

# WITHOUT BORDERS

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**W**hen was the last time you heard about the Ebola virus? Many of you may recall Ebola dominating headlines in global news throughout 2014 and 2015 when it spread explosively across West Africa, claiming more than 11,300 lives.

For the last few years, Ebola has been my focus, passion, and dreaded nightmare rolled into one. In 2015, I joined a wonderful team of physicians, nurses, and scientists, that were leading the fight against Ebola in Sierra Leone. We worked in Ebola hospitals isolating patients and supporting



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survivors of the virus' worst epidemic in history. Then, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that the outbreak was over in 2016. News stations stopped covering our progress. Discussions about the disease dwindled. But the fight to eradicate Ebola was far from over.

Since August 2018, an Ebola epidemic has spread across the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), affecting over 2,000 people and becoming the second largest epidemic ever recorded. Over the last few weeks, I have joined the WHO to support the fight against it in Africa.

The latest Ebola outbreak in Congo is affecting people who were already suffering from a major humanitarian crisis. People in the DRC are devastated by years of violence and conflict, resulting in the largest displacement emergency in Africa. Four and a half million are currently fleeing their homes. With over 100 different armed groups in the country, the challenge of ending this Ebola outbreak is on a whole new level. But still, there is hope.

Over the last few years, researchers have toiled hard and developed a powerful vaccine against the Ebola virus. This vaccine is still under evaluation, however, the preliminary results show a wonderful efficiency of over 97.5%. Even so, we have to remain aware. Ebola is a cruel, painful death sentence for most people who get infected, and leaves in its wake a trail of broken families, hundreds of orphans, and shattered hospitals. It decimates economies and destroys societies, leading to even more poverty and hardship. This is why we cannot forget about Ebola. 