efforts use all available channels to ensure the most effective support to the affected countries, including through international organisations, regional bodies, national and local authorities and partners.

Aside from in-kind contributions and the deployment of EU experts, **the EU has mobilised over €200 million in immediate humanitarian aid, and support to the outbreak response**, notably to enhance detection and testing of new cases, and support to research for the development of specific

vaccines and therapeutics. This is part of a broader **€493 million set of ongoing long-term actions on health**, supported by the EU in the region.

In addition to its bilateral actions, the EU is supporting countries via **significant multilateral contributions** to the global health initiatives (The Pandemic Fund; Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and CEPI), which are mobilising up to €315 million funding to help countries respond to the Ebola outbreak.

The goal is to provide support across all the different pillars necessary for response, contributing to the implementation of the Continental Preparedness and Response Plan developed by the World Health Organization and Africa Centres for Disease Prevention and Control. An effective response relies on comprehensive and coordinated actions across many different areas, from surveillance to research and development of diagnostics/treatments, from workforce training to risk communication and community engagement, from clinical care to water and sanitation actions — all underpinned by humanitarian actions in a complex region. These efforts are in line with the EU’s renewed approach to global health challenges within the Global Health Resilience Initiative.

SOME EXAMPLES ARE AS FOLLOWS:



€24.5 million has been allocated to support surveillance including:

- **€12.5 million to strengthen the Africa Pathogen Genomics Initiative and to Africa CDC, to help equip frontline teams train healthcare workers** and improve surveillance through diagnostics.
- **€5 million** to the World Health Organization to strengthen surveillance and access to supplies (e.g. PPE).
- **€2 million** to Africa CDC for wastewater surveillance.
- **Testing equipment with a value of around €5 million can be deployed where needed.** Use of response facilities established in Ituri for coordinated action through EU delegations in the DRC, Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan.



The Pandemic Fund (PF) has activated the Emergency Financing Procedures, enabling the mobilisation of up to USD\$

220.6 million to fill critical gaps in line with the PF's mission and mandate, through reprogramming and fast-tracking projects. This can be used to improve surveillance and contact tracing, enhance laboratory capacity and detection of the virus or to train emergency workforce. The EU and its Member States together are the largest contributor to the Pandemic Fund.



The ECDC's EU Health Taskforce has deployed experts to the Africa CDC and in the field, to help

coordinate the response and provide technical support. The Commission has additional experts in the field, who are coordinating operational efforts on the ground with local governments and EU Delegations.



The European Medicines Agency works intensively with WHO and African partners to support the regulatory approval of **clinical trials for vaccines** and therapeutics intended for the treatment and post-exposure prophylaxis in affected countries. Without these approvals, vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics cannot be deployed and tested on the ground. This is a key bottleneck that must be eliminated. In parallel, potential treatment avenues for patients in or returning to the EU will be further explored.



Building on the €101.9 million allocated for 2026, the European Commission has allocated an additional **€15 million in humanitarian assistance** to support the response to the Ebola outbreak.

In addition, contributions enhance emergency **operations in the affected areas and provide** significant in-kind support to aid as preparedness **and prevention efforts, including:**

- Under ReliefEU, 9 Humanitarian Air Bridges (EUHABs) have been conducted to Bunia, Goma and Juba, carrying over **650 metric tonnes** (MT) of relief supplies. These include medicines, personal protective equipment (PPE), infection-control material, tents and equipment for frontline workers. The EU has donated a further 165 metric tonnes (MT) of EU Stocks to UNICEF and MEDAIR, to support the response in Bunia.
- **Experts** have been deployed under ReliefEU to WHO and UNICEF in Bunia and Butembo.
- **Two aircrafts** are available to transport small humanitarian cargo and humanitarian personnel.
- **€1.5 million** in co-financing to the WHO AFRO Regional Emergency Hub in Dakar for 6.3 tonnes of medical supplies to the DRC, including sample collection kits, viral haemorrhagic fever kits (specialised PPE), medications, and the deployment of expert teams on the ground.
- **€2.7 million** earmarked for health support in Uganda in the 2026 initial humanitarian allocation
- EU-funded partner teams monitoring border crossing points at the Uganda-DRC border, together with surveillance, contact tracing and community outreach in high-risk areas.



These are just some of the actions that complement the contributions already provided by the EU and its Member States to the WHO, Africa CDC and affected countries before the outbreak started.

The ECDC is closely monitoring the situation and currently assesses the likelihood of infection for citizens in Europe to be very low.

- The **Health Security Committee** coordinates the EU's rapid response to serious cross-border threats to health and is meeting regularly to discuss the ongoing outbreak. On 22 May, it issued an [Opinion](#) on the Bundibugyo virus disease outbreak to ensure the EU is prepared in case of potential future confirmed cases on EU territory. The Opinion

includes recommendations for risk communication, travel-associated measures, including the importance of effective exit screening, infection prevention and control protocols, preparedness for healthcare settings, and reviewing laboratory testing protocols.

In addition, the EU is rapidly coordinating with EU countries that have direct flights to the affected area on the preparedness of airlines and airports.

Further actions include:

- **Rapid scientific advice** on infection prevention and control in healthcare settings by the ECDC, and risk assessment guidelines for infectious diseases transmitted on aircraft.
- The **EU Reference Laboratory for Public Health on Emerging, Rodent-borne and Zoonotic Viral Pathogens** ([EURL-PH-ERZV](#)) support to national reference laboratories on diagnostics and reference materials.

The Council's Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR) arrangements have also been activated in monitoring-mode since June 2026 to facilitate and enhance situational awareness of EU Member States, contributing to joint efforts.

INCREASING RESEARCH EFFORTS TO DEVELOP VACCINES AND TREATMENTS



- The key short-term focus is diagnostics and protective equipment. Existing projects increased the lab capacity in Africa, allowing the detection of Bundibugyo. Specific options are being explored with WHO and Africa CDC to further strengthen testing, sequencing and detection capacities on the ground, to deliver diagnostic solutions that can be easily deployed.
- While no vaccines or therapeutics are currently licensed for Bundibugyo, the EU is working to accelerate R&D and equitable access to new vaccines and treatments. Several vaccine candidates are under development, including via the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness (CEPI), which the European Commission is supporting with up to €73.7 million.
- The Commission supports the WHO R&D Blueprint Project with €7.4 million to work on coordination of clinical trials for vaccines and therapeutics.
- The EU-funded European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (Global Health EDCTP3) is adding €4 million in emergency funding to its investment of €73.5 million in research activities addressing the ongoing Bundibugyo Ebola outbreak, supporting development of medical countermeasures and diagnostics, surveillance, clinical research networks, and rapid-response capacities for Ebola and other emerging infectious diseases.
- The First Response Fund from GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, has been activated, allocating up to USD 50 million (USD 40 million for accelerated vaccine access and USD 10 million for outbreak response needs, to mitigate impact on routine immunisation and health system challenges). The European Commission is the fifth largest donor to GAVI and Team Europe is collectively the largest donor.
- The Commission is also supporting clinical trial preparedness for filovirus outbreaks through an EU-based reserve of investigational candidate vaccines, from which partners may benefit in the future

Support to addressing this outbreak is a joint effort of the EU and its Member States.

On top of significant in-kind contributions and long-term funding of major global health initiatives, EU Member States such as Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Ireland, Netherlands, Spain and Sweden are making available more than €46 million to the immediate Ebola response. The financed actions support mobilisation and emergency response across the board, including collaborative surveillance, case investigation, contact tracing, community protection or humanitarian assistance—through contributions to support WHO, Africa CDC, and the countries concerned. These contributions build on long-term work by Member States, such as Belgium, related to Ebola outbreak prevention, preparedness, and response. This means that, together, the direct contribution by the EU and its Member States is almost €250 million to date.