February 2022 Background Sheet 1

RESULTS

Talking points on CEPI's '100 Days' Mission

Sometimes, the technical language, facts and figures about the creation of vaccines can seem complex. This month's action is very straightforward: to help achieve faster development and deployment of vaccines, to save many of the millions of lives lost to deadly pandemics like COVID-19, and to other potential disease threats.

Here are some talking points you might find helpful in creating your letter. Keeping it simple, and setting out your own moral arguments and motivation, are most persuasive!

- Vaccines are at the heart of how we counter infectious disease threats. They are among our best tools against disease threats and will be critical to any future response.
- The Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) is a global partnership launched in 2017 to accelerate the development of vaccines against infectious diseases and to ensure equitable access to these vaccines during outbreaks.
- CEPI has a plan to give the world the ability to fight and contain disease outbreaks before they spread.
- Supporting CEPI will help its mission to develop, manufacture and distribute vaccines in 100 days, which would save millions of lives across the world.
- If the world had developed the first COVID-19 vaccine within 100 days, the first vaccines could have been distributed in April 2020, when there were just 2.3 million cases, rather than the 68 million people who were infected by December 2020.
- The UK Government should commit £60 million per year for the next 5 years to support CEPI's work, at its fundraising summit in March.

Hear From the Experts!

If you would like further information on CEPI's mission, you can read the CEO of CEPI, Dr. Richard Hatchett's blog, where he shares his thoughts on how the '100 Days Mission' can be achieved.

You can also watch this film which explores what could be achieved if we are able to develop new life-saving vaccines within 100 days.

Case study: 13th Ebola outbreak in Democratic Republic of the Congo

In December 2021, the national health authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) announced the end of an outbreak of Ebola that had begun in October. 11 cases, including six deaths, were reported since the first case was confirmed. This was the country's 13th outbreak – the disease is endemic in DRC – and occurred in the same area as the major 2018 outbreak that persisted for two years.

In support, the World Health Organization deployed experts and supplies, and contributed funds to help contain the outbreak. The response included measures such as contact tracing, testing, disease surveillance as well as community collaboration efforts. Unpredictable security hampered the response in some places, with health workers and other responders unable to reach insecure areas to monitor contacts or administer vaccines. Results from genome sequencing, conducted by the country's National Institute of Biomedical Research, found that the first case probably represented a residual case from the 2018–2020 outbreak.

A five-month-old baby smiles when he sees his mother through the plastic that separates them at an Ebola Treatment Centre (ETC) in Beni, North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Image credit: Thomas Nybo / UNICEF

DRC has set up an Ebola Survivor Programme, which currently includes more than 1,100 people from previous outbreaks in North Kivu Province. Two survivors from the outbreak that just ended have been enrolled in the programme. For the next 18 months they will receive monthly check-ups, which include medical evaluations, psychological and nutritional support.

Outbreaks are thought to occur when Ebola is transmitted to people from wild animals, following which it can spread in the human population. Effective control of an outbreak of Ebola relies on coordination and implementation of several interventions including case management, infection prevention and control, surveillance and contact tracing, laboratory and diagnostics, and safe and dignified burials. Community engagement is critical to successfully controlling outbreaks.

Several vaccines to protect against Ebola are in development and have been used to help control the spread of Ebola during outbreaks. CEPI is working to provide additional tools to control Ebola outbreaks and save lives, with the overall goal of attaining licenses for at least two Ebola vaccines.

In 2019, CEPI was part of a global consortium supporting the Government of the DRC to conduct a large-scale clinical trial with a second investigational Ebola vaccine, as part of ongoing efforts to control the outbreak in North Kivu and Ituri provinces.

Sources: UN News and CEPI