



ML Strategies Update

David Leiter, djleiter@mlstrategies.com
Georgette Spanjich, gmspanjich@mlstrategies.com

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ML Strategies, LLC
701 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20004 USA
202 296 3622
202 434 7400 fax
www.mlstrategies.com

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Africa Update

Leading the News

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On August 21st, the United Nations (U.N.) World Health Organization (WHO) announced plans to convene medical experts for a September 4th-5th meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, to gather expertise on the most promising experimental therapies and their role in containing the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. This discussion is expected to focus on safety, efficacy, and models for expediting clinical trials. The meeting is expected to attract more than 100 participants, including at least 20 participants from the African countries that have been impacted by the epidemic. The upcoming meeting was reported [here](#).

On August 21st, House Foreign Affairs Africa Subcommittee Ranking Member Karen Bass (D-CA) issued a statement on the release of American Ebola patients Nancy Writebol and Dr. Keny Brantly from Emory University Hospital. While expressing relief for the recovery of Writebol and Dr. Brantly, Congresswoman Bass said the more than 2,000 people in West Africa who have been infected with Ebola since the outbreak began in March cannot be forgotten. She called on the U.S. Government to do all it can to support Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Nigeria in fighting the disease, and more broadly, to continue to help developing nations strengthen their health care systems. Congresswoman Bass' full statement can be read [here](#).

On August 21st, *NPR* aired a podcast explaining how the Ebola outbreak in West Africa has made it even more difficult to provide good health care in the region. For example, it is currently the rainy season, which also makes it high season for malaria, a disease that has many of the same symptoms as Ebola. In addition, malaria patients are increasingly unlikely to visit clinics due to fears that they may contract Ebola. Further, health care workers are hesitant to draw blood to perform the tests needed to diagnose malaria, especially because blood is one of the ways the Ebola virus may be contracted. The full story was recorded [here](#).

On August 22nd, Nigerian officials confirmed two new cases of Ebola, bringing the total number of Ebola cases in the country to 14. Five Ebola patients have died, five have recovered, and four are in isolation and being treated. Nigerian Health Minister Onyebuchi Chukwu reported that the new newest cases are

the spouses of medical workers who treated Patrick Sawyer, the Liberian American who brought Ebola to Nigeria in July. Details were reported [here](#).

On August 22nd, a spokesman for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced that CDC Director Dr. Tom Frieden would travel to Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea this week. While in West Africa, Dr. Frieden was scheduled to meet with local health officials to learn more about what is needed to combat the Ebola outbreak. In addition, Dr. Frieden planned to visit hospitals treating Ebola patients. More information was shared [here](#).

On August 22nd, Senior U.N. System Coordinator for Ebola Dr. David Nabarro and U.N. World Health Organization (WHO) Assistant Director-General for Health Security Dr. Keiji Fukuda completed a two-day visit to Monrovia, Liberia, to assess the Ebola situation. Following his visit, Dr. Nabarro pledged to send more workers to the West African countries that are struggling to deal with the outbreak. In addition, the WHO reported that new treatment centers opening in Liberia are being overwhelmed with an influx of Ebola patients who were not detected by the surveillance system. The U.N. officials' visit to Monrovia was summarized [here](#).

On August 22nd, the sons of recently released U.S. Ebola patient and missionary Nancy Writebol said that while their mother is continuing her recovery, she has not ruled out the possibility of returning to Africa to help the people she was ministering when she contracted the disease. Comments from Writebol's sons were transcribed [here](#).

On August 23rd, a cargo plane carrying 68 metric tons of supplies provided by the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) arrived in Liberia, Monrovia, as part of an effort to help Liberian health workers continue the battle against the Ebola outbreak. Among the supplies delivered were concentrated chlorine for disinfection and water purification, 45,000 pairs of latex gloves, and supplies of intravenous fluids, oral rehydration salts, and ready-to-use therapeutic food to feed patients during treatment. More information can be seen [here](#).

On August 24th, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Health Minister Felix Kabange Numbi announced two Ebola-related deaths in the DRC. Last week, eight fever victims in the DRC tested positive from Ebola. It is believed they contracted the unidentified fever in the Equateur region of the DRC and that the disease's presence in the country has nothing to do with the ongoing Ebola epidemic in West Africa. The Ebola cases in the DRC were announced [here](#).

On August 24th, the U.S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) airlifted more than 18 tons of medical supplies to Monrovia, Liberia, as part of its ongoing efforts to combat the West Africa Ebola outbreak. Among the supplies delivered from USAID'S warehouse in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) were personal protective equipment, water treatment systems, portable water tanks, and plastic sheeting. The delivery was noted [here](#).

On August 25th, the WHO released a draft document detailing a \$430 million strategy for bringing the Ebola outbreak in West Africa under control. The plan sets the goal of reversing the trend in new cases within two months and stopping all transmission of the Ebola virus in six to nine months. The plan is to be funded with support from governments, development banks, the private sector, and in-kind contributions. The strategy was outlined [here](#).

On August 25th, the U.N. continue to warn against flight restrictions into and out of Ebola-affected countries in West Africa, saying that such limitations were preventing the transport of health workers and supplies and also increasing the economic and diplomatic isolation of the region. U.N. officials repeated that flight restrictions are not an optimal measure to control the spread of the virus because they do not reflect what is known about the way the virus passes between people. Additional feedback from the U.N. was shared [here](#).

On August 25th, Liberian officials announced the death of Dr. Abraham Borbor, Deputy Chief Medical Officer at Liberia's largest hospital, from Ebola virus. Dr. Borbor had received the experimental drug ZMapp after contracting the disease. In addition, a Spanish priest who had also received the ZMapp drug died, but his death was attributed, in part, to his age. Details were posted [here](#).

On August 25th, medical professionals at the British Hampstead's Royal Free Hospital reported that they have begun treating William Pooley, a 29-year-old, British volunteer nurse, for Ebola virus. Pooley had been treating Ebola patients in Sierra Leone when he contracted the disease. He was flown back to the United Kingdom (U.K.) on Sunday in a special outfitted military aircraft. The full story is available [here](#).

On August 25th, Assistant Professor of Government at Dartmouth College Brendan Nyhan authored an opinion piece for the *New York Times* describing how misinformation and conspiracy theories are likely to be the greatest obstacles to combating the Ebola epidemic in West Africa. Professor Nyhan acknowledges that there are widespread rumors about how the disease is contracted and how to treat it, as well as a growing distrust of medical professionals and aid workers. The full op-ed can be read [here](#).

On August 26th, the WHO announced it had removed its Ebola response teams from a region of Sierra Leone that had been hardest hit by the outbreak after a Senegalese epidemiologist contracted the virus. Those pulled back included workers running a mobile laboratory to test for the virus and three WHO employees who coordinated the tracing of victims' contacts. A Doctors Without Borders Operation in the region will continue its operations. The situation was described [here](#).

On August 26th, Nigerian Health Minister Onyebuchi Chukwu said that Nigerian authorities have so far contained the Ebola outbreak that began in the country last month, with only one of 13 confirmed cases still being treated in isolation in Lagos. Minister Chukwu's comments can be seen [here](#).

On August 27th, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf issued a statement dismissing all ministers and senior government officials who defied an order to return to Liberia within a week of President Sirleaf declaring a state of emergency related to the Ebola outbreak on August 6th. It was not immediately clear how many and which ministers might have been impacted by the decree. More information can be found [here](#).

On August 27th, Nigeria's Ministry of Education announced that all schools in Nigeria will remain closed until October 13th as part of measures to prevent the spread of Ebola virus. The academic year had been scheduled to start on Monday. According to the Ministry of Education, the school year has been delayed so that teachers can receive training on how to handle suspected Ebola cases. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On August 27th, the WHO kicked off a three-day workshop in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo (ROC), focused on strengthening Africa's defense against the West African Ebola outbreak. Participants included health experts from Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The workshop is intended to build participants' capacity to control Ebola virus, including through surveillance and data management, infection prevention and control, case management, laboratory sample collection and transportation, and social mobilization and proper use of personal protection equipment. The workshop was noted [here](#).

On August 27th, USAID announced an additional \$5 million to help combat the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, bringing USAID's total contributions to assist in West Africa to \$19.6 million since the outbreak was first reported in March. The additional funding was announced by Director of USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Jeremy Konyndyk during his visit to Monrovia, Liberia, with CDC Director Dr. Tom Frieden. The new funds will be used to provide health equipment and emergency supplies, train and support health care workers on infection control and case management, support public outreach campaigns, and help build the capacity of local health care and emergency response systems. More information can be seen [here](#).

On August 27th, the CDC said it flew an employee who has been deployed to West Africa back to the U.S. by chartered plane after the staff member came into contact with an international health care worker who later tested positive for Ebola. The CDC reported that the employee was at low-risk for contracting Ebola, but had been working in close proximity to the ill person for a prolonged period during which the sick person began to show symptoms. The CDC staffer is reportedly feeling fine. The situation was detailed [here](#).

On August 27th, U.S. Senator Mary Pryor (D-AR) released a new campaign ad highlighting his opponent,

Tom Cotton's, vote against a 2013 bill that would have required the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to develop specific strategies for pandemic preparedness and made it easier to access experimental drugs during emergencies. The ad alleges that Cotton is opposed to preparing the U.S. for an Ebola outbreak, which 40 percent of Americans believe is a possibility. The ad can be watched [here](#).

On August 28th, the WHO released new statistics on the impact of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. According to the WHO, the epidemic has killed more than 1,552 people out of 3,069 known cases in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria, and the outbreak is continuing to accelerate. In addition, the WHO cautioned that the outbreak could eventually exceed 20,000 cases. The current Ebola outbreak has now killed as many people as all previous Ebola outbreaks combined. An update from the WHO was provided [here](#).

On August 28th, authorities in Nigeria confirmed the first Ebola death outside of Lagos. Following the death of a doctor in Port Harcourt, the physician's wife has been put under quarantine. In addition, 70 other people in the city are now under surveillance for symptoms of the virus. The full story is available [here](#).

On August 28th, the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) announced the launch of a clinical trial of an investigational vaccine for Ebola. The trial will be conducted by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and U.K. pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline. If regulatory approvals are granted, research teams in the U.K. could start vaccinating healthy volunteers in mid-September. With U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval, the NIH could begin vaccinating healthy Americans as soon as next week. The CDC is also in discussions with the Nigerian Health Ministry regarding a possible trial in Nigeria. All phase I trials are expected to be completed by the end of the year. Details were shared [here](#).

Libya

On August 23rd, in a mission dubbed Operation Dawn, a coalition of Islamists and Misrata forces captured Tripoli International Airport and announced the formation of their own government. On Sunday, militant groups set airport buildings on fire. In response to the incident, Libyan legislations called an emergency meeting. Meanwhile, in Benghazi, government forces continued to clash with forces loyal to renegade former General Khalifa Hiftar. An update on the situation in Libya was provided [here](#).

On August 25th, the ruling Islamist coalition in Tripoli, Libya, appointed Omar al-Hasi as the new prime minister and declared the recently elected parliament, the House of Representatives, null and void. Meanwhile, Libyan Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thinni said the House of Representatives is the only legitimate body in Libya and the former General National Congress's (GNC) appointment of a new prime minister is invalid. The situation was detailed [here](#).

On August 25th, the State Department issued a joint statement with the Governments of France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom (U.K.) on developments in Libya. Government leaders strongly condemned the escalation of fighting and violence across the country, especially land and air strikes against residential areas, public facilities, and critical infrastructure. The international community also repeated its call for an immediate ceasefire and welcomed the discussions to be held on Libya's political and security situation in the coming days. The full statement can be read [here](#).

On August 25th, the *New York Times* reported that twice in the past week Egypt and the UAE have launched secret airstrikes in Libya, targeting positions held by Islamist militias battling for control of Tripoli. Both Egypt and the UAE acted without informing the U.S. of the airstrikes in advance. The full report can be viewed [here](#).

On August 26th, during a news conference, Pentagon Press Secretary Rear Admiral John Kirby confirmed reports that warplanes from the UAE, with assistance from Egypt, have attacked targets in Libya over the past several days. Press Secretary Kirby said the U.S. does not want more violence on top of the violence that is already existing inside Libya, and referred reporters to government officials from the UAE and Egypt for further details. A video from the news conference can be watched [here](#).

On August 27th, outgoing U.N. Special Representative for Libya Tarek Mitri delivered his final briefing to the U.N. Security Council. Special Representative Mitri reported that the air and ground strikes in Libya over the past several days have been unprecedented and alarming. In addition, he reported that the continuing fighting between rival militia groups has left over 100,000 people displaced in Libya and led 150,000 Libyans to seek refuge in other countries. Special Representative Mitri also warned of an uptick in kidnappings, burning houses, and lootings, as well as the use of heavy weapons in densely populated areas. Additional excerpts from the briefing were highlighted [here](#).

South Sudan

On August 23rd, the Intergovernmental Development Authority (IGAD) announced that one of its ceasefire monitors in South Sudan had died in Bentiu after being detained by opposition forces. The monitor had been participating in a routine inspection when the monitors were arrested and marched to an unknown destination. Mission officials reported that he died of natural causes and that the remaining monitors and air crew were rescued and flown to a U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) base on Sunday. The incident was noted [here](#).

On August 25th, UNMISS condemned the detention of six IGAD ceasefire monitors and three air crew in Unity State over the weekend by opposition forces. Reiterating its full support for IGAD mediation and the monitoring and verification mechanism, UNMISS called on all parties in South Sudan to cooperate in finding a peaceful and durable solution to the current crisis. Feedback from UNMISS can be found [here](#).

On August 25th, the U.S. Department of State also issued a statement condemning the temporary detention of members of the IGAD Monitoring and Verification Mechanism (MVM) team and three aircrew by opposition forces in Unity State, South Sudan. According to State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki, impediments of movement to MVM personnel are a clear violation of the cessation of hostilities agreement signed by both sides of the conflict on January 23rd. In addition, she reiterated support for IGAD mediation efforts and underscored the importance of MVM operations in facilitating the implementation of the January agreement and the more recently signed Security Matrix. The full statement was published [here](#).

On August 25th, South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and opposition leader former Vice President Riek Machar signed a new ceasefire agreement following negotiations hosted under the auspices of the IGAD. IGAD called on President Kiir and former Vice President Machar to form a unity government within 45 days, after missing the 60-day deadline to do so under a previous agreement. More information was reported [here](#).

On August 25th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the signing by the South Sudanese Government and the oppositions of a plan to implement a ceasefire agreement. In his statement, Secretary-General Ban commended the efforts of the IGAD and articulated the full support of the U.N. for South Sudan's peace process. Secretary-General Ban also urged both parties to immediately implement the agreement and uphold their commitment to establishing a transitional government. His full statement can be read [here](#).

On August 26th, UNMISS confirmed that three crew members died and another was injured when one of its helicopters crashed near Bentiu. The helicopter had been on a routine cargo flight from Wau to Bentiu when it lost contact with UNMISS. UNMISS is now conducting an investigation into the cause of the crash. The full story is available [here](#).

On August 27th, the U.N. Security Council condemned the downing of a U.N. helicopter in South Sudan that killed three Russian crew members and left a fourth severely injured. The Security Council stressed that the attack on the helicopter was a grave violation of the Status of Forces Agreement that jeopardized UNMISS operations. Like UNMISS, the U.N. Security Council called for a thorough investigation of the attack. A press statement was issued [here](#).

Central African Republic

On August 22nd, Central African Republic (CAR) Acting Prime Minister Kamoun Mahamat announced the establishment of a new transitional government. The newly announced cabinet includes 31 members,

eight of whom are women. Details were reported [here](#).

On August 26th, the U.S. Department of State issued a press statement welcoming the formation of a new transitional government in the CAR. State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki called on the newly appointed government to quickly move forward with the democratic transition process and to pursue broad-based, inclusive national dialogue that includes Central Africans who are internally displaced or have fled to neighboring countries. In addition, the State Department urged all parties in the CAR to adhere to the terms of the July 2014 Brazzaville cessation of hostilities agreement. The full statement can be read [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

U.S. Agency for International Development

On August 21st, Director of the Center for Data, Analysis, and Research in the USAID Global Development Lab Jerry O'Brien authored a post for USAID's *Impact Blog* on the power of scientific research to help increase investment in Africa. Director O'Brien highlighted USAID's participation in efforts to advance a "science-led agenda in Africa," including the launch of the Global Development Lab, Power Africa, and the Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) program. The full blog post can be seen [here](#).

On August 27th, Dr. Benjamin Ryan Phelps and Joella Adams, who both work for USAID on Preventing Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) of HIV programs, wrote for USAID's *Impact Blog* about new efforts to combat HIV/AIDS. The blog post highlights the announcement of the Accelerating Children's HIV/AIDS Treatment (ACT) during last month's U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit. Supported by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), ACT is a \$200 million initiative to double the total number of children receiving life-saving antiretroviral therapy (ART) across ten priority African countries over the next two years. The blog post can be accessed [here](#).

Department of Defense

On August 22nd, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) detailed a course held for U.S. Army soldiers on field sanitation throughout the month of August. Lessons in the course included medical threats, water supply, food service sanitation, rodent management, heat and cold weather injuries, toxic-waste disposal, noise hazards, and field sanitation equipment and supplies. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On August 25th, the Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) reported that many Eagle Scouts have deployed to CJTF-HOA and Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti. Eagle Scouts are Boy Scouts who have gone through all of the scout ranks, earned 21 mandatory merit badges, executed a final community service project, and passed an Eagle Scout board of review. The merits badges include first aid, communication, fitness, camping, family life, and wilderness survival. More information was highlighted [here](#).

On August 26th, CJTF-HOA reported on new medics with the Charlie Company who recently arrived at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, for a nine-month deployment. While the missions remain, some reorganization is occurring to match teams with missions and the respective operations tempo. Details were shared [here](#).

On August 26th, AFRICOM headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany, celebrated Women's Equality Day to recognize the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, which gave women the right to vote. As part of the event, Deputy Director of AFRICOM's Intelligence and Knowledge Development Directorate Brigadier General Jody Daniels spoke about the impact women have on the world when they contribute. The celebrate was highlighted [here](#).

Congress

On August 21st, *Army Times* profiled retired Lieutenant General Dana Chipman, who previously served as judge advocate general for the Army and was recently hired by Congressman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) to

serve as Chief Counsel for the Republicans on the House Select Committee on Benghazi. Chipman was also deployed during Operation Enduring Freedom in 2001 and 2002 as a legal adviser to a joint special operations task force. The Committee is planning to hold its first public hearing in September. The full article can be read [here](#).

North Africa

On August 21st, the World Bank launched its first Economic Update for Mauritania. The analysis found that while Mauritania registered a 6.7 percent economic growth rate in 2013 and has recently found macroeconomic stability, the country remains vulnerable to a lack of diversification, international price volatility, and reliance on foreign inflows. The report also highlights the need for Mauritania to reinvest the revenue generated by selling natural resources into other forms of capital. The full report can be downloaded [here](#).

On August 24th, Italian authorities reported that they had rescued 3,500 migrants from North Africa and found at least 18 bodies in the Mediterranean Sea since Friday. In total, Italian authorities estimated that as many as 100,000 may have tried to make the journey from Libya to Italy since the start of this year. In response, Italy has been spending roughly \$13 million per month to operate air and sea patrols. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On August 26th, the World Bank Board of Executive Directors approved \$100 million to support the Government of Morocco's ongoing efforts to boost employment and improve the quality of jobs across the country. The project will focus on ensuring the skills taught in universities and vocational training programs match the needs of the labor market, increasing the efficiency of employment services and broadening their reach to disadvantaged segments of the population, promoting micro-enterprises while formalizing the employment conditions for the many currently employed by them, and forcing the governance of the labor market. The funding was announced [here](#).

On August 27th, the U.N. Security Council extended the mandate of the African Union (AU) – U.N. Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) through June 30, 2015. The Security Council also directed UNAMID to continue its focus on strategic priorities, such as the improved protection of civilians and humanitarian workers, along with facilitation of aid and mediation activities. Information on the unanimously adopted resolution on UNAMID can be found [here](#).

East Africa

On August 25th, *Yahoo! News* profiled WildLeaks, an organization launched in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, earlier this year that maintains an online whistle-blowing platform dedicated to wildlife and forest crime. The project is hoping to target powerful individuals who are involved in poaching and to address the government corruption that sometimes keeps these individuals from being apprehended. Since its launch, WildLeaks has received 45 tips and leaks, including 28 that the organization deemed useful. The project was further described [here](#).

On August 27th, the Thomson Reuters Foundation reported on the Government of Ethiopia's efforts to grow more sugar to meet demand and to boost electrical production and to create sugar-based ethanol to help reduce carbon emissions and cut down on fossil fuel imports. Ethiopia is currently producing 300,000 tons of sugar a year at three factories that generate a total of 62 megawatts (MW) of electricity. According to Ethiopia's Ministry of Water, Irrigation, and Energy, the country has the potential to produce as much as 600 MW from sugar when 13 additional factories under construction begin operations. More information can be viewed [here](#).

West Africa

On August 20th, the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) reported on the preparations U.N. entities are taking to accommodate for girls returning to Chibok after being kidnapped in April by Boko Haram. UNFPA said it is setting up clinics, providing health screenings, and distributing dignity kits. While most of the approximately 200 schoolgirls who were updated remain missing, UNFPA also reported that some girls who have managed to flee the perpetrators have been raped by lone men and encountered other violence on their way home. An update from UNFPA was issued [here](#).

On August 21st, the *Wall Street Journal* reported on concerns raised by U.S. and Nigerian officials that the Saltpond oil facility on the coast of Ghana might be assisting stolen Nigerian crude oil in reaching the global market. The platform's operator has denied any wrongdoing and reported that the facility has a legitimate contract with Nigerian authorities to transship oil that has been confiscated by law enforcement officers. However, observers suggest the activity at the port has been high and drawing attention. The full story is available [here](#).

On August 23rd, Nigerian Agriculture Minister Abdou Labo was arrested for his suspected involvement in a baby-trafficking network. Seventeen other people, including Minister Labo's wife, had been arrested earlier this summer when they were found to be acquiring newborn babies from Nigeria and selling them. While Minister Labo is presumed innocent, he has been placed in detention. Details were shared [here](#).

On August 25th, Boko Haram leaders Abubakar Shekau released a new video claiming that Boko Haram fighters had captured the town of Gwoza and are now ruling by Islamic law. While witnesses reported that police and military forces in Gwoza had been forced to retreat, the Nigerian military refuted the claim that Boko Haram militants had captured the town. More information can be found [here](#).

On August 26th, the World Bank highlighted additional funding allocated for the Ghana Social Opportunities Project, which was designed to support Ghana's efforts to fight poverty in the country's poorest regions and to ensure that poor and vulnerable households are not left behind as the economy grows. As part of the Project, the World Bank is also supporting the Labor-Intensive Public Works (LIPW) program, which pays people for their afforestation work in climate change mitigation programs, rehabilitation of rural roads and small earth dams, and dugouts improving the country's infrastructure. The Project was detailed [here](#).

On August 27th, Cameroonian officials reported that Cameroonian troops had killed 30 suspected Boko Haram militants who attacked areas where Nigerian troops had crossed the border during a battle with insurgents. Cameroonian soldiers also seized heavy weapons and destroyed one of the vehicles the militants had been using. More information was provided [here](#).

On August 27th, Nigerian Minister of Information Labaran Maku announced that Nigeria will soon launch its first digital radio station. Minister Maku said the digital station will be world class and able to compete with global radio stations. In addition, he urged members of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) to participate in planning for the success of the new radio station. Minister Maku's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On August 27th, the U.N. Security Council issued a presidential statement reiterating its concern about the alarming security situation in the Sahel region. The Security Council called for a coherent, comprehensive, and coordinated approach encompassing governance, security, human rights, developmental, and environmental aspects to respond to threats across the Sahel region. The U.N. explicitly expressed concerns regarding terrorist activities in the region, the proliferation of arms, and transnational organized crime, such as drug trafficking. Additional feedback from the U.N. Security Council can be viewed [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On August 21st, at least 25 people were killed when a gold mine collapsed near the town of Bambari in the CAR. The mine, which is owned by Canadian mining company Axim, had previously collapsed in December 2012. The miners who were trapped in the rubble are believed to have been artisan miners who were looking for minerals to help finance illicit operations in the CAR. Details can be viewed [here](#).

On August 21st, The World Bank highlighted its efforts to work with local authorities in Zimbabwe to supply a safe and clean water supply and to mitigate the risk of water-borne disease outbreaks. To re-establish urban water and sanitation utility viability nationally and to enhance efficiency in revenue collection and effective prioritization of interventions, the World Bank is supporting a water and sanitation service-level benchmarking exercise. More information was provided [here](#).

On August 24th, Mozambique's Frelimo Government and the Renamo main opposition party signed an

agreement to end hostilities, widely seen as a positive development with presidential elections approaching on October 15th. The agreement is focused on demobilizing Renamo fighters and integrating them into the national army and police forces with assistance from foreign military observers. The peace deal was detailed [here](#).

On August 25th, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the fifth review of Burundi's economic performance under a three-year program supported by the IMF's Extended Credit Facility (ECF) arrangement, and also concluded the 2014 Article IV Consultation with Burundi, allowing for the disbursement of another \$7.6 million. The IMF found that Burundi has made satisfactory progress and the country is expected to achieve 4.7 percent economic growth for 2014. In addition, the IMF observed that inflation has been declining aided by moderating international food and fuel prices and stable monetary conditions. Additional analysis was posted [here](#).

On August 25th, the *New York Times* reported on efforts to combat the AIDS epidemic in South Africa that are focused on high-risk subgroups including gay men, prostitutes, truckers, prisoners, miners, and patients who do not regularly take their drugs. For example, The Sex Workers Project, located in Johannesburg, caters to street-corner workers, while Ndlovu Care Group, located in Groblersdal, has a ward for late-stage AIDS and also focuses on infected women giving birth and educating teenagers. In addition, Doctors Without Borders' Ubuntu Clinic is making strides in getting patients to take their pills. The full article can be read [here](#).

On August 26th, Zimbabwe Central Bank Governor John Mangudya said that foreign investment in Zimbabwe has fallen by half since the start of this year. Governor Mangudya said he believes that Zimbabwe's indigenization policy has been misunderstood by foreign investors, resulting in a drop in foreign investments from \$165 million to \$67 million in just one year. Meanwhile, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe continues to pursue investment deals with China. Comments from Governor Mangudya were recorded [here](#).

On August 27th, the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved \$9.3 million in trust fund grants for the Government of Rwanda to help boost land management of the Gishwati and Mukura forests and improve the environment, local livelihoods, and climate resilience. Funding from the Global Environment Fund (GEF) and the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) will support the Landscape Approach to Forest Restoration and Conservation Project's goals of increasing the diversity of trees to help improve soil fertility, stabilize slopes, regulate stream flow, and expand the resource base for local livelihoods. The funding was announced [here](#).

On August 28th, the World Bank released its Rwanda Economic Update (REU). The World Bank forecasted an economic growth rate of 5.7 percent in 2014 and 6.6% in 2015. While a slowdown in Rwanda's economic growth rate revealed bottlenecks in the Rwandan economy in 2013, the economy has bounced back quickly, showing a 7.4 percent growth rate for the first quarter of 2014. Moving forward, the World Bank advised Rwanda to focus on transforming its currently small scale but potentially lucrative mining sector. The Rwanda Economic Update can be downloaded [here](#).

General Africa News

On August 25th, the *Washington Post* reported on the controversy surrounding a *Newsweek* cover that gives the impression that Africans are savages and that Africa is dirty and a place to be feared. The article argues that the *Newsweek* covering is perpetuating "othering," which happens when in-groups treat out-groups of people as though there is something wrong with them by identifying perceived "flaws" in the out-group's appearance, practice, or norms. The full article can be read [here](#).

On August 25th, Standard Bank Economist Simon Freemantle criticized a 2011 African Development Bank (AfDB) report that suggests that Africa's middle class consists of approximately 350 million people, or roughly 34 percent of the continent's population. A more recent analysis of Africa's middle class completed by Freemantle finds that there are roughly 15 million middle class household on the continent. More information can be found [here](#).

On August 27th, *MSNBC* highlighted the Immunize Africa 2020 declaration, endorsed by African leaders in May. By endorsing the declaration, African leaders committed to invest in a healthy and sustainable

future for children to protect them from diseases. As part of the plan, the continent will invest \$700 million toward the cost of childhood vaccinations for 2016-2020. The new initiative is anticipated to help immunize another 300 million children on the continent by 2020. More information was reported [here](#).

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