

Doctors Without Borders

Background:

Doctors Without Borders is an international humanitarian medical non-governmental organization (NGO) founded in 1971 by a small group of French doctors and journalists. They are known for their health projects in conflict zones and in countries affected by infectious diseases. Known for emphasizing “independence and impartiality,” they exclude political, economic, and religious justifications for engagement with a particular nation or issue.



Doctors Without Borders was performing aid work in Farfelu before the manifestation of Ebola and has thus become the premier NGO to tackle the outbreak. Their early presence and involvement in the country allowed them to recognize the outbreak as a true crisis but most international governments and health organizations ignored their extensive early warnings and requests for help. While the Doctors Without Borders medical staff are knowledgeable and trained to administer treatment to Ebola patients, there is an extreme shortage of medical supplies. Without these necessary resources, Doctors Without Borders cannot provide treatment or train local medical staff.

Public misconceptions about how the disease is spread are preventing Doctors Without Borders from quickly engaging the community. For example, a mob recently attacked an Ebola Treatment Center because they believed that the infection-control teams, who were wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) and spraying chlorine as a disinfectant, were actually spraying the disease and wearing PPE to avoid catching Ebola. Navigating an unreceptive local population, slow moving governments and organizations, and a lack of resources will prove to be the greatest challenges for Doctors Without Borders.

Opening Position:

The International President of Doctors Without Borders has instructed your delegation to negotiate with all stakeholders, although you may find that some stakeholders may not want to negotiate with one another. You are to take the following opening positions:

- You will reaffirm the tenacity of the current outbreak and call upon relevant stakeholders to increase their engagement and funding support.
- You must treat as many individuals as possible while respecting local burial practices and other cultural traditions.
- You will continue establishing Regional Ebola Treatment Centers with help from the various NERCs and WHO but you do not feel that it is necessary to attend the daily NERC meetings because you do not conduct surveillance.
- Your delegation wants an apology from WHO for not listening to Doctors Without Borders' early warnings. You also want WHO to give international attention to Doctors Without Borders so that other countries around the world may allocate resources to you.