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WHO and World Food Program join forces to reach zero Ebola cases

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Singapore: WHO and United Nations World Food Program (WFP) have come together to build logistics strength for Ebola-affected countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to help get the current Ebola outbreak down to zero cases in West Africa. The platform also establishes an alert and response infrastructure for future crises.

"This partnership increases both agencies' abilities to reach, monitor and respond to the needs of all people touched by Ebola," said Dr Margaret Chan, director-general, WHO. "It helps us deploy and maintain technical teams with expertise in infection prevention and control, epidemiology, and contact tracing, enabling dedicated health workers in the deep field to do their best work. The partnership is also a learning opportunity for the future, informing our capacities to launch joint operations during large scale emergencies."

"Over the past seven months, partnerships have been crucial in fighting this devastating outbreak. WFP has worked with our partners to respond to communities' most basic needs, making sure food is reaching everywhere that the Ebola virus has hit. Our logistical support to WHO and the wider humanitarian community has enabled affected people to receive the urgent care and support they need," says Mr Ertharin Cousin, executive director, WFP. "We are making progress, however we must remain vigilant. The Ebola crisis will not end until we identify, reach and successfully treat every last case. Recognizing this goal, the WHO-WFP partnership, a joint technical and operational force, will continue providing the support required to achieve zero cases."

Using a joint operations approach, the two agencies have agreed to combine their expertise in more than 60 priority districts and prefectures on the ground in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, the three most Ebola-affected countries.