

OUTBREAK

EBOLA

1 x 54 HD



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When the largest Ebola outbreak on record began to devastate West Africa, why did it take so long for the world to respond? *Outbreak* is the vivid, inside story of how and why the Ebola outbreak wasn't stopped before it was too late, drawing on revelatory and candid admissions of failure from key government and public health officials, some of whom are speaking for the first time.

"We wasted a month. . . we would have done much better had we really followed up the chain of transmission better," Dr. Amara Jambai, Director of Disease Prevention for Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health, tells FRONTLINE of his government's fateful failure to quickly monitor people who had been in contact with Ebola victims.

From the jungles of Guinea to the slums of Monrovia, the film exposes tragic missteps in the response to the epidemic.

"It was a race against time, and I guess we didn't have the same type of watch," Dr. Joanne Liu, president of Doctors Without Borders, tells FRONTLINE of the organization's early efforts to alert the World Health Organization (WHO), which has been criticized for not declaring the outbreak an international emergency sooner.

Outbreak draws on the commentary of these and other health responders and global decision makers—including the President of Liberia, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and multiple top World Health Organization officials—to shed new light on what went wrong. It's the newest investigation from award-winning filmmaker and journalist Dan Edge, who spent four months in West Africa tracing Ebola's path.

"This is not a retelling of news events," says Edge, whose previous FRONTLINE documentaries include *Solitary Nation*, *Inside Japan's Nuclear Meltdown* and *The Wounded Platoon*. "Rather, it reveals the untold story of what really happened before the world was paying attention, both on the ground and in the global corridors of power, and the human cost of the mistakes that were made."

Edge and his team found and interviewed the father of the child who was believed to be the first person to die in the outbreak, a young woman considered to be among the first to bring Ebola across the border from Guinea to Sierra Leone, and the surviving family of the Sierra Leonean faith healer whose burial was among the catastrophic early events in the outbreak.

He weaves this vivid, specially shot material from inside the Ebola zone with the timeline of the world's response—laying out the turning points of how this tragedy might have been avoided, through testimony from the very people involved. All told, it's a powerful piece of accountability journalism that raises questions about whether governments and global health organizations have the capacity to respond at the right scale the next time the world faces a major infectious epidemic.

"Ebola was not an exception, Ebola is a precedent," top WHO official Dr. Bruce Aylward tells FRONTLINE. "How do we make sure nobody makes a mistake the next time, because you know what? Everybody got it wrong on this one."

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CREDITS

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