

WHO official: Ebola under control in Uganda

August 3 2012, by RODNEY MUHUMUZA

(AP) — Doctors were slow to respond to an outbreak of Ebola in Uganda because symptoms weren't always typical, but a World Health Organization official said Friday that authorities are halting the spread of the deadly disease.

Joaquim Saweka, the WHO representative in Uganda, told reporters in the capital Kampala that everyone known to have had contact with [Ebola](#) victims has been isolated. Ugandan health [officials](#) have created an "Ebola contact list" with names of people who had even the slightest contact with those who contracted Ebola. The list now bears 176 names.

"The structure put in place is more than adequate," Saweka said. "We are isolating the suspected or confirmed cases."

Ebola was confirmed in Uganda on July 28, several days after villagers were dying in a remote corner of western Uganda. Ugandan officials were slow to investigate possible Ebola because the victims did not show the usual symptoms, such as coughing blood. At least 16 Ugandans have died of the disease.

Delays in confirming Ebola allowed the disease to spread to more villages deep in the western district of Kibaale, Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni said.

"The doctors in Kibaale say the symptoms were a bit atypical of Ebola," Museveni said in a national address Monday. "They were not clearly like

Ebola [symptoms](#). Because of that delay, the sickness spread to another village."

Saweka said that organizations such as Doctors Without Borders and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are helping Ugandan officials to control the spread of Ebola.

This is the fourth outbreak of Ebola in Uganda since 2000, when the disease killed 224 people and left hundreds more traumatized in northern Uganda.

Ebola is highly infectious and kills quickly. The disease was first reported in 1976 in Congo and is named for the river where it was recognized, according to the CDC.

The aid group Doctors Without Borders said in a statement on Wednesday that the first victim of the Ebola outbreak was a 3-month-old girl and that of the 65 people who attended her funeral, 15 later contracted the deadly [disease](#).

Funerals in [Uganda](#) are typically elaborate affairs that draw huge crowds. Health officials have now taken on the task of safely burying the bodies of Ebola victims, Saweka said.

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