

Govt names districts at high risk of Ebola

BY TONY ABET

KAMPALA. The Ministry of Health has flagged 36 districts and cities as being at a very high risk of Ebola spread following the May 15 outbreak in Kampala, where two cases were reported.

Details from the ministry indicate that there are three risk categorisations. More than 20 districts and cities are also categorised as being at moderate to high risk of Ebola spread.

The districts classified as "very high risk" are mainly in western Uganda, particularly those along the Uganda-DRC border; refugee-hosting areas, as well as Kampala and Wakiso.

These 36 districts also include Lamwo, almost all districts in West Nile Sub-region, Kiryandongo, Hoima, Kabarole, Kas-

ese, Kanungu and Isingiro, among others.

During a meeting with health workers yesterday, Dr Sunday Kithula, the principal medical officer in the Public Health Emergencies Preparedness and Response Division in the Ministry of Health, said: "As of May 15, a total of 13 confirmed cases have been identified, with 67 probable cases currently under investigation (in DR Congo). The probable cases have been reported as early as April 1 in the Mongbwalu Health zone."

"Uganda has confirmed two cases that have been seeking care in Uganda from DRC in Kampala and districts neighbouring DRC, and a number of health workers are in quarantine," he added.

He did not specify the number of quarantined health workers, and other officials have also been unwilling to share

VERY HIGH RISK DISTRICTS

Lamwo	Kikuube
Moyo	Ntoroko
Obongi	Kabarole
Adjumani	Bundibugyo
Yumbe	Bunyangabu
Koboko	Kyegegwa
Maracha	Fort Portal
Terego	Kamwenge
Arua City	Kasese
Madi Okollo	Kitagwenda
Arua	Rubirizi
Zombo	Rukungiri
Nebbi	Kanungu
Pakwach	Rubanda
Kiryandongo	Kisoro
Bulisa	Isingiro
Hoima	Kampala
Hoima City	Wakiso

this information.

Information from the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organisation (WHO) indicates that the index case, a 59-year-old Congolese male, was treat-

HIGH TO MODERATE RISK OF EBOLA

Nwoya	Ntungamo
Masindi	Rwampara
Nakasongola	Lwengo
Luweero	Masaka City
Kyankwanzi	Mpigi
Kiboga	Jinja City
Mityana	Iganga
Mubende	Mbale City
Kyenjojo	Soroti City
Kagadi	Moroto
Busheya	Lira City
Mbarara City	Gulu City

ed at Kibuli Muslim Hospital in Kampala. He was admitted on May 11, but he deteriorated and died on May 14 in the intensive care unit (ICU). The body was reportedly taken the same night back to the DRC.

Dr Henry Lulu Leku, the assistant district health officer for Adjumani District, one of the districts at a very high risk, said they need more support from the ministry as development partners have not come through as they had done in

the past outbreaks.

"We need to go beyond online engagement to support the weak health systems. We need to be doing similar engagement. Currently, we don't have partners supporting the local response. We have heard there is a suspected case in South Sudan," he said.

Dr Kithula explained that the rapid spread of the virus is worsened by frequent mobility between DRC and Uganda for trade.

There are also direct flights two weeks from Bunia in the Democratic Republic of Congo to Entebbe, while Entebbe Airfield also handles flights connecting Bunia and South Sudan.

"One of the cases was also able to travel through Hoima and proceeded to Jinja," Dr Kithula revealed.

The ministry has asked the public to report persons with Ebola-like symptoms through the toll-free line 0800-1000 and free SMS to 6767.

Now the WHO said they assessed the situation and found that the outbreak caused by the Bundibugyo virus in the two countries "constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC)."