

State asks private companies to donate to an Ebola fund

The Department of Health has appealed to the country's private sector to donate to the Ebola Response Fund to assist the countries affected by the virus.



Department of Health Director-General Malebona Matsoso has called on corporate South Africa to donate cash or services to a new Ebola Response Fund set up by the department. Image: [Who's Who Southern Africa](#)

The department, which created the Ebola Response Fund, has set a goal of raising R250m to coordinate and manage relief assistance for the affected countries.

More than 5,000 cases and over 2,600 deaths have been reported so far this year, primarily in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

"The objective of the fund is to support South Africa's drive to assist the affected countries to halt the social and humanitarian crisis that is unfolding in the region," said Department of Health Director-General Malebona Matsoso

He said that a number of major companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange have pledged their support in cash and in kind to the Ebola Response Fund. The pledges were made at a meeting on 19 September at the JSE.

Matsoso noted that a pledge to donate money to the Ebola Response Fund will help Africa tackle this social and humanitarian crisis.

"We are counting on South Africa's private sector to actively support this attempt to stop the spread of the Ebola across the continent. We believe corporate South Africa will respond positively," he said.

Response from corporate South Africa

"We are grateful to a number of major South African companies listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, who have already pledged millions to the Ebola Response Fund, as well as committed their companies to make other kinds of contributions," Matsoso said.

The donations will be used to support the immediate response to the unfolding crisis and include:

- Setting up a 40-bed Ebola treatment unit in Sierra Leone;
- Provision of qualified people to staff the treatment unit
- Strengthening of the surveillance system and database;
- Supporting social mobilisation efforts in the communities in affected countries;
- Expanding laboratory capacity;
- Project management.

The department is also working with the World Health Organisation to coordinate and harmonise support for the response to the Ebola outbreak.

The South African Government has already committed R32.5m to assisting countries stricken by Ebola.

Matsoso said that contributions in cash or in kind to the Ebola Response Fund will be managed by the University of the Witwatersrand (Faculty of Health Sciences and Right to Care) working in partnership with the Department of Health.



The Ebola virus which is devastating parts of West Africa as more and more people die from the disease. Image: [ThisIs50](#)

The Department of Health will work with the World Health Organisation country office to coordinate all efforts. All funds will be audited and strict corporate governance will be applied.

Companies wishing to donate are asked to contact Dr Barry Kistnasamy at 082 806 7210 or via e-mail on barry@fnbconnect.co.za.

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