

## INTERNATIONAL OUTBREAKS OF IMPORTANCE

contacts have completed their follow-up period, while 24 have become symptomatic, including 19 in Bikoro, three in Ingende and two in Lotumbe.

From 5 June 2020 to 16 August 2020, a total of 22 468 people has been vaccinated. An additional 170 people were vaccinated with rVSV-ZEBOV-GP on 15 August 2020, including 22 high risk contacts, 143 contacts of contacts and five probable contacts.

The EVD outbreak in Équateur Province is of grave concern, given the continuing increase in incident cases and further geographical spread. The outbreak is further complicated by the COVID-19 outbreak, a long-standing measles outbreak and a complex humanitarian crisis in the country. Challenges continue around known confirmed cases still living in the community and contacts lost to follow-up. Additionally, there is a lack of funding

for the response, particularly that required to prevent further spread, and inadequate human resources for risk communication and engagement in affected health zones and hotspots.

WHO reports that the ongoing EVD outbreak requires robust response activities in order to control this outbreak and break chains of transmission and engage the community in these activities. It is vital that the outbreak does not spread to new geographical areas. The response to EVD should be linked to existing COVID-19 activities in order to use resources efficiently. These efforts should be encouraged and supported nationally and by partners.

As of 24 August 2020, there are no EVD cases reported in South Africa associated with the current outbreak in the DRC. In addition, there are no suspected cases of EVD in South Africa at present.

Source: WHO: [www.who.int](http://www.who.int); WHO-AFRO, Division of Public Health Surveillance and Response, NICD-NHLS; [outbreak@nicd.ac.za](mailto:outbreak@nicd.ac.za)

## SEASONAL DISEASES

### Influenza and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) seasons, 2020

As in other southern hemisphere countries, there has been little influenza activity so far this year during the usual influenza season (May to September). This is most likely due to the various hygiene and physical distancing measures implemented to reduce SARS-CoV2 virus transmission.

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) usually precedes the influenza season, starting between the beginning of February and mid-March, with the mean peak of the season in mid-April. Although the detection rate of RSV briefly crossed the seasonal threshold during April [using

the Moving Epidemic Method (MEM), a sequential analysis using the R language, to calculate the duration, start and end of the annual epidemic], it remained lower than the 10-year mean. Since mid-July, there has been an increase in detection of RSV, mainly in the Western Cape Province, possibly due to relaxation of restrictions. This increase has been mainly in hospitalised children under the age of five where detections have crossed the seasonal threshold, but have remained at a low level. As COVID-19 restrictions are progressively relaxed, NICD will continue to monitor trends in influenza and RSV through our inpatient and outpatient surveillance programmes.

Source: Centre for Respiratory Diseases and Meningitis, NICD-NHLS; [cherylc@nicd.ac.za](mailto:cherylc@nicd.ac.za)