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SUCCESS STORY

USAID Helps Contain Guinea's Ebola Outbreak

The USAID-supported Forécariah ETU proved critical in halting Guinea's Ebola outbreak



Courtesy of USAID/OFDA

(L-R) Ebola survivor Alseny Touré, Acting USAID/OFDA Senior Humanitarian Advisor Linda Mobula, and FRC staff member Ugo Fabry pose in front of the Forécariah ETU survivor wall, which celebrates the ETU's 24 patients who survived the disease.

Alseny Touré lost his wife to Ebola. Thanks to treatment, however, he and his four children survived. Following his recovery, Alseny assisted activities at the Forécariah ETU, including conducting community outreach on Ebola treatment and providing support to ETU patients.

In August 2014, the UN World Health Organization (WHO) declared West Africa's Ebola outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. Since the onset of the outbreak in December 2013, Guinea has recorded more than 3,800 suspected, probable, and confirmed Ebola cases, including approximately 2,500 deaths. Despite response efforts, the country's Ebola outbreak remained difficult to control—particularly in Forécariah Prefecture, which experienced significant community resistance to public health measures, as well as constant population flux due to a shared border with Sierra Leone's Kambia District, another Ebola hotspot.

In January 2015, with support from USAID, the French Red Cross (FRC) assumed management of Forécariah's sole treatment facility. FRC staff treated Ebola patients, trained Guinean health workers on patient treatment and infection prevention and control, and reduced community resistance by educating local households about Ebola treatment.

In response to increased transmission in Forécariah in April 2015, FRC transformed the facility into an Ebola treatment unit (ETU), doubling its treatment capacity. Since commencing operations, the ETU treated a total of 54 confirmed Ebola patients, 24 of whom were discharged as survivors—a survival rate of approximately 44 percent. In total, the ETU screened more than 360 people for Ebola, admitting more than 290 patients as suspected cases. FRC also worked closely with the Guinean Red Cross to conduct community outreach and employed several Ebola survivors to operate as clinical providers and support staff at the ETU.

Providing treatment in this challenging prefecture proved critical to containing the Ebola outbreak in Guinea. WHO declared the end of active transmission on December 29, 2015—42 days after the last Ebola patient from Forécariah recovered from the disease. Through patient treatment and community outreach, the FRC-managed ETU supported the people of Forécariah during a crucial period in Guinea's Ebola outbreak.