

## Ebola Outbreak

### *Security Review for Travellers and Companies in West Africa*

#### **Executive Summary**

There are currently 22,057 confirmed, probable and suspected cases of EVD and 8795 deaths. A total of 816 confirmed health worker infections have been reported in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone; there have been 488 reported deaths. The case fatality rate amongst hospitalized cases is between 54% and 62% in the three intense-transmission countries. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the number of confirmed and probable cases in males and females is similar. Compared with children (aged 14 years and under), people aged 15 to 44 are approximately three times more likely to be affected by EVD while people aged 45 and over are almost four times more likely to be affected than children.

**Total Cases and Deaths: As of 28 January 2015 (WHO)**

*8,795 people have died from Ebola*

*22,057 (probable, confirmed and suspected cases)*

For the first time since the week ending 29 June 2014, the WHO has reported fewer than 100 new confirmed cases reported in a week in the three most affected countries. In the week leading up to 25 January 2015, a total of 99 confirmed cases were reported in three countries: 30 in Guinea; 4 in Liberia and 65 in Sierra Leone. Case incidence continues to fall in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Guinea reported 30 confirmed cases in the week leading up to 25 January; this is an increase from the 20 confirmed cases that were reported in the previous week. The country's northern prefecture of Mali, which borders Senegal, has reported its first confirmed EVD case.

According to the WHO, the Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak has “now moved to a second phase, as the focus shifts from slowing transmission to ending the epidemic.” As a result, efforts have now shifted from rapidly building hospitals and medical centres to treat Ebola patients to ensuring that capacity for case finding, case management, safe burials and community engagement is used effectively. It must be noted that while the Ebola outbreak is decreasing, it is still present in a third of the areas of the three-worst affected West African countries. United Nations Ebola coordinator David Nabarro has warned that while “the number of cases is decreasing week by week and getting to zero in many places.... we still see occasional flare-ups and we still see some surprises with new cases out of our contact lists.”

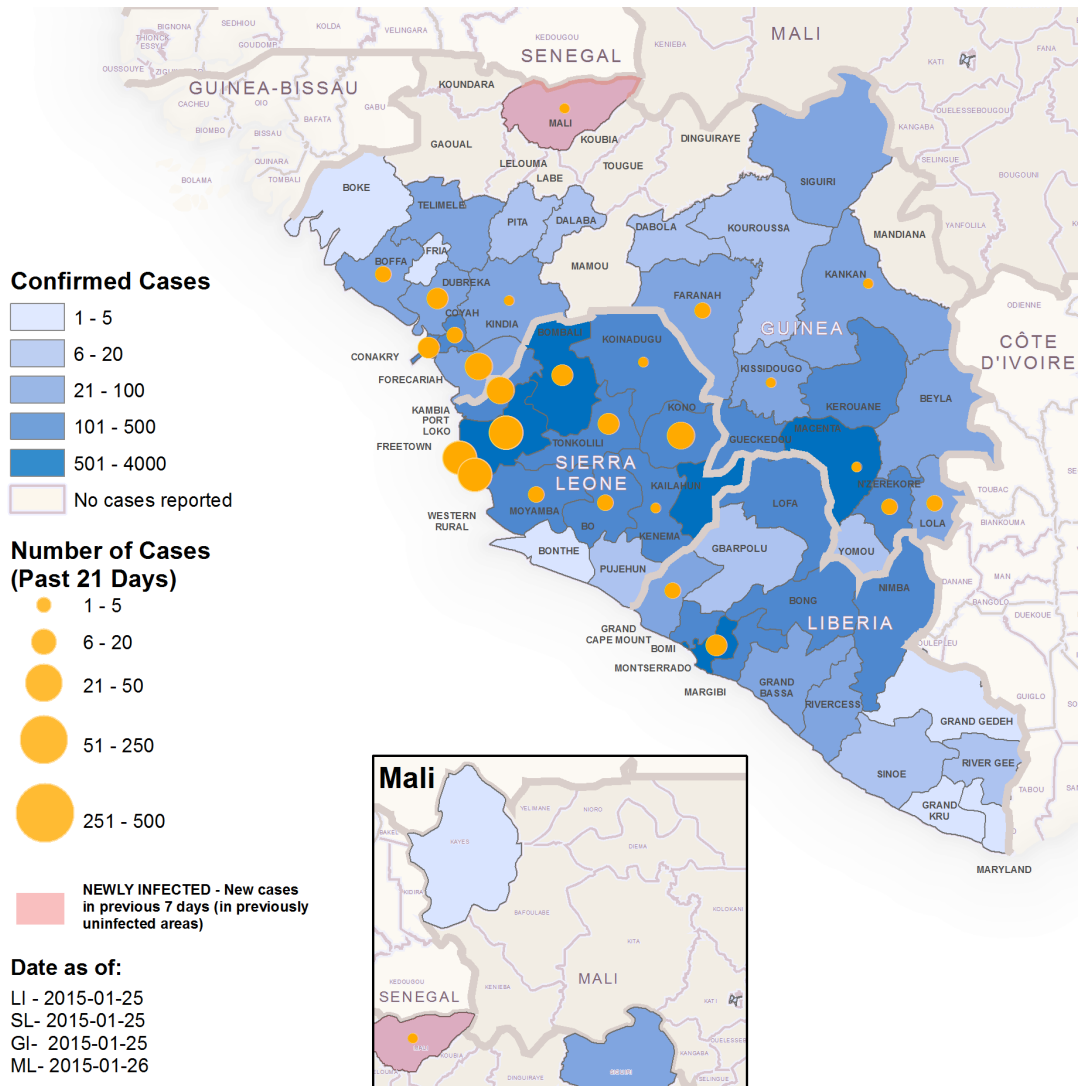
Affected countries currently fall into three categories:

1. *Those with widespread and intense transmission:* Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone;
2. *Those with either an initial case or cases, or with localized transmission:* Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Spain, United Kingdom and the United States

The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified three patterns of transmission:

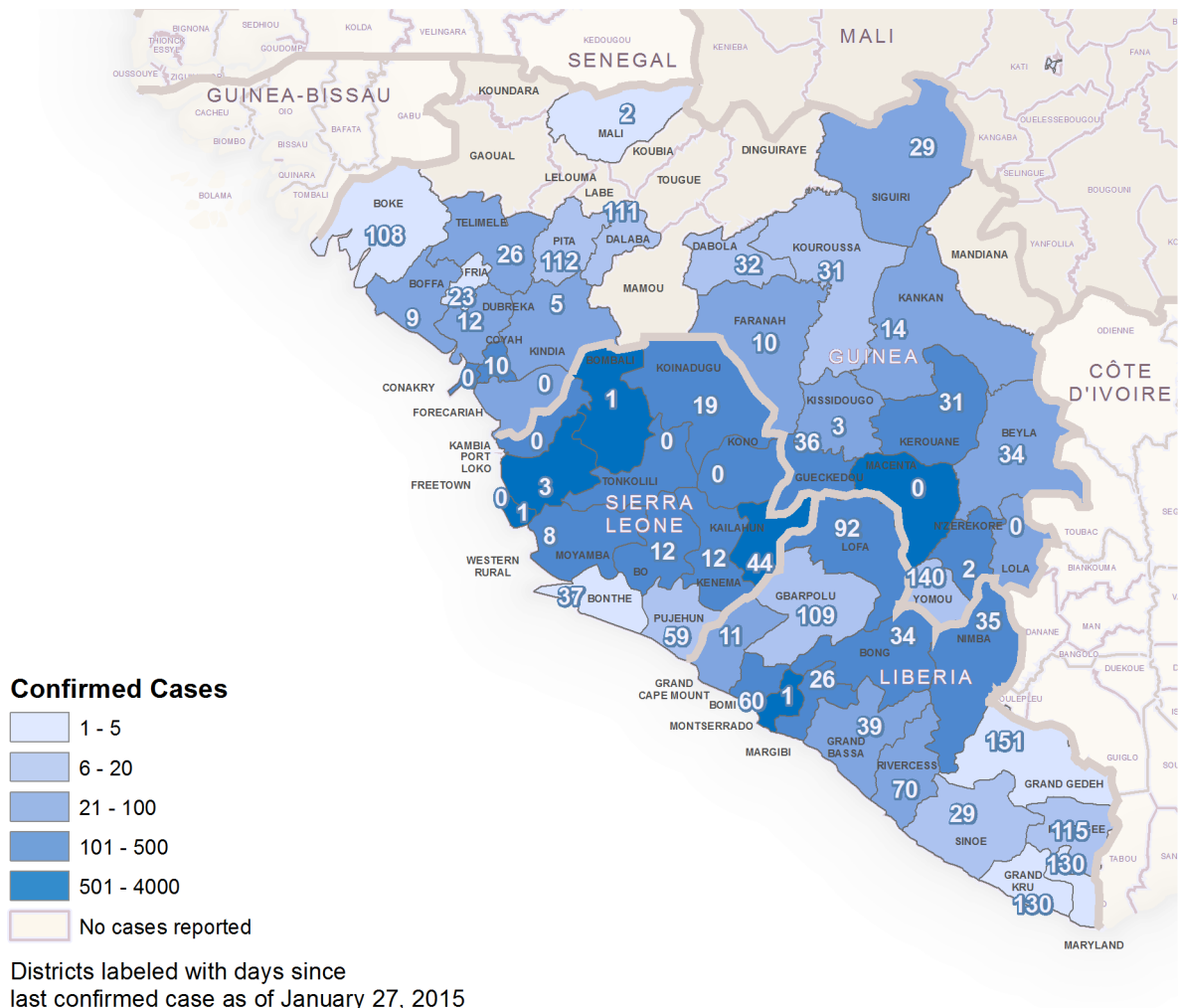
1. In rural communities, which is facilitated by strong cultural practices and traditional beliefs;
2. In densely populated urban communities;
3. Cross-border transmission

**Geographical Distribution of New and Total Confirmed Cases**



Source: WHO

**Days Since Last Reported Confirmed Case by District in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone**



Source: WHO

## 1. Countries with Widespread and Intense Transmission

### Guinea

As of 28 January 2015, Guinea has reported 2,917 confirmed, probable and suspected cases of EVD and 1,910 deaths. Over the past twenty-one days, the country reported 92 new cases.

In the seven days leading up to 25 January 2015, Guinea reported a total of 30 confirmed EVD cases, compared with 20 that were reported the week before. This is the first time this year that case incidence in Guinea has increased from week-to-week. During this reporting period, eight districts reported a confirmed or probable case of EVD. The northern district of Mali, which is located near the border with Senegal, reported its first confirmed EVD case. The patient is a man who recently travelled from Liberia. Due to Senegal recently reopening its border crossings with Guinea, surveillance in districts that border the affected countries are being implemented.

In other regions of Guinea, the western district of Forecariah confirmed 15 new cases in the week leading up to 25 January. It currently is the worst affected district, and accounted for half of all confirmed cases during this reporting period. The WHO has reported that there are high levels of community resistance to EVD response measures in Forecariah. Forecariah borders the Sierra Leonean district of Kambia to the south, which reported 10 confirmed cases during the reporting period; the third highest weekly total of any district in Sierra Leone. Conakry reported 6 confirmed cases while the districts of Kissidougou and Macenta both reported their first confirmed case in 21 days.

Twelve districts that have previously reported confirmed cases did not report any confirmed cases in the 21 days leading up to 25 January. Three districts have not reported any cases in over 100 days.

### Major Incidents

- **23 January 2015** - On the ground sources have reported that angry residents are blocking access for health workers to dozens of remote villages across Guinea, in what appears to be a sign that mistrust continues to exist and may threaten President Alpha Conde's aim to eradicate Ebola from the West African country by March. The worst Ebola outbreak on record began in December 2013, deep in the forests of south-eastern Guinea, before it spread to neighbouring countries. While Guinea, along with Liberia and Sierra Leone, have in recent week recorded a sharp fall in infections, experts have revealed that some people still deny that the deadly disease exists. Officials have indicated that this persistent denial could prove difficult to trace those who had been in contact with the infected and to change traditional behaviour such as burial rituals, which involve touching the dead. These steps are seen as critical in defeating the disease. Fode Tass Sylla, spokesman for the national committee for the fight against Ebola, "we are at a turning point. However, we cannot say that we have complete defeated the disease until we know what is happening inside these reticent villages." Sylla noted one case in which medical kits sent by the government to schoolchildren were destroyed by villagers in Ourekaba, southern Guinea who believed that the kits had been sent in order to contaminate the children. In a separate incident, a police source disclosed that two security officials, who arrived to investigate reports of a secret Ebola burial, were lynched last week by a crowd in Sinkine, in the Forecariah region, which is located 100 kilometres (62 miles) from the capital city Conakry. While officials have noted that denial of the existence of Ebola has been seen in all three affected countries, with some communities, particularly in Sierra Leone, being reluctant to change their behavior, officials have noted that the problem in Guinea appears to be more acute, with health workers still

**Total Cases:** As of 28 January 2015

2,917 clinical cases (2,569 confirmed, 332 probable, 16 suspected)

1,910 deaths

New cases in the past 21 days: 92

#### **Current Affected Areas:**

Conakry, Coyah, Dubreka  
Forecariah, Gueckedou,  
Kissidougou, Kouroussa,  
Lola, Macenta, Sigui, Pita,  
N'Zerekore, Dubreka,  
Youmou, Kerouane, Kindia,  
Dabola, Faranah, Telimele,  
Mali

being denied access to certain regions. Health experts also worry that some of the southern areas of Guinea lie close to the borders of Liberia and Sierra Leone and that imported cases could reverse some of the significant progress achieved in those two countries in recent weeks.

- **20 January 2015** – Three priests from a Baptist church in Guinea have been beaten up and held hostage after locals mistook them for Ebola awareness campaigners. According to on the ground sources, the priests had gone to the village of Kabac in Forecariah intending to spray insecticide on wells and pit latrines when they were attacked by villagers who suspected that they may have been bringing the Ebola virus into the area. Reports have indicated that the priests were badly beaten and that their vehicle was set on fire. The angry villagers later went to the town council building, which they vandalized. The building was set on fire, forcing local officials to flee. While local reports have indicated that one council worker was killed by the crowd, this report has not been independently verified. There was further chaos when police arrested some of the residents and the crowd attempted to prevent the detainees from being taken away. This is the second such attack to take place in Forecariah this month. Earlier, residents attacked and killed two police officers that they had suspected of bringing the Ebola virus to the area.
- **14 January 2015** - In the latest violence spurred by the deadly Ebola virus, police officials reported Wednesday that two men were killed and their bodies burned by an angry mob convinced that the victims had infected a local with Ebola. On the grounds sources have reported that residents of the western village of Dar-es-Salaam attacked a group of three police officers and their driver who had stopped there on Saturday while on their way to attend a funeral. According to police Commissioner Boubacar Kasse, during their visit, one in the group gave a sedative to a local healer, who was suffering from an described illness. After the healer died, his wife called for help from the local population, who responded violently. According to Kasse, the villagers grabbed machetes and clubs and beat the victims to death. They later set their bodies and vehicle on fire. The other police officers who survived the attack are currently recovering in hospital. Violent reactions to the Ebola virus have frequently occurred in Guinea, particularly in the southern region of the country, where tensions between local groups and the central government remain high. The most violent attack occurred September 2014 in the southwestern village of Womey when eight members of an Ebola prevention campaign were killed by locals.

### Liberia

As of 28 January 2015, Liberia has reported 8,622 confirmed, probable and suspected cases of EVD and 3,686 deaths. Over the past twenty-one days, the country reported 20 new cases.

According to WHO officials, case incidence in Liberia has continued to decline from a peak of over 300 new confirmed cases per week in August and September 2014 to 4 confirmed cases in the seven days leading up to 25 January 2015. This is compared with 8 cases that were reported in the previous week.

All four confirmed cases of EVD were reported in Montserrado. The district includes the capital city Monrovia. The adjacent district of Bomi reported 3 probable cases.

Social Welfare has established hotlines for the public to get basic information on Ebola: Call 0770198517 or 0777549805 or 0886530260 or 0886549805.

**Total Cases:** As of 28  
January 2015

8,622 clinical cases (3,138  
confirmed, 1,864 probable,  
3,620 suspected)

3,686 deaths

New cases in the past 21  
days: 20

**Current Affected Areas:**

Montserrado, Margibi,  
Bomi, Bong, Grand Cape  
Mount, Nimba, Grand  
Bassa, Grand Gedeh, River  
Cess, River Gee, Sinoe,  
Gbarpolu, Grand Kru

### Major Incidents

- **31 January 2015** - Liberia has delayed planned re-opening of schools, with officials indicating that they are not yet fully prepared to prevent the spread of Ebola. Schools, which were closed in July, had been due to open on Monday however teaching will now begin on 16 February. On the ground sources have reported that several schools were not prepared to prevent Ebola infection as they lacked chlorinated water for hand-washing and thermometers to check pupils don't have fever.
- **26 January 2015** - Liberia's president on Monday announced the closure of an Ebola treatment facility as the spread of the disease has slowed in the West African country. In a speech before the national parliament, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf stated "Lofa, the epicentre of the virus, has had no new cases for over 70 days," adding "the Ebola Treatment Unit in Foya is closed," and that the country can now "...take pride that 13 of 15...counties have not reported new cases for 21 days." The President however did stress that the outbreak was not yet over, stating "we know we must continue relentlessly on the practices and protocols that have brought us this far. We must make a successful transition from treatment to prevention by building our health system. But from now lets take pride and rejoice in our collective success." Liberia, which was once the worst affected by the Ebola outbreak, hopes to have no new cases by the end of next month.

Sierra Leone

As of 28 January 2015, Sierra Leone has reported 10,518 confirmed, probable and suspected cases of EVD and 3,199 deaths. Over the past twenty-one days, the country reported 366 new cases.

Case incidence in Sierra Leone continues to decline. In the week leading up to 25 January 2015, there were 65 new confirmed cases reported, compared with 117 cases that were reported in the previous week and 184 the week before that.

The western region of the country remains the area with the most transmission. During this reporting period, the capital city, Freetown, reported 20 new confirmed cases, compared with 30 the previous week. The nearby districts of Kambia and Western Rural reported 10 and 16 new confirmed cases respectively during this reporting period. The western district of Port Loko reported 6 new confirmed cases, its lowest total since the week ending 3 August 2014.

During this reporting period, a total of 7 out of 14 districts reported new confirmed cases. Kailahun, which borders Gueckedou, has reported no confirmed cases for 44 days. The district of Kono, which is located in the eastern region of the country and which borders Guinea, reported a single case during this reporting period, compared with 13 cases in the previous week.

**Total Cases: As of 28  
January 2015**

10,518 clinical cases (7,968  
confirmed, 287 probable,  
2,263 suspected)

3,199 deaths

New cases in the past 21  
days: 366

**Current Affected Areas:**

Kenema, Kono, Kambia,  
Bombali, Tonkolili, Port  
Loko, Pujehun, Bo,  
Moyamba, Western Rural  
Area



## 2. Countries with Initial Case/Cases or Localized Transmission

Six countries – Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States – have reported a case or cases of EVD imported from a country with widespread and intense transmission.

### United Kingdom

On 29 December 2014, public health authorities confirmed a case of EV in Glasgow, Scotland. The case was a health-care worker who returned from volunteering at an Ebola Treatment Centre in Sierra Leone. The patient was isolated on 29 December and received treatment in London. On 23 January, the patient tested negative twice for EVD, and on 24 January, the patient was discharged from hospital. All contacts have completed a 21-day follow-up.

### Mali

A total of eight cases, including 6 deaths, have been reported in Mali.

The most recent cases have been reported in the capital city Bamako and are not related to the country's first EVD case, which was reported in the western town of Kayes. The last confirmed case tested negative for the second time on 6 December 2014 and was discharged from hospital on 11 December 2014. All identified contacts connected with both the initial case in Kayes and the outbreak in Bamako have completed the 21 day follow-up period. If there are no further reported EVD cases, Mali will be declared Ebola-free in January.



### Nigeria

On 20 October 2014, the WHO declared Nigeria Ebola-free after six weeks of no new reported cases. For officials to declare the country Ebola-free, Nigeria had to make it 42 days with no new cases, which is double the incubation period, verify that it actively sought out all possible contacts, and show negative test results for any remaining suspected cases.

Nigeria had a total of twenty cases after a Liberian-American man flew into Lagos International Airport on July 20 and collapsed shortly afterwards. The disease later spread to Port Harcourt.

While Nigeria has been declared Ebola-free, Nigerian authorities are preparing for any additional outbreaks as the current Ebola epidemic in West Africa is far from over and spread to additional countries, including to Nigeria, remains possible.

### Senegal

On 17 October 2014, the WHO declared Senegal Ebola-free. The assessment was made after the West African country went forty-two days without reporting any new cases. In late August, Senegal confirmed one case of Ebola, an imported one from Guinea, which prompted officials to monitor seventy-four contacts of the patient and increase surveillance at the country's entry ports.



### Spain

It has now been thirty-six days since a healthcare worker, infected with Ebola while caring for a patient with EVD in Madrid, tested negative twice for EVD. If no additional cases of EVD are reported in the coming days, Spain will be declared Ebola-free 42 days after the date of the second negative test. All 83 contacts of the healthcare worker have completed the 21-day follow-up period.

### United States

There have been four cases of EVD and 1 death reported in the United States. All contacts in the country have completed the 21-day follow-up period.

## ***Ebola Outbreak in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)***

On 20 November 2014, the WHO declared the DRC Ebola-free after 42 days had passed since the last case tested negative twice for the deadly disease.

During the outbreak, the DRC reported 67 EVD cases (38 confirmed, 28 probable, 1 suspected). This includes eight cases amongst healthcare workers. In total, there were 49 deaths reported, including eight healthcare workers.

**Total Cases:** As of 28  
November 2014

67 clinical cases (38  
confirmed; 28 probable; 1  
suspected)

49 deaths

**Previously Affected Areas:**

Equateur province

## ***Priority Countries in Africa***

The following states have been identified by the WHO as highest priority countries: Ivory Coast, Guinea Bissau, Mali and Senegal; followed by high priority countries: Burkina Faso, Benin, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan and Togo. According to the WHO, "the criteria used to prioritize the countries include geographical proximity to affected countries, trade and migration patterns, and strength of health systems.

Since 20 October 2014, preparedness support teams (PST's) have provided technical support to fourteen of the above named countries, including: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Ivory Coast, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo. Technical working group meetings, field visits, high-level exercises and field simulations have helped in identifying areas in need of improvement. According to the WHO, each country now has a tailored 90-day plan that will strengthen operational readiness.