

# CDC in Liberia



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) began collaborating with the Government of Liberia in 2007 with the launch of the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI). In 2014, CDC expanded its presence to support the Government of Liberia's Ebola outbreak response. As Liberia continues to recover, CDC remains committed to supporting and strengthening the Ministry of Health (MoH) and its services through Global Health Security Agenda activities.

## Staff

CDC office (physical presence)  
10 U.S. Assignee  
13 Locally Employed

## At a Glance

Population: 4,503,000  
Per capita income: \$790  
Life expectancy at birth women/men: 61/59 yrs  
Infant mortality rate: 54/1000 live births

Source: PRB 2014 World Population Data Sheet

## Top 10 Causes of Death

1. Lower respiratory infections 12%
2. Malaria 8%
3. TB 6%
4. HIV/AIDS 6%
5. Stroke 5%
6. Diarrheal Diseases 5%
7. Birth Asphyxia & Birth Trauma 4%
8. Ischemic Heart Disease 4%
9. Preterm Birth Complications 4%
10. Maternal Conditions 3%

Source: WHO Country Health Profiles 2012: Liberia



## Ebola and the Global Health Security Agenda

In March 2014, the largest known Ebola outbreak in history began in West Africa, primarily affecting Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone. Liberia reported more than 10,600 cases and 4,800 deaths. CDC and its partners helped establish emergency operations centers to coordinate the response to Ebola and future health threats. Response activities also included

- Identifying people sick with Ebola and monitoring their contacts,
- Implementing effective infection prevention and control measures,
- Designing and delivering strategies for health promotion, and
- Providing guidance and resources to help strengthen laboratory systems.

The work proved successful when, in May 2015, Liberia was declared Ebola-free. Additional cases have occurred since that time, but the responses have been effective and the clusters were rapidly controlled.



CDC supports the Liberia MoH's Men's Health Screening Program, which provides screening and counseling services for male Ebola survivors. The program educates men and women on how to reduce the risk of sexual transmission of the Ebola virus. With growing information suggesting that Ebola virus can stay in the body of a survivor for more than a year, the screening program is an important effort to control future outbreaks.

CDC is also partnering with Liberia under the [Global Health Security Agenda](#) to develop essential systems to prevent, detect, and respond to outbreaks. Working closely with the MoH and in-country partners, CDC supports efforts to build surveillance systems that monitor cases of infectious diseases, improve the safety and quality of national laboratory systems, develop the skills of the public health workforce, and establish emergency operations centers that can launch a quick, coordinated response to a public health threat. This work helps improve the world's ability to stop outbreaks before they become epidemics.

### **Malaria**

Since 2008, CDC has assigned a resident advisor to Liberia, as part of an interagency team with USAID, to support the MoH malaria prevention and control interventions. These include providing long-lasting insecticide mosquito nets and indoor residual spraying; preventing malaria in pregnancy; improving diagnostics and case management; surveillance, and monitoring and evaluation of malaria-related activities. CDC technical support has included dedicated diagnostic technical assistance visits to support the efforts of the National Malaria Control Program (NMCP) to rationalize treatment guidelines and improve the rollout of malaria diagnostics. Another goal is to improve entomologic capacity by providing equipment, supplies, and mentoring for NMCP entomologic technicians, in particular surveillance equipment to determine species distribution and mosquito densities and training for insecticide resistance through the CDC bottle bioassay testing.

### **Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP)**

Working with the MoH, CDC has helped develop Liberia's first Field Epidemiology Training Program to train disease detectives. As of June 2016, 74 students have graduated from the program. Students have included staff from the MoH and from county and district health teams. Graduates and current students have used their new skills to help control Ebola outbreaks in Monrovia and to investigate outbreaks of other diseases across the country.

### **Immunizations**

The 2014 measles campaign was interrupted by the Ebola outbreak. As a result, Liberia experienced one of the largest measles outbreaks in its history. Immunizations for other vaccine-preventable diseases also declined during the Ebola outbreak. CDC is helping improve routine immunization services and is supporting mass immunization campaigns.

### **Impact in Liberia**

- 74 students graduated from Liberia's Field Epidemiology Training Program in 2016 and are now working all over Liberia on district health teams and in the MOH.

For more information please contact Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

**CDC-Atlanta**  
1600 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30333  
Email: [cgh@cdc.gov](mailto:cgh@cdc.gov)

**CDC-Liberia**  
U.S. Embassy, 502 Benson Street, Monrovia