

Committee: Economic and Social Council

Issue: Promoting sustainable development in the Ebola aftermath

Student Officer: George – Evangelos Laios

Position: President

INTRODUCTION

2014 marked the beginning of a health crisis in West Africa. The crisis entailed the largest outbreak of the Ebola virus to have ever happened to date. More than 28,000 human beings were diagnosed as infected or considered to be infected by the disease, with the number of total deaths reaching a staggering 11,325. On the 29th of March 2016 the health crisis was officially declared to be (almost) over by the World Health Organisation, but that did not mean the aftermath of the outbreak was to be taken lightly.

The outbreak was apparently planning on leaving a mark for years to come, seeing as patients that managed to recover are frequently still plagued by health problems that originated as side-effects of the Ebola virus. Moreover, if proper sanitation and healthcare are not made available to affected countries, the phenomenon is bound to spring up again.

But not only the health of citizens was negatively affected by the disease. The economic impact Ebola had was immense and crippled the economies of the *less developed countries the disease struck (Guinea, Liberia & Sierra Leone)*¹.

As such, the outbreak prevented any development in these regions. Through this study guide you will be able to delve into the effects that unfolded after the outbreak and find possible solutions that would enable the regions in question to develop sustainably, despite still laying under the potentially imminent “shadow” of Ebola.

¹ http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/ldc/ldc_list.pdf

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Note: Any medical/"biological" terms used will feature an explanation right next to them (and will not be explained in this section) to make reading and comprehending the Study Guide easier and more seamless.

Ebola Virus Disease (EVD)

The Ebola Virus Disease (EVD or Ebola for short) is a frequently fatal hemorrhagic disease caused by the so called "ebolaviruses". There are a handful of "variants" of the virus, but they are all almost equally dangerous, except for one variant that has never infected a human being. In order for you to better grasp the issue at hand, it would be advisable to go through how the virus works, which is mentioned in the "Background information" section below.

Source:

"Ebola (Ebola Virus Disease)." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 18 Feb. 2016. Web. 22 June 2017.
<<https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/about.html>>.

Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) Model

CGE models are a type of economic model. CGE models utilize actual economic data to assess how an economy will react when confronted with a change in an external factor, such as technology or, in our case, a disease outbreak.

Sources:

- *"Computable General Equilibrium Model." Computable general equilibrium model - Oxford Reference. N.p., 26 Sept. 2013. Web. 11 July 2017.*
<<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199237043.001.0001/acref-9780199237043-e-499>>.
- *"Computable general equilibrium." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, 02 June 2017.*
Web. 11 July 2017.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computable_general_equilibrium>.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

The GDP is the total market value of all goods and services produced in a country during a specific time period.

Sources:

- Segal, Troy. "Gross Domestic Product - GDP." Investopedia. N.p., 17 May 2017. Web. 9 July 2017. <<http://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/gdp.asp>>.
- Picardo, CFA Elvis. "The GDP and its Importance." Investopedia. N.p., 08 May 2017. Web. 10 July 2017. <<http://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/121213/gdp-and-its-importance.asp>>.

Sustainable Development

We use the term "sustainable development" to describe development that addresses the needs of a society without, however, the development process using up an excessive amount of resources (which would prevent any further development in the future).

Sources:

- World Commission on Environment and Development. *Our Common Future*, Chapter 2: *Towards Sustainable Development - A/42/427 Annex, Chapter 2 - UN Documents: Gathering a body of global agreements*. N.p., n.d. Web. 9 July 2017. <<http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm>>.
- "Topic: Sustainable Development." International Institute for Sustainable Development. N.p., n.d. Web. 9 July 2017. <<http://www.iisd.org/topic/sustainable-development>>.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

How does the virus and the disease it causes work?

- **Infection methods:**
 - The virus spreads through **direct contact with body fluids** (e.g. blood and even semen and breast milk) **of an infected human or animal** (usually fruit bats, which happen to be a common carrier of the virus without, however, being affected by it). Infection can also take place in case a person comes in direct contact with an object that recently became contaminated by the aforementioned body fluids.
 - The virus **most likely does not** spread through the air, as such a phenomenon has neither been observed in a laboratory nor under natural circumstances.
- **Symptoms:²**
 - The EVD's symptoms include: **fever, severe headache, muscle pain, weakness, fatigue, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal pain (stomach pain), unexplained bleeding or bruising**
 - Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days.
- **What does the virus actually do?**
 - Immediately after entering the body, the virus sets its sight on certain types of immune cells (e.g. dendritic cells) and infects them. These cells are normally responsible for sending a signal to T lymphocytes (the job of which is to destroy infected cells before the virus replicates) in case a virus enters the body. However, by taking over these "signalling" cells, the ebolavirus has succeeded in turning off the body's "security alarm", just like a robber would do in order to enter a house. **The cells send no out-of-the-ordinary signal and the body is tricked into believing everything is as it should be.** As such, no T lymphocytes and antibodies (Y-shaped proteins that neutralize malicious bacteria and viruses - they are also known as immunoglobulins)

² *Source: "Ebola (Ebola Virus Disease)." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 02 Nov. 2014. Web. 14 June 2017.*
<<https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/symptoms/index.html>>.

are activated. That gives the virus time to **replicate and strengthen itself**, which is why the EVD is so dangerous and difficult to recover from. Whether one dies or survives depends more on how strong one's immune system than on how good his clinical care is.

- **Why does the disease cause bleeding in most cases?**
 - The virus is also transported through the body via blood. During that transportation other immune cells (Macrophages) **devour it**. However, these cells become -quite unsurprisingly- **infected** as well and start releasing proteins and nitric oxide. **The proteins form small clots in the area where the blood vessels are located, thus reducing blood supply to organs**, while **the oxide damages the blood vessels and causes blood to ooze from them**, which leads to hemorrhage (internal and/or external).

- **Why is the disease often fatal?**
 - As was mentioned [before](#), **the EVD damages the body's blood vessels**. This means that **blood pressure is also reduced**. **The body cannot provide enough blood to the organs** in the long run, and **the patient dies from multiple organ failure**.

- **Other important info:**
 - The EVD was formerly known as **Ebola Haemorrhagic Fever (EHF)**.
 - People who recover from Ebola infection **develop antibodies** that last for at least 10 years.
 - Since the cause of the EVD is a virus, antibiotics **cannot be of any assistance!**
 - **The EVD was identified for the first time in 1976**, namely in two **simultaneous** epidemics (one in Yambuku, **Congo** and the other in the area that we now call Nzara in **South Sudan**). ³(See sections "[Previous outbreaks](#)" and "[Timeline of Events](#)" below)

³ *Source: "Ebola virus disease." WHO | Ebola virus disease. World Health Organization, n.d. Web. 8 July 2017. <<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs103/en/>>.*

- According to the [World Health Organisation](#), the **average EVD case fatality rate is around 50%.**⁴

Previous outbreaks

The 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak in West Africa was, unfortunately, not the first one. Below you can find a list with the most important (with more than 100 human cases) outbreaks of the EVD that have hitherto taken place:

DATE	PLACE	NUMBER OF CASES
1976	Yambuku (Democratic Republic of the Congo - Formerly: Zaire)	318
1976	Nzara (South Sudan)	284
1995	Kikwit (Democratic Republic of the Congo - Formerly: Zaire)	315
2000-2001	Uganda	425
December 2002 - April 2003	Republic of the Congo	143
2007	Republic of the Congo	264
December 2007 - January 2008	Uganda	149
March 2014- Spring/Summer 2016	Multiple countries (see " Affected countries " section below)	28652

⁴ *Source: "Ebola virus disease." WHO | Ebola virus disease. World Health Organization, n.d. Web. 8 July 2017. <<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs103/en/>>.*

Sources used for the creation of the list:

- "Ebola (Ebola Virus Disease)." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 14 Apr. 2016. Web. 11 June 2017.
<<https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/history/chronology.html>>.
- "List of Ebola outbreaks." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, 14 June 2017. Web. 9 June 2017.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Ebola_outbreaks#Major_or_massive_cases>.

Economic effects

The EVD didn't only affect the population's health but also the economy of many societies. **In many rural areas, people abandoned their fields and agricultural activities and moved to places that Ebola had not contaminated yet. Others couldn't go to work either because they had contracted the disease or in order to avoid contracting it, many of them leaving resources unexploited in the process. Transactions were stopped, trading businesses were hindered and tourism came to a halt. There were no Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) anymore.** Generally speaking, the epidemic prevented any breakthrough of economic nature in the affected areas.

In 2015 the three countries that were affected the most by the outbreak (Guinea, Liberia & Sierra Leone) lost a total of about 2.2 billion dollars, according to the World Bank.⁵

The World Bank tried to assess the size of the economic shocks in these as well as other countries through economic models as well as formulas.

- **Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) Models**
 - **MAMS (Maquette for Millennium Development Goals Simulations) for Liberia:**
For the creation of this model data regarding the freeze of any sort of economic breakthrough (such as the ones mentioned above in **bold**) were used. The model eventually showed that the economic situation in Liberia **could be overturned**, which would result in the country making up for the economic losses that took place during

⁵ *Source: "Ebola: World Bank Group Provides New Financing to Help Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone Recover from Ebola Emergency." World Bank. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 July 2017.*
<<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/04/17/ebola-world-bank-group-provides-new-financing-to-help-guinea-liberia-sierra-leone-recover-from-ebola-emergency>>.

the epidemic, particularly in 2015⁶. However, according to the model, such a thing could only happen **under the condition that Liberia's response to the situation is immediate and efficient**. Otherwise, the losses would increase.

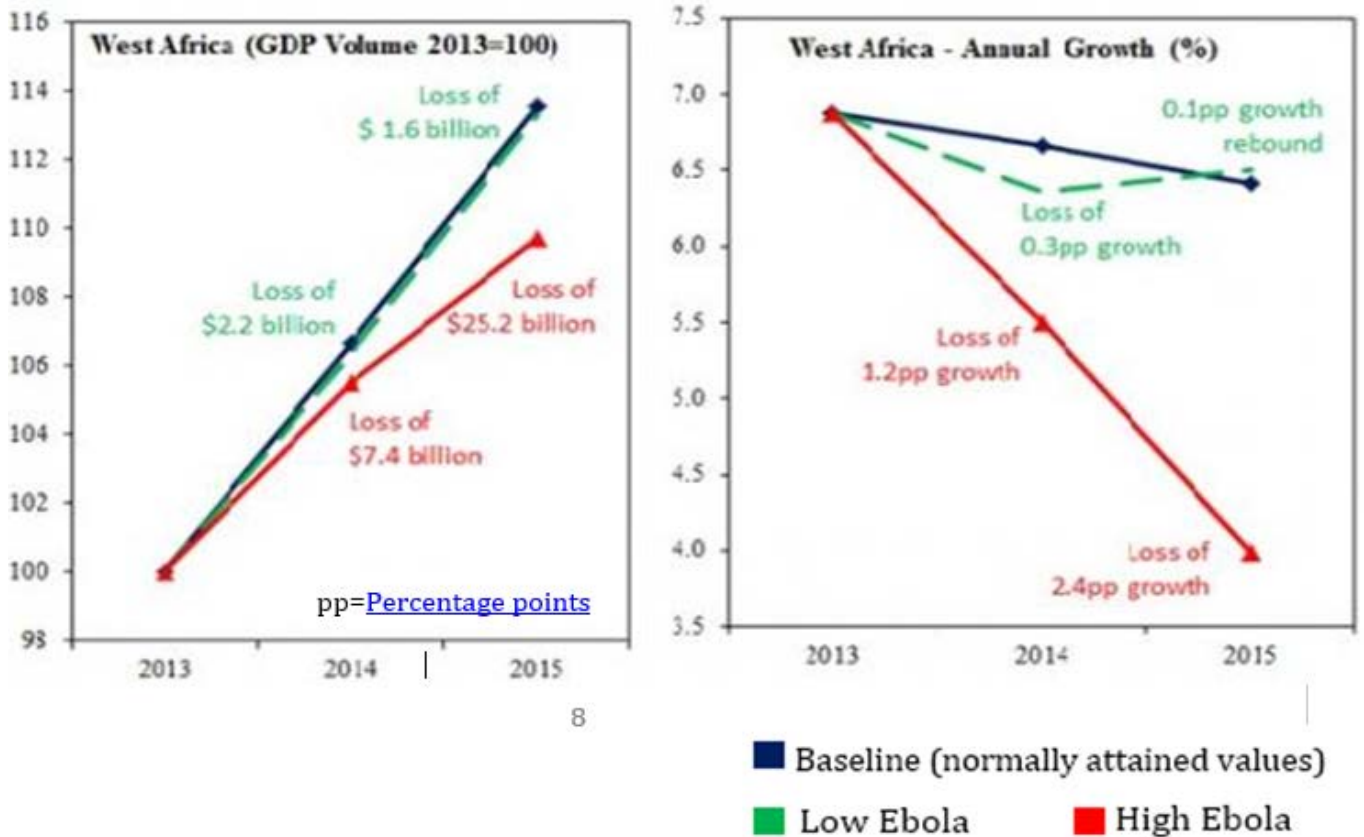
➤ **LINKAGE – Global CGE model**

This model did not focus on a specific country. Instead, it maintained a global approach to the issue. The data it uses derive from a database of economic transactions within as well as across economies for the year 2013. All countries in the world were divided into 12 groups. By excluding specific data from the model, one can view information on the various economies in West Africa. One is also able to extract information on specific countries, such as Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal and the rest of West Africa. However, this is **not possible with the three countries that were affected the most by the EVD outbreak** (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea), since the total of their GDP accounts only for 11% of the West African economy (excluding Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal), according to the [World Bank](#).⁷

Furthermore, many scenarios regarding the development of the disease have been studied. In some of them, the spread of the disease is limited and confined to certain areas ("Low Ebola"), while in others the EVD spreads radically and affects nearby areas ("High Ebola"). Combined with the results of the LINKAGE, these scenarios give us a detailed overview of how the West African countries' economies may advance during an EVD outbreak. You can view a relevant graph below.

⁶ *Source: "Ebola: World Bank Group Provides New Financing to Help Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone Recover from Ebola Emergency."* World Bank. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 July 2017. <<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2015/04/17/ebola-world-bank-group-provides-new-financing-to-help-guinea-liberia-sierra-leone-recover-from-ebola-emergency>>.

⁷ *Source: [Book:] The economic impact of the 2014 Ebola epidemic: short- and medium-term estimates for West Africa.* Washington (DC): World Bank, 2014. 26 Nov. 2014. Web. 18 June 2017. <<https://books.google.gr/books?id=ozbtBQAAQBAJ>>. (p.38)



Graph: The estimated economic impact of the EVD outbreak in both a Low Ebola and a High Ebola scenario

[What is a percentage point \(pp\)?](#)

Source:

Written by Cesar Calderon, Senior Economist, Regional Chief Economist Office for Latin America and the Caribbean Region at the World Bank. "How much economic damage is Ebola causing?" World Economic Forum. N.p., n.d. Web. 18 June 2017.
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2014/10/ebola-economic-damage-africa/>.

- **Formulas**

- Ebola Impact Index

The Ebola Impact Index shows the **likelihood of an Ebola outbreak** in a country. The higher the result of the formula, the higher the chances of an outbreak. The GDP as well as other statistical values are required for the Ebola Impact Index to be calculated. This is why countries with a greater GDP have a lower Ebola Impact Index (view the [formula](#) below and you will understand how a greater GDP results in a lower Ebola Impact Index score). MEDCs can also deal with an Ebola outbreak more easily since their health infrastructure is more advanced (Economy does play a great role in combatting Ebola). However, a high Ebola Impact Index does not mean that an outbreak will necessarily take place. This is how the Ebola Impact Index is calculated:⁸

Expected number of cases (Potential outbreak size) =

Likelihood of a single case in a specific country * Number of cases likely to emerge once a single case breaks out



$$\text{Ebola Impact Index} = \frac{\text{Expected number of cases}}{\sqrt{\text{GDP of the country}}}$$

⁸ Sources:

- [Book:] *The economic impact of the 2014 Ebola epidemic: short- and medium-term estimates for West Africa*. Washington (DC): World Bank, 2014. 26 Nov. 2014. Web. 18 June 2017. <<https://books.google.gr/books?id=ozbtBQAAQBAJ>>. (p.45)
- Maliszewska Maryla, David Evans, Cesar Calderon, et al. "How much economic damage is Ebola causing?" *World Economic Forum. The World Bank Blog*, n.d. Web. 23 June 2017. <<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2014/10/ebola-economic-damage-africa/>>.

MAJOR COUNTRIES INVOLVED

Affected Countries (2014-2016)

The countries affected in the 2014-2016 epidemic are the following:

- **Countries where the disease was widely spread (also known as “Core countries”):**
 - Liberia
 - Sierra Leone
 - Guinea

[\(View map\)](#)

These countries had to deal with a rapid and widespread transmission of the disease. The phenomenon sparked a “health investigation” by organisations in the area, which found that the number of cases was extremely higher than what had been expected.

The virus could be easily transmitted since the indigenous people were, in most of the cases, neither aware of the disease nor of the fact that they should be protected when coming in touch with infected people.

The economies of these three countries are mainly supported by agricultural or service sectors, as well as by mining operations.

Liberia: Out of the three “core countries”, Liberia’s economy was damaged the most by Ebola. The service sector in particular saw a 50-75% drop in revenue. Moreover, the agricultural sector, which accounts for about ¼ of Liberia’s total GDP, was negatively affected. Mining activities play a great role in Liberia’s economy as well (17% of the total GDP), yet the outbreak crippled the country’s largest mining companies.

Sierra Leone: Sierra Leone’s agricultural operations account for about ½ of its economy. However, due to the epidemic, many farms were deserted and the movement of workers was limited due to areas being sequestered in order to prevent the virus from spreading. Furthermore, tourism also saw a decline due to visitors cancelling their flights in order to avoid contracting the EVD. Unlike Liberia’s mining sector, Sierra Leone’s mining sector (16% of the country’s GDP, 85% of country’s industry) was not greatly affected by the outbreak, except for a

decrease in iron ore prices, which resulted in reduced mining revenue. However, the major companies involved have stated that they plan on “maintaining their originally planned production levels to the extent possible”.

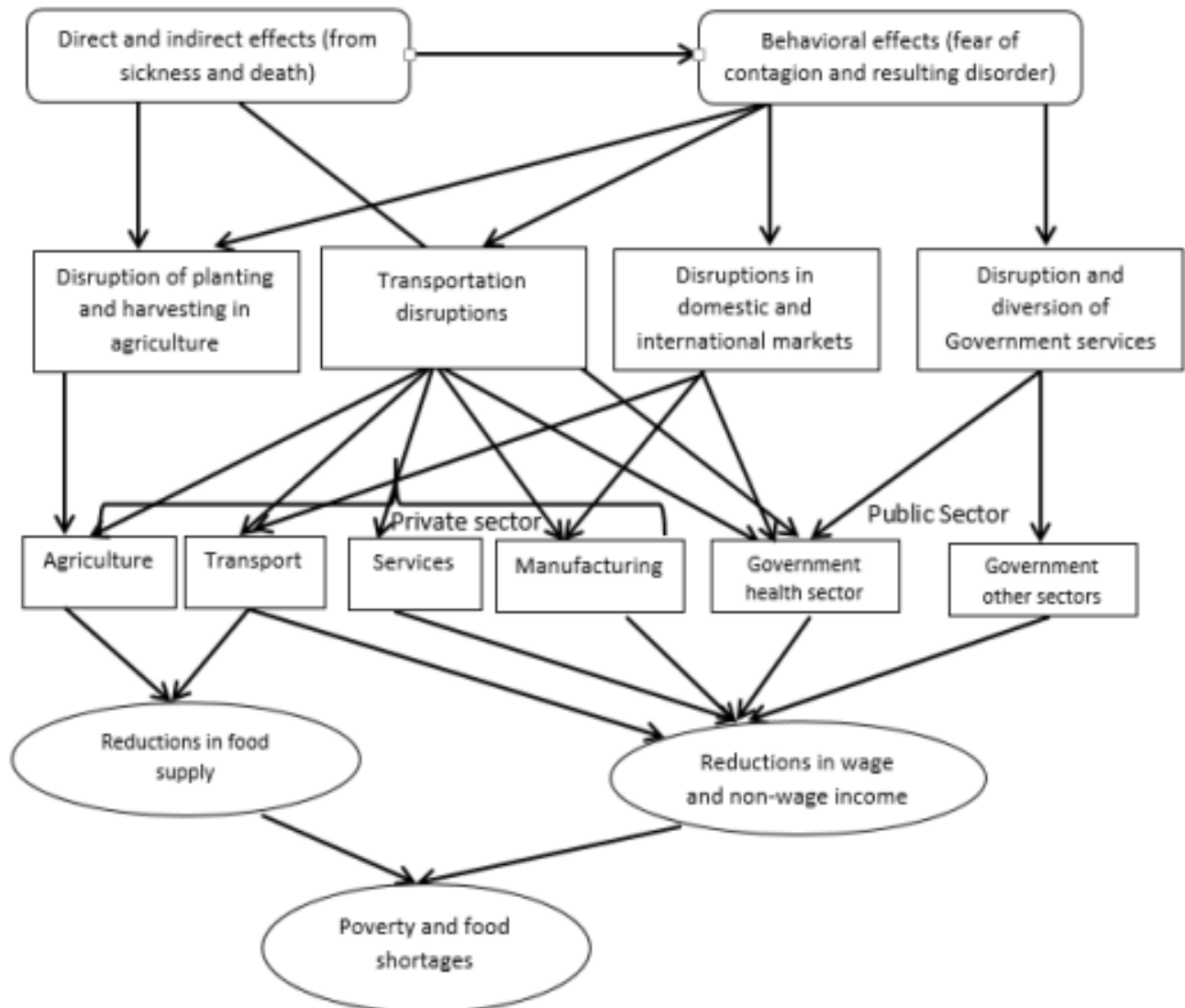
Guinea: Guinea relies on the agricultural sector as a source of income, yet the sector in question was “severed”, making it almost impossible for the country to export agricultural products and improve its economic situation. Revenue from the services sector was reduced almost by half, mainly because of a decline in tourism like in Sierra Leone. Guinea’s mining sector does not play a huge part in the country’s economy, unlike its counterparts in Liberia and Sierra Leone. As such, the fact that this sector was “damaged” did not affect the country’s economy very much.

Moreover, there is another problem the three core countries were confronted with. Due to the economy being impeded by the outbreak, the taxes naturally had to be reduced. However, this reduction coincides with a period in which the governments of these countries have to spend immense amounts of money in an attempt to combat the virus’s impact in all sectors. As such, revenue from taxes has seen a decrease while expenses have seen an increase, which means that the governments fail to support many of their projects financially. This clearly isn’t a sign of a healthy economy.

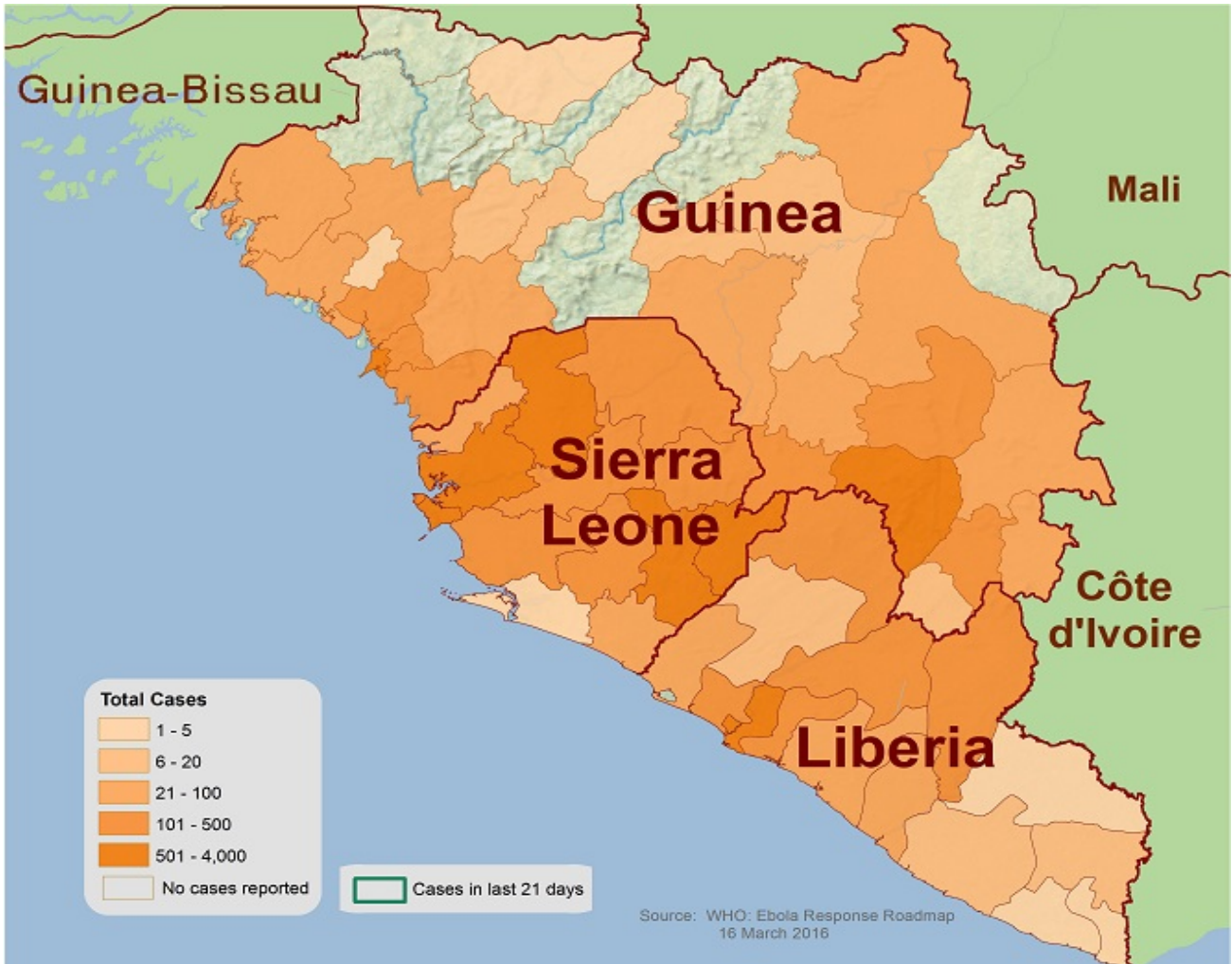
Sources:

- FRM, Elvin Mirzayev CFA. "Ebola's Economic Impacts on Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea." *Investopedia*. N.p., 13 Oct. 2014. Web. 11 July 2017. <<http://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/101314/ebolass-economic-impacts-liberia-sierra-leone-and-guinea.asp>>.
- [Book:] *The economic impact of the 2014 Ebola epidemic: short- and medium-term estimates for West Africa*. Washington (DC): World Bank, 2014. 26 Nov. 2014. Web. 18 June 2017. <<https://books.google.gr/books?id=ozbtBQAAQBAJ> & <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/20592/9781464804380.pdf>>.

Below you can find a graph that shows how the economic impact of Ebola was caused. The graph clarifies the relations between the factors that contributed to the impact:⁹



⁹ *Source:* FRM, Elvin Mirzayev CFA. "Ebola's Economic Impacts on Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea." *Investopedia*. N.p., 13 Oct. 2014. Web. 24 July 2017. <<http://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/101314/ebolass-economic-impacts-liberia-sierra-leone-and-guinea.asp>>.



The map above shows which African countries were plagued by a **widespread transmission** of the EVD during the 2014-2016 outbreak, as well as how many cases were reported in each one and how recent the cases were (more than 21 days before the map's creation).

Source:

"Ebola (Ebola Virus Disease)." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 17 Mar. 2016. Web. 19 June 2017.

<https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/distribution-map.html#areas>.

- **Countries with (limited) isolated cases:**

- Nigeria
- Mali
- United States of America
- Senegal
- Spain
- United Kingdom
- Italy

These countries had to deal with individual, “isolated” cases, mostly of people who returned from a trip to one of the countries where the disease was widely spread. The disease did fortunately not spread.

Nigeria’s and Senegal’s reactions to the limited Ebola cases that broke out within the country are prime examples of a rapid and effective response to the Ebola threat. For example, Nigeria’s Ministry of Health, cooperating with the Nigerian government, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) (view the “[Major organisations involved](#)” section for more information), immediately diagnosed and quarantined an infected airplane passenger and monitored him and other citizens for the 21-day period in which the symptoms appear, thus preventing the disease from spreading widely. Note that if no citizen shows any Ebola symptoms within 21 days since the first case broke out, that means that the virus did not manage to spread (due to the fact that, as was mentioned previously, the symptoms appear between 2 and 21 days after the exposure to Ebola). Senegal’s response to its **single** Ebola case was just as effective. Assisted by the WHO, Senegal’s government quarantined the host of the EVD. After the 21-day period no signs of Ebola were reported in the country, which indicates that the disease was prevented from spreading.¹⁰

Countries that were affected by previous EVD outbreaks

Please refer to the “[Previous outbreaks](#)” section.

¹⁰ *Source: “Ebola in Nigeria and Senegal: stable – for the moment.” WHO. World Health Organisation, n.d. Web. 16 June 2017. <<http://www.who.int/csr/disease/ebola/ebola-6-months/nigeria-senegal/en/>>.*

MAJOR ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF played a key-role in combatting the 2014-2016 epidemic in West Africa, both during the epidemic as well as in the post-epidemic era, trying to ensure that the disease does not spread again. The organisation has taken quite a lot of measures, such as, but not limited to:



- During the epidemic:
 - Raising public awareness regarding the evasion of infection
 - Erection of Community Care Centres (CCC), where infected people were isolated and cared for
 - Provision of protective supplies, such as protective gloves, safety goggles, IV (Intravenous) fluids, medicines, soap and chlorine
- After the epidemic:
 - Exercising alertness for further potential outbreaks of the EVD
 - Raising public awareness regarding the evasion of infection as well as proper hygiene

You can learn more about the organisation's efforts in countries such as Liberia and view promotional material [here](#).

Doctors Without Borders / Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)



The healthcare provided by the MSF was of the utmost importance. In countries where the disease spread widely, such as Liberia, not only simple schools, but also medical schools were suspended. According to the MSF organisation itself (see the [video](#) in the "[Useful links](#)" section), about only 50 indigenous people were medics and many of them died because of the epidemic. As such, there were no medical personnel and no medical students to assume the position of the medics that passed away. Subsequently, no healthcare was available to the public at all, even for minor health issues. The MSF organisation tackled this aspect of the issue by providing healthcare for minor as well as major health problems.

ActionAid

ActionAid is non-profit organisation that raised funds in order to combat the EVD outbreak in Sierra Leone and Liberia. The organisation used these funds to support 271,000 people through projects such as:

- Raising public awareness via local volunteers and messages on public media
- **Providing** quarantined patients with **edible supplies**
- **Providing** hospitals with **medical and sanitation supplies**
- **Providing** health workers with **protective gear**



World Health Organisation (WHO)



The World Health Organisation -unsurprisingly- focused more on combatting the virus itself rather than alleviating its consequences. A major step the organisation took was **the creation of an experimental EVD vaccine, which was proven effective** through testing and was put into action in Guinea, thus preventing many people from becoming infected.¹¹

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

As the name implies, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention try to estimate the impact of diseases and limit it or even neutralize it completely. The organisation operated extensively within the countries affected the most by the outbreak (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea) and performed actions such as:

- Tracking people who had come in contact with carriers of the virus and diagnosing them
- Tracking the methods through which the disease was spread and trying to limit them
- Training medical personnel in order for it to provide assistance in the affected areas
- Vaccinating the indigenous people

You can find out more about the organisation's efforts [here](#).



¹¹ *Source: "Final trial results confirm Ebola vaccine provides high protection against disease."* World Health Organisation. World Health Organisation, n.d. Web. 21 June 2017. <<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/releases/2016/ebola-vaccine-results/en/>>.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

* = Check the [“UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS”](#) section!

Date	Description of Event
March 2014	<p>An Ebola outbreak begins in West Africa. It is believed that the cause of the outbreak is a human being that was infected after coming contact with the body and/or the bodily fluids of a fruit bat, which is a natural host of the disease.</p>
9/10/2014	<p>An event named “Impact of the Ebola Crisis: A Perspective from the Countries” takes place (11:30 – 13:00 GMT). The leaders of the three core countries (Guinea, Sierra Leone & Liberia) as well as global development leaders express their thoughts on the matter and try to find solutions to combat the effects the EVD outbreak had on the social, economic as well as health sectors.</p> <p><u>(Sources:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>“Transcript of Remarks at the Event: Impact of the Ebola Crisis: A Perspective from the Countries.”</i> World Bank, http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/speech/2014/10/09/transcript-event-impact-ebola-crisis-perspective-countries. Accessed 24 Aug. 2017. ➤ <i>“New World Bank event: Impact of the Ebola Crisis: A Perspective from the Countries.”</i> World Bank Live, live.worldbank.org/impact-of-ebola-crisis. Accessed 24 Aug. 2017.)
18/9/2014	<p>The Security Council Resolution 2177 (2014) is adopted. *</p>
19/9/2014	<p>The United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) is established. *</p>
31/7/2015	<p>UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon makes the following comment on combatting the EVD outbreak in West Africa:</p> <p><i>“The United Nations remains steadfast in its commitment to supporting the Governments of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in getting to and staying at zero cases”</i></p>

	<i>(Source: "UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) Global Ebola Response." United Nations, United Nations, ebolaresponse.un.org/un-mission-ebola-emergency-response-unmeer. Accessed 24 Aug. 2017.)</i>
29/3/2016	The WHO terminates the Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) for the Ebola outbreak in West Africa (This means that the outbreak is officially considered to be in a condition in which it poses very little to no danger to human beings in the affected areas – In other words, the outbreak is almost over).

UN INVOLVEMENT: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER)

The **United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response** was a mission established on the 19th of September 2014 after the adoption of [General Assembly Resolution 69/1](#). More details about it are also mentioned in the [UN A/69/389-S/2014/679](#) document.

It was established as a **temporary** measure to combat the EVD outbreak in West Africa, as the name implies. The countries where it mainly operated were Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Its **objectives** were to **stop the outbreak and to treat the infected while preserving stability and ensuring essential services in the affected regions**. The mission also tried to **prevent further outbreaks**. It was suspended on the 31st of July 2015 after it had achieved its primary objectives.

Global Ebola Response Coalition (GERC)¹²

The **Global Ebola Response Coalition** is a group consisting of organisations and representatives of both the affected countries and the Agencies of the UN. The GERC tried to tackle the issues the EVD outbreak caused as well as monitor and limit the outbreak itself. In fact, the coalition aimed at ensuring a coordinated response to the outbreak. It was established in September 2014 by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. The coalition does

¹² *Source: "Global Ebola Response Coalition | Global Ebola Response." United Nations. United Nations, n.d. Web. 11 July 2017. <<https://ebolaresponse.un.org/global-ebola-response-coalition>>.*

not have a formal membership. This means that members may join the GERC or drop out of it without having to abide by any limiting rules.

Resolutions

- The [Security Council Resolution 2177 \(2014\)](#) [S/RES/2177 (2014)] is a resolution adopted by the Security Council on the 18th of September 2014. It proposes measures on combatting the EVD outbreak in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia and encourages the governments of the three countries to take certain steps towards the resolution of the issue, such as the establishment of national mechanisms for the diagnosis of potentially infected citizens and for the isolation of the carriers of the disease.

PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER)

The UNMEER **achieved its core objectives**, thus greatly alleviating the situation. Since its goals included goals on development of the affected regions, it did achieve a form of sustainable development.

Other organisations & The Global Ebola Response Coalition

As was mentioned previously, several organisations (and the GERC) wish to improve the situation. Some are focusing more on the economic sector, others on the humanitarian and/or medical aspect of the outbreak. Since many of these organisations have achieved their goals, **they have hitherto been a huge help as far as the alleviation of the situation is concerned.**

WHAT IS THE DESIRED DEVELOPMENT?

During the aforementioned “Impact of the Ebola Crisis: A Perspective from the Countries” event in 2014, the leaders of the three countries most affected by the disease got a chance to discuss the matter and voice their countries’ needs in order for them to rebound and develop.

Guinea's President Alpha Condé made it clear that the main objectives of his country are that have to do with post-outbreak sustainable development are the following:

- a. **enhancing the health as well as the education system** in order to be able to cope better with a potential future outbreak,
 - b. **convince investors to continue investing in the country**, with this being achieved through a better communication with them (i.e. explaining the true nature of Ebola and informing them that Foreign Direct Investments play a huge role in combatting the crisis' effects, since they can help the economic sectors that were struck rebound),
 - c. **receive financial support from the international community** so as to implement the proposed measures and combat the economic deficit.
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Sierra Leone's President Ernest Bai Koroma stated the **sustainability** is the key to developing after the outbreak, since it will help us prevent further outbreaks or deal with them efficiently in case they emerge. In order to achieve this, **he proposed that temporary EVD treatment centers be turned into permanent ones**. He also suggested the **establishment of a "national public health institute"** that would be fully prepared to deal with the disease.

The president also mentioned the importance of an **economic rebound**. He acknowledged the fact that the economic impact of Ebola disrupted many economic activities, which led the government to a fiscal crisis and to a lack of funds. President Koroma **called for the support of both the international community as well as financial institutions** with the aim of **boosting investments** in the affected countries.

Should all these steps be taken, the countries are very likely to see a positive socioeconomic development.

Liberia's President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf asked the international community to assist the affected countries in invigorating the revenue-generating fields that were impacted by the outbreak, and, when it comes to Liberia, the sector affected the most is the agricultural one, as she clarified. She then proceeded by saying that, in order to perform the aforementioned invigoration, the infrastructure had to be improved and ongoing infrastructure projects had to be completed: "Primarily power, roads, ports, and water, which are vital to improved access to and quality of

health care” the President commented, showing her commitment to not only ensure a development in the economic sector, but also improve the healthcare sector.

The three presidents also stated the efforts of their countries against the epidemic and briefly describe the impact the outbreak had. This section was simply a summary of the most important parts of their speeches. Alternatively, I suggest that you view the full transcript of the conversations. (You can find the links in the sources below ↓)

Thanks to the event, the international community now has more leads as to how to approach the issue.

(Sources:

- *“Transcript of Remarks at the Event: Impact of the Ebola Crisis: A Perspective from the Countries.” World Bank, <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/speech/2014/10/09/transcript-event-impact-ebola-crisis-perspective-countries>. Accessed 24 Aug. 2017.*
- *“New World Bank event: Impact of the Ebola Crisis: A Perspective from the Countries.” World Bank Live, live.worldbank.org/impact-of-ebola-crisis. Accessed 24 Aug. 2017.)*

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

The EVD was, undeniably, a huge obstacle in the sector of sustainable development, partially due to its lethality and partially because of the economic impact it had. One should also keep in mind that in order to have sustainable development in the affected areas, one has to first ensure that the ebolavirus does not strike again. Even though the crisis is officially over, isolated cases of Ebola are reported at quite frequent intervals. According to the WHO, this is something to be expected, since the affected countries haven’t yet fully recovered from the outbreak. However, it goes without saying that the conditions in these countries have to be dramatically improved in order to prevent yet another widespread transmission of the EVD.

One should also focus on restoring the sources of revenue that the affected countries relied on to their state prior to the outbreak and on further improving them in a sustainable way.

The [World Bank](#) is a potential source of funding, but one should not forget the organisations that strive for the cause at hand.

Possible solutions include:

➤ Improved sanitation and healthcare sector

The governments could achieve this in tandem with organisations such as ActionAid and the Doctors without borders. By improving the sanitation in the country as well as the healthcare sector, **not only would a further outbreak be prevented, but tourists would also feel safer in the country and would start visiting it again, thus restoring a part of the services sector -namely the tourism sector- to its previous, profitable state.**

➤ Stricter vaccination schedule

This is a measure focusing solely on the **prevention of a further outbreak**. Having created an Ebola vaccine, the **WHO** could take part in this task. Moreover, the **CDC** organisation occupied itself with vaccinating indigenous people in the three core countries, so it could also be of assistance. Although organisations did vaccinate people during the outbreak, now that it is almost over vaccinations are not always performed in a strict schedule, since the core countries are no longer in a health emergency state. As such, a more specific plan of action on this topic **could greatly reduce the chances of Ebola being spread again**. Furthermore, the UN as well as other organisations involved **will have to cater for more vaccines**, so that more people in the endangered regions can be vaccinated.

➤ Raising public awareness and commencing public fundraising campaigns

As was mentioned before, the World Bank and the “treasury” of organisations are potential sources of funding, yet we cannot always rely on them and overtax them, especially the latter funding source. However, by **sensitizing citizens of MEDCs about the impact of the EVD outbreak**, we can **launch fundraising campaigns** like many organisations have done in the past. As such, through this method we will be able to not only inform the unaffected about the issue, but also **use the raised funds in projects aimed at improving the situation**, such as the rest of the potential solutions mentioned in the “Possible Solutions” section, since, as was mentioned

previously, the affected countries' governments have **immense expenses and fairly low (tax) revenue** at this point in time.

➤ Improving trade and economy

Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone all rely on exporting the minerals and agricultural products produced in the country (with the **exception of Guinea that relies mostly on its agricultural sector** and not on the minerals extracted in the country). However, these sectors were crippled by the recent EVD outbreak and need to be restored to their former glory. Why is it currently difficult for these sectors to be improved? The answer is that Ebola did not just cause many to abandon their profession out of fear of becoming infected, but it also killed many of them who unfortunately were exposed to the virus. This means that a fairly big percent of the countries' workforce was eradicated. Of course, due to the **large population of the core countries compared to the total EVD deaths**, this does not pose a permanent problem. However, during the outbreak, these sectors were unsurprisingly neglected. One cannot expect the situation to be overturned in a few months, but, with the UN's help, it can be improved over the course of the next years. What we have to focus on is how we can empower the countries' workforce once again.

This can be achieved through methods such as, but not limited to:

a) Training young people in these professions (This is a long-term solution)

The EVD outbreak in West Africa resulted in the death of many adults who occupied themselves with mining and agriculture. By training the young citizens of the affected countries (aged 18+) in these professional fields, we would be ensuring the **longevity** of these sectors, which are revenue sources for the countries. That way, the economy can improve -and keep improving- in the long run.

b) Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs)

This method involves promoting long-term investments of foreign individuals or companies into the two main professional fields of the core countries (agriculture and mining). This would mean that a

foreign entity takes control of an agricultural or mining company based in the core countries, which is, however, not a problem, since such a phenomenon had already occurred in these countries prior to the outbreak and also because the economy will **rebound** (= recover), which is one of our ultimate goals.

c) **Help from UN & other (affiliated) entities**

An example of this method is the following: Due to many of them being abandoned for a long time during the outbreak, many mining facilities and a large portion of the countries' farmlands are in a condition in which they are unusable. Providing adequate funding in the form of projects aimed at repairing and improving the present facilities is an important task that can be handled by several entities, such as the [World Bank](#) or the [World Trade Organisation \(WTO\)](#).

d) **Tax incentives**

Encouraging the establishment of small mining or agricultural companies and businesses in the core countries is a vital step towards improving their economy. This can be achieved through tax incentives being made available to newly created local companies and businesses. The provision of the tax incentives could be catered for by the World Bank in association with the countries' governments.

Moreover, the trade sector should be a priority as well. Fortunately, **none of the three core countries is landlocked** (*landlocked = entirely enclosed by land → no access to the sea*). This means that maritime trade routes are a possible option for exporting products for all three affected countries. With the help of the UN and the [World Trade Organisation \(WTO\)](#), these countries will be able to be included in the "trade game", thus boosting their exports and improving their damaged economy.

- Of course, coming up with your own ideas on how the issue can be dealt with is also possible and I recommend that you try to do so, since it will raise the debate's level and make it much more diverse!

USEFUL LINKS

- I personally suggest that you also view this video made by the MSF organisation. It really helped me a lot as far as the creation of the Study Guide is concerned and I also believe it will be a more “modern” and entertaining way for you to approach the issue. Of course, the video definitely cannot replace the whole Study Guide, so view it as complementary material.

Link: <https://youtu.be/I7EWNaaav0U>

- For more information on the EVD outbreak as well as on the ebolavirus itself, I suggest that you visit this website: <https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/index.html>
- In case you wish to view the results from the economic models and High/Low Ebola scenarios, I suggest that you view this [document](#) and navigate to the relevant section.

Link:

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/20592/9781464804380.pdf>

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