



PRESS RELEASE

ECSA-HC CALLS FOR STRENGTHENED REGIONAL VIGILANCE FOLLOWING CONFIRMATION OF A BUNDIBUGYO VIRUS DISEASE (EBOLA) CASE IN KENYA

Arusha, Tanzania | 6 October 2026: The East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC) is closely monitoring the situation following Kenya's confirmation, on 5 October 2026, of its first imported case of Bundibugyo Virus Disease (BVD), a form of Ebola disease.

The patient, a 40-year-old Kenyan man, fell ill in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and travelled through Uganda by road and air before arriving in Nairobi on 3 October. He was isolated and treated but subsequently died. The Kenya National Public Health Institute (KNPHI) responded the same day, and contacts, including health workers and relatives, are being followed up. His journey across three countries highlights the risk of cross-border spread.

"The confirmation of this imported case underlines the importance of the preparedness work that Member States and regional partners have been undertaking. No country can effectively manage a cross-border health threat alone," said **Dr. Ntuli Kapologwe, Director General , ECSA-HC.**

Immediately after the declaration, ECSA-HC reached out to the Government of Kenya and received a situation report on the national response. Kenya has requested technical and financial support, and ECSA-HC has committed to assist upon receipt of a formal request, including Points of Entry screening using the ECSA-HC Digital Screening Tool, infection prevention and control training, contact tracing support and PHEOC surge capacity training.

Support will be coordinated with Africa CDC, WHO, IGAD and other partners, and builds on the six-month cross-border Ebola preparedness intervention ECSA-HC launched in August 2026 under the World Bank-supported Health Emergency Preparedness, Response and Resilience Programme (HEPRRP), targeting 33 high-risk Points of Entry and 16 priority transport corridors.

Page 1/2



ECSA-HC urges Member States to stay vigilant without causing unnecessary alarm, and encourages communities to rely on information from Ministries of Health, WHO, Africa CDC and other recognised authorities.

“Our commitment is not only to respond when cases occur, but to build systems that detect threats early, act quickly and prevent local transmission from becoming a regional crisis.” added **Dr. Kapologwe**.

About ECSA-HC

The East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC) is an intergovernmental regional health organisation mandated to foster cooperation, coordination and collective action among its Member States to improve health outcomes and strengthen health systems. Its Member States are Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe with São Tomé and Príncipe participating as an Observer State.

Through HEPRRP, ECSA-HC has also extended technical support to Burundi, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Rwanda and São Tomé and Príncipe, strengthening emergency preparedness, resilience and regional health security.

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