



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SANITATION  
4<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, YOUYI BUILDING  
BROOKFIELDS, FREETOWN

Press Release

Confirmed measles outbreak in Kambia District

For Immediate Release

Freetown – 29<sup>th</sup> October, 2021

The Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) today declared a measles outbreak in Kambia District. There have been a total of 3 confirmed cases from a cluster of suspected cases in Bamoi Luma in the district. The MoHS is working with the World Health Organization and other partners and has dispatched Rapid Response Teams to conduct detailed investigation of the outbreak and plan for a response.

A measles outbreak is defined as 3 or more laboratory confirmed cases in a community or district within a span of one month.

On the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021, the Kambia District Health Management Team (DHMT) was notified by the Bamoi Luma Community Health Centre (CHC) of three suspected cases of measles in children aged 3, 5, and 6, residents of Fullah Town and Guinea Park communities within the Bamoi Luma CHC catchment area. The district surveillance unit conducted preliminary investigations including active case search in the surrounding communities leading to the identification and detection of twelve (12) additional suspected cases. Blood samples were collected from seven of the suspected cases for confirmation at the Central Public Health Reference Laboratory (CPHRL) in Freetown on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2021. Three of the samples tested positive for measles.

Measles is a serious but vaccine-preventable disease that is caused by a virus. When children are unvaccinated, the virus can spread quickly and cause severe illness, disability and deaths. A safe, free and effective vaccine is available to protect children against measles virus, with two doses given as part of the routine vaccination schedule in Sierra Leone (the first dose at 9 months and the second at 15 months).

The Ministry of Health advises and encourages the public to get their children vaccinated against measles. Measles vaccination is available free of cost at all health facilities in the country.

The public is hereby reminded that it is important to take preventative measures to control the spread of measles. The following precautions are advised:

- Avoid overcrowded living environments and engaging in public gatherings
- Keep children home from school if sick
- Ensure vaccination status of your child is up to date for all vaccine preventable diseases
- It is important to stay calm and not to panic
- Ensure to drink plenty of fluids and maintain good hydration
- Report all suspected measles cases (**fever and rash**) to your nearest health facility
- Good hand washing using soap and clean water

For more information, please contact:

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