



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SANITATION
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER

November 18, 2019

SUBJECT: Use of the Sierra Leone Ebola Database (SLED) information for public health research

Dear Colleague,

Thank you very much for your interest in using data from the Sierra Leone Ebola Database (SLED) in your proposed project.

In 2016, the Sierra Leone Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) with assistance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) authorized the development of SLED. Multiple organizations who participated in the response during the 2014-2016 Ebola epidemic in Sierra Leone collected data that are now included in SLED. Categorically, SLED includes data of five types:

1. Alert call center records
2. Epidemiological investigations recorded in the Viral Hemorrhagic Fever application (VHF)
3. Laboratory testing records
4. Ebola treatment facility and case management records
5. Burial records.

SLED contains over 500,000 records, estimated to be approximately 90% of all the records systematically collected by Ebola-responding organizations during the 2014-2016 outbreak in Sierra Leone.

The founding principles guiding the development and utilization of SLED are twofold:

1. All information belongs to the MoHS
2. SLED maintains security and confidentiality of patient records

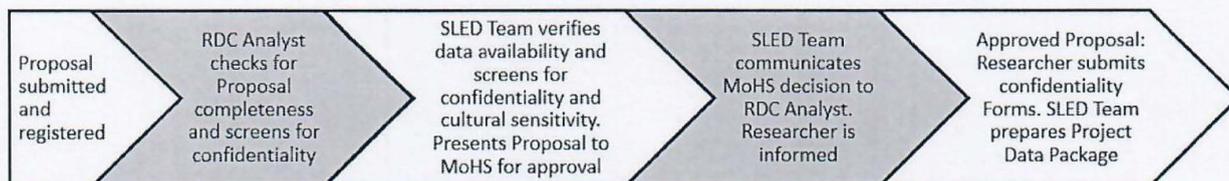
Following these principles, MoHS and CDC developed a model of ethical data access to maintain MoHS data ownership. The SLED objectives are to ensure secure and ethical access to Ebola data for epidemic prevention and response research (through the SLED Research Data Center), and to help families looking for the graves of their loved ones (through the SLED Family Reunification Program).

The SLED Research Data Center (RDC, <https://www.cdc.gov/rdc/index.htm>) operated by The National Center for Health Statistics facilitates ethical data use for post-epidemic data analysis and epidemiologic research for proposals approved by the Sierra Leone MoHS. The SLED-dedicated

web page <https://www.cdc.gov/rdc/b1datatype/sled.htm> provides data documentations, SLED RDC Proposal template, and guidance on how to submit a proposal.

The SLED Sierra Leonean Data Team reviews each proposal for data availability and risk of personally-identifiable information disclosure and cultural sensitivity and presents the proposal to the MoHS. This process could take up to four weeks. If the MoHS approves the proposal, the researchers must complete a confidentiality orientation and sign a written confidentiality agreement. For each approved research project, the SLED Sierra Leonean Data Team extracts or derives data elements requested in the proposal, limiting them to the scope of the project. After the project data package is reviewed by the SLED Data Team supervisor, it is transferred to the RDC via a secure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site and is available for analysis.

SLED Research Proposal approval timeline



For each proposal submitted to the SLED RDC, the SLED Team utilizes its best effort to review the proposal, present it to the MoHS, and prepare an adequate data package for MoHS-approved projects. We are looking forward to maintaining the same provisions for your project and welcome your submission.

Please email rdca@cdc.gov if you have any questions or need more information.

With best regards,

Dr. Amara Jambai
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Sierra Leone

