



MINISTRY OF HEALTH

OFFICE OF THE CABINET SECRETARY

PRESS STATEMENT ON EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE (EVD) PREPAREDNESS STATUS IN KENYA- 19TH MAY, 2026

The Ministry of Health wishes to update the public on the ongoing **Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak involving the Bundibugyo strain** currently affecting parts of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda.

Following the declaration by the **World Health Organization** of the outbreak as a **Public Health Emergency of International Concern** on 16th May 2026, and the subsequent declaration by **Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention** as a **Public Health Emergency of Continental Security**, Kenya has **significantly intensified national preparedness measures** aimed at preventing importation of the disease, ensuring rapid detection, and mounting a coordinated response should any case be identified in the country.

I wish to reassure all Kenyans that, as of today, **Kenya has not reported any Ebola Virus Disease case linked to the current outbreak**. However, given Kenya's close regional connectivity through road, air, trade, and population movement, the Government has activated enhanced surveillance and preparedness measures across the country.

The current regional situation remains concerning. As of 18th May 2026:

- **Over 336 alerts and suspected cases** are being investigated in DRC;
- **87 deaths** have been reported including two in Uganda, 4 Healthcare workers are amongst the reported cases;
- **13 laboratory-confirmed cases** had been identified in DRC and Uganda; and

The outbreak has been classified by Africa CDC as a **Grade 3 – High Risk event** due to confirmed cross-border transmission, delayed outbreak detection, high regional mobility, and the absence of licensed vaccines or approved therapeutics for the Bundibugyo strain.

In response, the Ministry of Health, through the Kenya National Public Health Institute (KNPHI), has activated a robust national preparedness framework, including:

1. **Activation of an Incident Management System** at national level, with counties operationalizing similar structures;
2. **Public Health Emergency Operations Centres** remaining on alert mode nationally and in counties;
3. **Rapid Response Teams** placed on 24-hour standby; and
4. Ongoing coordination meetings with counties and partners.

The Government has also intensified **screening and surveillance at all points of entry**, including airports, seaports, and land border crossings. As of 18th May 2026, more than

34,500 travellers, including **18,552** international, **5,848** local, **2514** truck drivers, and **4,729** conveyances had undergone screening. There is currently **no blanket quarantine for truck drivers or travellers**, but enhanced risk-based screening and monitoring measures are in place in line with International Health Regulations and WHO guidance.

Additional preparedness measures include:

- Deployment of an **online passenger surveillance system**;
- Population mobility mapping in high-risk border regions;
- Enhanced airport surveillance through the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority; and
- Strengthened cross-border coordination with Uganda, DRC, WHO, the East African Community, and Africa CDC.

Kenya has further enhanced **laboratory preparedness and diagnostic capacity** through designated testing facilities at KEMRI Kisumu, KEMRI Nairobi, the National Public Health Laboratory, and mobile laboratory platforms. Counties have also been directed to maintain dedicated sample transport arrangements for rapid testing and response.

On clinical preparedness, the Ministry is mapping ambulance capacity in high-risk counties with support from the Kenya Red Cross Society and strengthening engagement with private hospitals to improve early detection, referral, and reporting systems.

We are equally prioritizing **risk communication and community engagement** to ensure the public receives accurate and timely information. Community Health Promoters are supporting surveillance and sensitization activities, while engagements with transport operators, media houses, digital influencers, and telecommunications partners are ongoing to support dissemination of verified public health information and reduce misinformation and panic.

The Ministry encourages all Kenyans to:

1. **Seek information only from official Ministry of Health communication channels**;
2. **Practice regular handwashing** with soap and clean running water;
3. **Avoid contact with sick persons or bodily fluids** where possible; and
4. **Seek immediate medical attention** if they develop symptoms such as fever, weakness, vomiting, diarrhoea, or unexplained bleeding, particularly following travel to affected areas.

Members of the public can access Ebola Virus Disease information and key public health messages by dialling ***719#** or calling **719**.

We wish to assure the country that Kenya has significantly strengthened its preparedness systems over the years and remains better positioned to prevent importation, rapidly detect suspected cases, and respond effectively to any potential outbreak. The Ministry will continue to closely monitor the situation, work with regional and international partners, and keep the public informed as the situation evolves.



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