

# WHO says Liberia, Guinea meeting Ebola targets

December 1 2014, by John Heilprin

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In this photo taken on Friday, Nov. 28, 2014, health workers wearing Ebola protective gear remove the body of a man they suspect died from the Ebola virus, at a USAID, American aid Ebola treatment center at Tubmanburg on the outskirts of Monrovia, Liberia. Two months ago, the World Health Organization launched an ambitious plan to stop the deadly Ebola outbreak in West Africa, by isolating 70 percent of Ebola sick by December 1, 2014, but on Sunday Nov. 30, 2014, it seems that WHO will miss their own target by a wide margin and without any indication of when they may reach that goal. Head of the U.N.'s Ebola response Anthony Banbury, says "There are still going to be many people who catch the disease and many people who die from it". (AP Photo/ Abbas Dulleh)

Liberia and Guinea have met a Dec. 1 target for isolating 70 percent of people infected with Ebola and safely burying 70 percent of those who die, the World Health Organization said Monday.

Only last week, the U.N. health agency had said only Guinea was on track to meet the targets for getting the deadly Ebola outbreak under control in the three hardest-hit West African countries.

But at a news conference in Geneva, WHO's Dr. Bruce Aylward said the organization had revised its conclusion based on more analysis of its data. Sierra Leone also probably met the targets in the west of the country, he said, and likely will improve to the 70 percent target nationwide "in the coming weeks."

Aylward also told reporters that WHO's ambitious plan to stop the deadly Ebola outbreak in West Africa has shown it possible to quickly reduce the "yawning gap" between disease levels and the capacity to respond.

"You can catch up with Ebola even on this scale," he said.

However, he added that it "doesn't mean you're automatically going to get to zero" cases and eliminate unsafe burials without more cooperation among organizations, communities, citizens and country leaders.

It is also important for people who have changed their behavior to reduce the disease risks to avoid becoming complacent, he said.

WHO launched its Ebola plan two months ago to isolate 70 percent of the sick and safely bury 70 percent of the victims in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone by December 1.

But the U.N. and others have predicted that Ebola will continue to sicken people in West Africa and possibly elsewhere until sometime next year.



In this file photo taken Thursday, Oct. 16, 2014, a healthcare worker in protective gear is sprayed with disinfectant after working in an Ebola treatment center in the west of Freetown, Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone will soon see a dramatic increase in desperately needed Ebola treatment beds, but it's still not clear who will staff them, according to the top United Nations official in the fight against the disease. (AP Photo/Michael Duff, File)



In this file photo taken Saturday, Oct. 4, 2014, a child suffering from the Ebola virus receives treatment at Makeni Arab Holding Centre in Makeni, Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone will soon see a dramatic increase in desperately needed Ebola treatment beds, but it's still not clear who will staff them, according to the top United Nations official in the fight against the disease. (AP Photo/Tanya Bindra, File)

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