

2 **INTERNATIONAL OUTBREAKS OF IMPORTANCE TO SOUTH AFRICAN TRAVELLERS AND HEALTHCARE WORKERS**

Ebola virus disease outbreak: update

Situation update in West Africa

Since the last update (access updates on www.nicd.ac.za), additional new cases and deaths continued to be reported in all affected countries in West Africa (Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria). In addition, an imported EVD case has been reported in Senegal. The case-patient is a 21-year-old Guinean national who is reported to have travelled by road from Guinea to Dakar (Senegal) on 20 August 2014. Three days later he sought medical care at a healthcare facility in the area. He presented with fever, diarrhoea and vomiting and was treated for malaria. However his condition did

not improve and on 26 August 2014 was referred to an infectious disease facility where he was hospitalised and subsequently tested positive for EVD. The case-patient turned out to be a close contact of a confirmed EVD case in Guinea. To date, no further EVD cases have been reported in connection with this case. As at 14 September 2014, a cumulative total of 5 325 EVD cases (laboratory-confirmed, probable and suspected) including 2 622 deaths with a case fatality rate of 49% have been reported in the current EVD outbreak in West Africa (Table 1).

Table 1: Number of Ebola virus disease cases and deaths in West Africa as at 14 September 2014

Country	Total cases (laboratory-confirmed, probable and suspected)	Total deaths	Case fatality rate
Guinea	942	601	64%
Liberia	2 710	1 459	54%
Sierra Leone	1 673	562	34%
Nigeria	21	8	38%
Senegal	1	0	0%
Totals	5 347	2 630	49%

Situation in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

In August 2014, another EVD outbreak was reported in Djera, Equateur Province. Increases in number of cases presenting with Ebola-like symptoms were reported between 28 July and 18 August 2014. EVD was confirmed in some of the case-patients. The index case was a pregnant woman who resided in the village of Ikanamongo. She was a wife of a hunter, who became ill after handling bushmeat. Subsequent to this, transmission among healthcare workers and local community was established. The index case and subsequent cases had no travel history to or contact with people from affected EVD countries in West Africa (Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria). As at 15 September 2014, a cumulative total of 71 EVD cases (53 confirmed and 18 suspected) including 40 deaths with a CFR of 56%

have been reported. Of the 71 EVD cases, nine were healthcare workers seven of whom died. To date all EVD cases have been localised in Boende, Boende Muke, Lokolia and Watsikengo in Equateur Province.

This is the seventh confirmed EVD outbreak in DRC, close to where the virus was first identified in 1976 in Yambuku near the Ebola River. The recent outbreak in DRC is unrelated to the current outbreak occurring in West Africa affecting Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia or the focal outbreak in Nigeria.

Situation in South Africa

The risk of Ebola being introduced into South Africa remains low. As at 23 September 2014 there have been no cases of Ebola virus disease in South Africa associated with the current outbreaks in West Africa and DRC. There are no suspected cases of EVD in South Africa at present. For the suspected EVD case

Laboratory testing

Testing for viral haemorrhagic fever viruses (including Ebola virus) in South Africa is only available at the NICD. EVD testing is neither warranted nor useful for persons that are not suffering from a clinical illness compatible with EVD, even in the event of compatible travel histories. The tests cannot be used to determine if the patient has been exposed to the virus and may develop the disease later. Requests for testing (with a detailed clinical, travel and exposure history) should be directed to the NICD Hotline at 082 883 9920 (a 24-hour service, for healthcare professionals only)

necessary. At present, no travel or trade restrictions are recommended. However individuals who have been confirmed or are suspected of being infected with EVD or have had contact with cases of EVD should not be allowed to travel unless the travel is part of the medical evacuation (www.who.int). Travel restrictions are in place for South Africans wishing to travel to the affected sub-region, as well as for all persons wishing to travel from the affected sub-region to South Africa. Refer to the Department of Health website (www.doh.gov.za) for more information.

Recommendations for travellers

The World Health Organization regularly reviews the EVD outbreak public health situation and recommends travel or trade restrictions if

Source: Division of Public Health Surveillance and Response and Centre for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases, NICD-NHLS

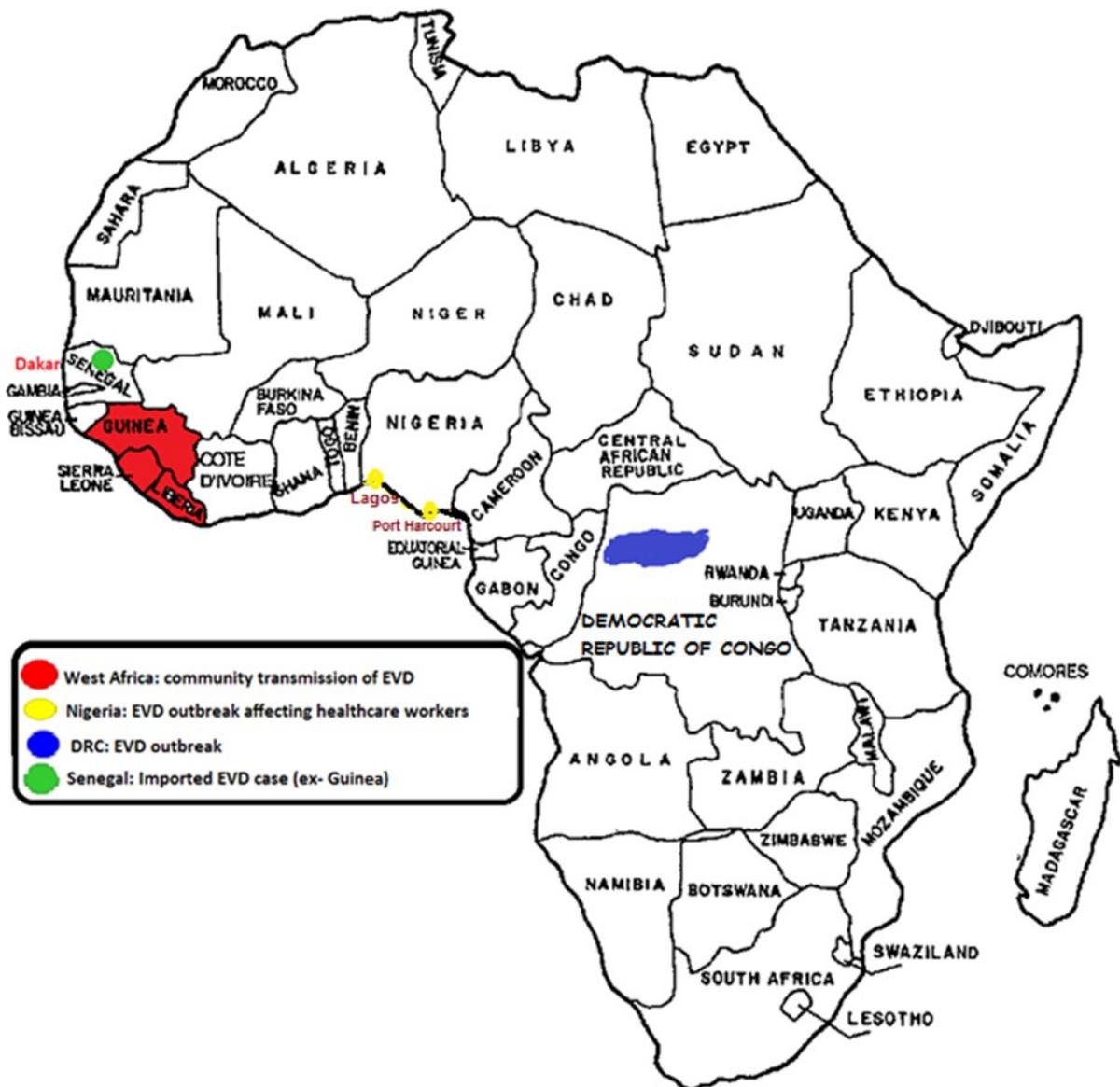


Figure 1. Geographical distribution of current Ebola virus disease outbreaks in Africa as at 15 September 2014