

## South Sudan alert after Ebola outbreak in Uganda

Monday 30 July 2012

July 30, 2012 (JUBA) - The Republic of South Sudan remains alert after a confirmed Ebola outbreak in neighbouring Uganda reportedly killed 13 people, with at least 20 cases reported by the country's health officials.

An outbreak of the deadly disease, according to local media reports, were confirmed in the Western Ugandan district of Kibaale, located about 200km from the country's capital, Kampala. The district reportedly has a total population of about 646,700 people.

An official from the South Sudanese ministry of health, speaking on condition of anonymity, told *Sudan Tribune* on Monday that the new nation, being a neighbour to Uganda, will "not take chances" at all on the disease.

"Ebola, as you know, is a deadly disease and the rate at which it spreads from one person to another is very rapid. We need to take precaution as a country especially with the massive influx of Ugandans coming into South Sudan," the official warned.

According to the World Health organization (WHO), there is no treatment and no vaccine against Ebola, which is transmitted by close personal contact and, depending on the strain, kills up to 90 percent of those who contract the virus.

Meanwhile, the Ugandan government has reportedly embarked on coordinating needs assessments and response efforts aimed at containing the outbreak.

According to WHO, "A team of experts from the government, WHO and CDC (U.S. Centers for Disease Control) are in the field and following up on all suspected cases and those who got into contact with patients."

In addition, the Ugandan Red Cross (URC) has reportedly been asked by the Ministry of Health to prepare for support to case tracking, social mobilization and community awareness, while a team of mobilized URC volunteers and staff are reportedly on standby ready for deployment as soon as the modalities for engagement have been confirmed.

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