
ECA to launch report on the economic impact of Ebola Virus Disease

Addis Ababa, 10 December 2014 (ECA) - While the Ebola outbreaks in both Nigeria and Senegal officially ended in October 2014 and both countries declared free of Ebola, a new United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) report looks at the impact of the 13,241 cases identified and 4,950 deaths reported in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone so far.

The report raises the alarm on the risk of a rise in mortality of diseases not related to Ebola and also points out the wider impacts of the virus on the livelihoods of those affected. Educational systems, rising social stigma, unemployment, and decreased food security are some of the big issues that Ebola-affected countries must deal with, according to the report.

Despite the alarm, Carlos Lopes calls for a careful and cautious approach to the response. The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa notes that while the social and economic situation in the three most affected countries is dramatic, the crisis for Africa as a Continent is exaggerated.

According to the report, West Africa has been the fastest growing region in Africa in recent years. Based on 2013's estimates, the three Ebola countries taken together only represent 2.42 percent of West Africa's GDP and 0.68 percent of Africa's GDP, so West Africa's overall growth should remain robust.

Lopes says: "In Africa we are dealing with a stigma that is growing by the day and this is going to affect economies that have nothing to do with Ebola."

Note to Editors:

The Report will be launched on Monday at 11:00am at the UN Conference Centre by the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa.

Copies of the Report will be available for pick up or for download on the day of the launch. An embargoed copy of the report may be available to media on request this week.

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