

Humanistic challenges and opportunities in introducing an Ebola vaccine: Anthropology weighs in

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“Today we know the best way to prevent the spread of Ebola infection is through public health measures, including good infection control practices, isolation, contact tracing, quarantine, and provision of personal protective equipment. However, a vaccine will ultimately be an important tool in the prevention effort.”

____Anthony S.Fauci, NIAID Director (August 2014)

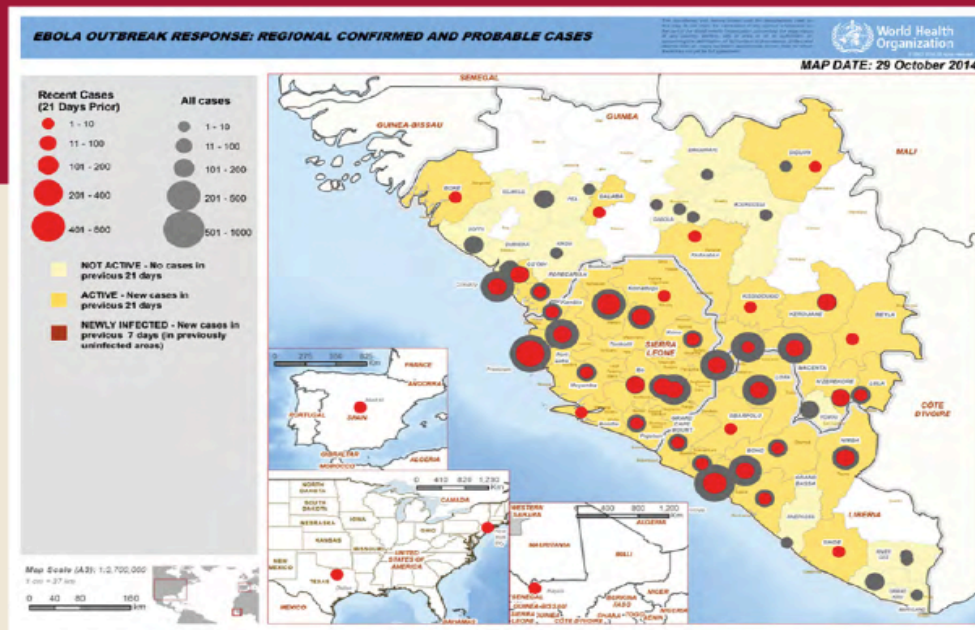
Ebola Response Anthropology Platform

The Ebola Response Anthropology Platform (www.ebola-anthropology.net) brings together anthropologists from around the world to provide advice on how to engage with crucial socio-cultural and political dimensions of the Ebola outbreak and build locally-appropriate interventions

Strengthening West African Health Care Systems to Stop Ebola:

Anthropologists Offer Insights

Prepared November 18, 2014



AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Emergency Response Platform Recommendations

- Care of the sick and the dead
- Health Communications
- Health care and State System Strengthening
- Streamlining Response Systems
- Risk factors (youth, gender, food security, mobility)
- Identification & Diagnosis/Surveillance
- Surveillance and Quarantine
- Military Coordination & Security Issues

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Ask a Rapid Response question ?

Search

Search

Identifying and Diagnosing Cases ▾

Management of the Dead ▾

Caring for the Sick ▾

Clinical Trials/Research ▾

Preparedness ▾

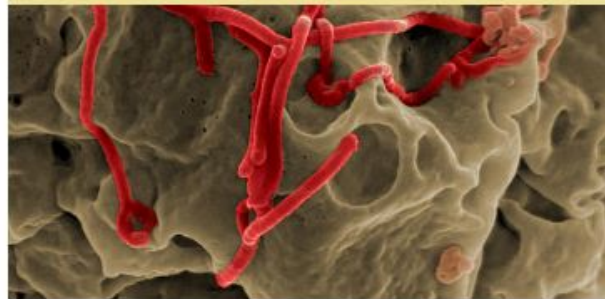
Communication and Engagement ▾

Identifying and Diagnosing Cases

Briefings and Guides

Background

Field Notes



Management of the Dead

Briefings and Guides

Background

Field Notes



Caring for the Sick

Briefings and Guides

Background

Field Notes



Clinical Trials/Research

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Preparedness

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Clinical Trials/Research ▾

Preparedness ▾

Communication and Engagement ▾


Clinical Trials/Research

Identify and link trials with anthropologists and social scientists who can feed into the design of research and support participants and fieldworkers; provide anthropological insight into issues relating to vaccine, drug and blood plasma trials as well as other clinical research, including emerging resistances/rumours and working with survivors; provide inputs into planning for clinical research, such as considerations for ethics and acceptability of trials.

★ Identifying and Enrolling Survivors to Donate Blood

Survivors are rapidly becoming a strategic population for the Ebola Outbreak response. The public health potential of this group appear to be manifold—from safe burials and the care for orphan children to community outreach and the donation of blood for clinical trials. There are a number of stories emerging from the field of survivors who refuse to leave Ebola Treatment Units, offering their support in caring for new patients. Data regarding the status and experience of survivors is somewhat thin, although anthropological experience of the [Continue reading](#) →

 Clinical Trials/Research

 Blood, Research, Survivors

📄 Summary of Discussions of the Ethics Working Group on Ethical issues related to study design for trials on therapeutics for Ebola Virus Disease

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Understanding Publics



The Social Lives of Protocols



Hope and Trust





The Political Economy of Clinical Trials



GAVI READY TO PURCHASE EBOLA VACCINE

As soon as WHO recommends safe, effective vaccine, Gavi will purchase millions of doses to support large-scale immunisation in affected countries

Credit: EC/ECHO/Cyprien Fabre (CC BY-ND 2.0)



Strengthening Health Systems





Will improving people's biomedical knowledge of Ebola lead to "risky behavioural" changes?

Priorities of caring for the sick or attending to the dead trump biomedical information. Consider other priorities that address people's needs when trying to influence behaviour

Clare Chandler, James Fairhead, Ann Kelly, Melissa Leach, Frederick Martineau, Esther Mokuwa, Melissa Parker, Paul Richards, Annie Wilkinson, for the Ebola Response Anthropology Platform

www.thelancet.com Published online December 19, 2014 [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(14\)62382-5](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)62382-5)



Should local activities be regarded as “exotic behaviour”?

Caring for the sick is a practical endeavour, not irrational and immutable “traditions”.

Negligence in funeral conduct will foster suspicion and malicious causes of death which override health considerations

Clare Chandler, James Fairhead, Ann Kelly, Melissa Leach, Frederick Martineau, Esther Mokuwa, Melissa Parker, Paul Richards, Annie Wilkinson, for the Ebola Response Anthropology Platform

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A photograph of a group of people in a rural setting. In the foreground, a man in a white shirt and a white cap with 'DIX' on it is speaking to a group of people. He is holding a white plate. To his left, a man in a blue shirt is looking towards him. In the background, there are several other people, including a woman in a colorful patterned dress and a man in a yellow shirt with 'DIX' on it. The background is filled with green foliage, suggesting a rural or agricultural area.

How helpful is the message that biomedicine is the most effective way to understand and respond to Ebola?

Health facilities have been sources of infection, and many admitted do not survive. How can trust be established or collaboration developed if local people are expected to accept ideas and practices that conflict with their own observations and experiences? Adopt multiple modalities to achieve care and wellbeing and safer practices without changing core beliefs

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A photograph of a group of people in a rural setting. In the foreground, a man in a white shirt and cap is talking to another man in a light blue shirt. In the background, there are several other people, including a woman in a colorful patterned dress and a man in a yellow shirt. The scene is outdoors with green foliage in the background.

Are standardized messages and modes of delivery for public health information about Ebola appropriate?

Protocols developed at national and international levels rather than collaboratively with people do not change behaviour. Standardization discourages adaptation, prohibits engagement with local social realities, and ignores how people will interpret public health messages according to specific local political and social circumstances

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Building resilient health systems in Ebola-affected countries

Date: 10-11 December 2014

Place: Geneva, Switzerland

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The meeting will bring together health and finance ministers, non-state actors, donors and international technical agencies with the aim of laying the foundation for stronger health systems in the medium- to long-term in the Ebola-affected countries.

It will draw on the experiences of the key stakeholder groups to identify pragmatic solutions and needed investments to enable an adequate coverage and quality of health services for the population and to ensure that these strengthened health systems will be better prepared to cope and sustain core services with future crises.

Objectives of the meeting

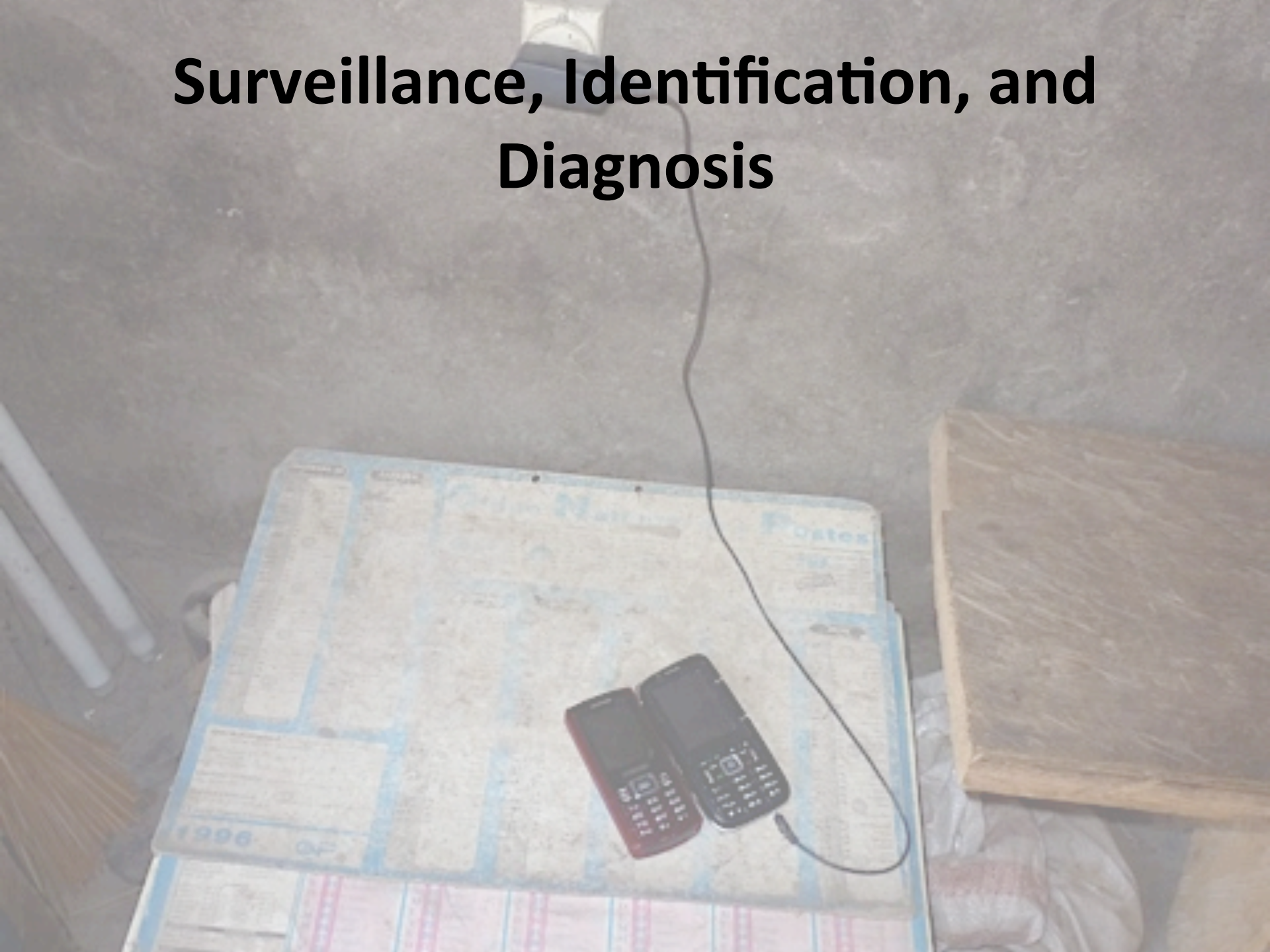
- Identify the main constraints and challenges faced by countries in rebuilding and developing more resilient health systems.
- Identify medium- to long-term solutions on how best to build and invest in national and sub-national systems that deliver basic essential quality health services that can also respond adequately to future emergencies and crises.
- Based on the comparative advantage of each entity, agree on the roles and responsibilities of the all stakeholder groups (governments, non-state actors, donors and international technical agencies) on their contribution to building resilient health systems in countries, in a coordinated manner under country leadership.

Streamlining Local, National, & International Response

Risk Factors (Food Security, Children, Gender and Age)



Surveillance, Identification, and Diagnosis



This simple, hand-drawn map helped guide an Ebola team during a 9-hour trek through the Liberian jungle.



K Kupferschmidt Science 2015;347:120-121

Ebola Emergency Anthropology Network

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Thank You! Merci!