



ML Strategies Update

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Africa Update

Leading the News

West Africa Ebola Outbreak

On August 14th, the United Nations (U.N.) World Health Organization (WHO) engaged in new efforts to assure travelers that the risk of contracting Ebola on a plane is small. Taking to social media, the WHO issued a number of messages to clarify that Ebola is not airborne like other diseases, such as influenza and tuberculosis. The WHO also noted that someone with Ebola is typically so unwell that they cannot travel. More information can be seen [here](#).

On August 14th, President Barack Obama spoke by phone with Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and separately with Sierra Leone President Ernest Bai Koroma regarding the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The leaders discussed ongoing mitigation measures, including those directed through the Monrovia-based U.S. Disaster Assistant Response Team (DART) and deployed personnel in both Liberia and Sierra Leone from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In addition, while noting that their participation was missed, President Obama said that he appreciated both President Sirleaf and President Koroma's decisions to forgo the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit to tend to the outbreak. Details on the calls were shared [here](#).

On August 14th, the U.S. Department of State ordered the departure of all eligible family members not employed by the U.S. Embassy in Sierra Leone from Freetown. The State Department also noted it is reconfiguring Embassy staff to be more responsive to the current situation and to assist U.S. citizens in the country, the Government of Sierra Leone, international health organizations, local NGOs, and the people of Sierra Leone in dealing with the unprecedented Ebola outbreak. A press statement was issued [here](#).

On August 14th, referring to U.S. efforts to assist Sierra Leone in combatting the Ebola outbreak, U.S. State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf noted that it has been 400 days since President Barack Obama nominated John Hoover to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Sierra Leone – a position that has been vacant since September 2013. She said that Hoover has extensive experience in Africa and in crisis management and called on the Senate to quickly confirm his nomination. Deputy Spokesperson

Harf's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On August 14th, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a statement warning consumers to be aware of products sold online claiming to prevent or treat the Ebola virus. The FDA issued a reminder that there are currently no FDA approved vaccines or drugs to prevent or treat Ebola, and that experimental treatments are still in the early stages of product development. Additionally, the FDA urged consumers to report fraudulent claims to the FDA so that the agency can act to better protect consumers. The full statement was posted [here](#).

On August 15th, the WHO reported that health workers at Ebola outbreak sites are seeing new evidence that the numbers of reported cases and deaths vastly underestimate the magnitude of the public health crisis in West Africa. While no new cases have been reported in Nigeria, the WHO cautioned that the outbreak is expected to continue in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone for some time. In its August 14th update, the WHO reported that Ebola cases in West Africa totaled 1,975, while deaths were at 1,069. Additional feedback from the WHO can be seen [here](#).

On August 16th, following a warning that Kenya might be susceptible to Ebola virus, the Kenyan Health Ministry announced plans to implement a travel ban that will keep people traveling from or through Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia, from entering the country. Nigeria was not included in the scope of the travel ban. Following the announcement, Kenyan Airways also announced plans to suspend flights to Liberia and Sierra Leone, despite an earlier announcement indicating that the carrier planned to continue those flights. Meanwhile, the WHO continued to urge countries at risk for the spread of Ebola to avoid imposing blanket travel bans. The situation in Kenya was described [here](#).

On August 16th, unidentified assailants attacked a health care facility in Monrovia, Liberia, where patients were undergoing treatment for Ebola. The Liberian National Police reported that the attack was fueled by fear of the virus and people who did not want a quarantine center located in Monrovia. According to police, the attackers stole mattresses and equipment. No one was injured in the incident, but several Ebola patients who were receiving treatment fled the facility. The full story was reported [here](#).

On August 16th, the *New York Times* reported that many aid doctors working in West Africa are choosing to leave the country due to the threat of the Ebola virus and a lack of supplies and training to combat the outbreak. The departure of many Western development workers from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone has only added to the inability of the region's already understaffed health care systems to combat the public health crisis. For example, Liberia has fewer than 250 doctors left in the whole country. The entire article can be read [here](#).

On August 16th, the *Wall Street Journal* published an article suggesting that the spread of Ebola virus in West Africa may be due, in part, to a shortage of rubber gloves and other basic medical supplies. Many health works have been treating Ebola patients with unprotected hands, greatly increasing the risk that Ebola virus will infect the health professionals trying to fight it. In Liberia, at least 36 health workers have died after being infected with the virus. The phenomenon is causing fear among health professionals throughout the region. Details were shared [here](#).

On August 17th, the *New York Times* provided an update on the recovery process for Nancy Writebol and Dr. Kent Brantly, the two Americans affected with the Ebola virus in West Africa who are currently receiving care at Emory University Hospital. In both cases, the ongoing treatment was expected to greatly improve both patients' odds of recovery. In addition, the availability of extensive testing not available in Africa is allowing U.S. doctors new insights into the disease. More information is available [here](#).

On August 17th, the *Associated Press* chronicled scientists' efforts to increase their understanding of Ebola. Once the current Ebola outbreak in West Africa is under control, scientists plan to shift their focus toward determining the origins of the disease. There is some speculation that the disease may have originated in bats, which are considered a delicacy in some parts of continent. Since Ebola first emerged in 1976, it has caused roughly two dozen outbreaks in Africa. Details were reported [here](#).

On August 17th, the University of New Mexico hospital reported that state Department of Health and CDC officials are testing a female patient who had traveled to Sierra Leone earlier this month for Ebola.

The patient, who had been working as a teacher in Sierra Leone, was experiencing symptoms that could be indicative of Ebola virus, including sore throat, headache, muscle aches, and fever. Her doctors are wearing protective clothing and limiting her visitors until test results are known. The situation was detailed [here](#).

On August 18th, the WHO, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the World Tourism Organization (UNTWO), Airports Council International (ACI), International Air Transport Association (IATA), and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) decided to activate a Travel and Transport Task Force to monitor the risk of transmission of Ebola during air travel. While reiterating that the risk of contracting Ebola during air travel is low, the newly formed Task Force encouraged countries affected by the Ebola outbreak to conduct exit screenings at international airports, seaports, and major land crossings. The Task Force also called on all non-affected countries to strengthen their capacities to detect and contain new cases without interfering with international travel and trade. The launch of the Task Force was noted [here](#).

On August 18th, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) DART provided an update on its efforts in Liberia to support health care workers and other professionals who are providing psychological support to those grieving after losing loved ones to the Ebola virus. The USAID DART has partnered with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Monrovia to raise public awareness of Ebola's mode of transmission and to teach prevention practices to communities, health workers, and volunteers. More information can be seen [here](#).

On August 18th, Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), announced that it had disinfected one of its planes after health authorities reported that a Nigerian woman who had died after flying to Abu Dhabi showed signs of possible Ebola infection. The woman's husband, who was the only person sitting next to her on the plane, as well as five medics who treated her, are being isolated pending test results to confirm whether or not the woman had, in fact, contracted Ebola. The full story can be viewed [here](#).

On August 18th, Nigerian economist, banker, investor, and philanthropist Tony Elumelu announced he will make a \$617,000 contribution to assist in efforts to battle the West African Ebola outbreak through his private foundation. Elumelu joins other Nigerian billionaires, including Africa's richest man, Aliko Dangote, in funding the response to the Ebola outbreak in Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria. Last week, Dangote donated \$924,000 to be used to establish a National Ebola Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Lagos, Nigeria. More information on the contributions can be found [here](#).

On August 19th, the WHO reported that the death toll from the Ebola outbreak in West Africa has now exceeded 1,200 with the death toll at 1,229 following 84 new fatalities being reported August 14th-16th. Additionally, the WHO announced new efforts to address looming food shortages in areas isolated by quarantines. Meanwhile, health officials in Liberia said that the three Liberian doctors receiving the experimental drug, ZMapp, are showing remarkable signs of improvement. An update on the Ebola situation in West Africa was provided [here](#).

On August 19th, Liberian Information Minister Lewis Brown said that all 17 suspected Ebola patients who fled the quarantine center in Monrovia that was attacked over the weekend have been found and transferred to the JFK Ebola specialist treatment center. The transfer of the Ebola patients was announced [here](#).

On August 19th, following Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's announcement of a curfew in Monrovia to help contain the spread of Ebola, clashes erupted between Liberian soldiers and residents in the slum district of West Point. Witnesses in West Point reported that angry residents attempted to stone security officers who were attempting to implement the quarantine, while youths attempted to loot stores and businesses for access to basic commodities, including food. The situation was described [here](#).

On August 19th, Doctors Without Borders President Dr. Joanne Liu said the Ebola outbreak in West Africa is a complete disaster and the response effort is lacking strong data collection and surveillance. Doctors Without Borders currently has two treatment facilities in each of the three countries impacted most by the Ebola outbreak – Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone – and is treating more patients than any

other aid entity. Dr. Liu also expressed concern that the outbreak had caused a broader medical crisis in West Africa as clinicians are fleeing the region out of fear of Ebola. Dr. Liu's comments were reported [here](#).

On August 20th, the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) announced plans to dispatch a five-man medical team to Liberia to assist in the response to the continuing Ebola outbreak. The decision was made by DRC President Joseph Kabila in consultation with the DRC Embassy in Monrovia. Liberian Foreign Minister Augustine Kphehe Nagafuan extended gratitude to the DRC for their assistance, noting the DRC overcame a similar Ebola outbreak in 1976. More information can be found [here](#).

On August 20th, the clashes in Liberia's slums in Monrovia worsened, with Liberian soldiers firing against young men who were trying to escape Ebola quarantine. Approximately 75,000 people are living in the West Point area, which is densely populated with poor sanitation services. The men who were trying to escape the quarantine claimed that they did not have enough food and that they suspected at least one government official had been evacuated from the neighborhood. Liberian police reported that order was quickly restored to the area. The incident was detailed [here](#).

On August 21st, Emory University Hospital held a press conference to announce that Dr. Kent Brantly and missionary Nancy Writebol had both been discharged after receiving treatment for the Ebola virus they had contracted in West Africa. Writebol was discharged on Tuesday, while Dr. Brantly was discharged on Thursday. Medical staff reported that both patients underwent rigorous testing to ensure the virus was no longer present and to confirm the patients' discharge poses no public health risk. An update on both patients was provided [here](#).

Nigeria

On August 15th, suspected Boko Haram militants attacked the village of Doron Baga on Lake Chad, burning houses and shooting sporadically. Following the attack, villagers reported that six older men were killed in the raid, five other people were wounded, and 97 people – all boys and men – were unaccounted for. Nigerian security forces reported that they were aware of the incident and are currently investigating the attack. The full story is available [here](#).

On August 17th, Chadian security officials announced the rescue of approximately 100 Nigerians who had been kidnapped by Boko Haram along the border last week. The Boko Haram militants and their abductees were stopped at the border by Chadian soldiers. It was not immediately clear what Chadian officials will do with the suspected militants and when the kidnapping victims will be sent home. More information can be seen [here](#).

On August 20th, Nigerian defense officials denied reports that government soldiers in the northeastern part of the country are refusing to fight Boko Haram militants until they receive better equipment to help battle the insurgents. The denial comes amidst reports that Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General Kenneth Minimah had ordered the arrest of soldiers and officers in Borno State who had allegedly abandoned their operational duties. Details can be viewed [here](#).

Libya

On August 14th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Bernardino Leon of Spain to serve as U.N. Special Representative to Libya and Head of the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL). Special Representative Bernardino has previously served as the European Union's (EU) Special Representative for Libya and has held a number of other diplomatic posts within the Spanish Government. His appointment was announced [here](#).

On August 17th, UNSMIL issued a statement condemning further escalation of the violence between rival militias in Tripoli and its suburbs. In particular, UNSMIL denounced the shelling of residential neighborhoods, civilian casualties, and the widespread displacement of civilians and the damaging of property. The U.N. also expressed concern for the lack of responsiveness to repeated international appeals for an immediate ceasefire agreement. Additional feedback from UNSMIL was provided [here](#).

On August 18th, unidentified warplanes bombed a small arms depot and other locations in Tripoli, Libya, controlled by Islamist militias, killing at least six people. While the U.S., France, Italy, and Egypt were all quick to deny responsibility for the bombings, loyalists to renegade former Libyan General Khalifa Hifter attempted to claim responsibility for the strikes, although many experts believe they do not possess the capacity to carry out air strikes. The full story was reported [here](#).

South Sudan

On August 15th, the U.N. Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) condemned the outbreak of violence in Bentiu that has led roughly 340 civilians in the area to seek shelter at the nearest airport. UNMISS reported small arms and artillery fire near the U.N. base. Following the incident, UNMISS again called upon South Sudanese Government forces and forces loyal to former Vice President Riek Machar to refrain from violence and to allow access for humanitarian aid. UNMISS's reaction to the violence in Bentiu was detailed [here](#).

On August 18th, House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) sent a letter to U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Samantha Power urging the U.N. Security Council to swiftly impose sanctions against both sides of the ongoing conflict in South Sudan. Congressman Royce said that a U.N. sanctions regime would complement the Administration's effort and place additional pressure on rival South Sudanese leaders to change course. In addition, Congressman Royce called on the Security Council to impose a comprehensive arms embargo on South Sudan. The letter can be downloaded [here](#).

On August 19th, UNMISS released a statement condemning live gunfire by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) soldiers stationed at the Rubkona Airstrip near the U.N. base in Bentiu. The soldiers responded that they had been firing their guns into the air to celebrate war veterans' day. One child was wounded in the incident and UNMISS warned SPLA forces that more civilians could have potentially been harmed by the shootings. The incident was described [here](#).

On August 19th, U.S. State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf expressed concern after South Sudanese authorities shut down a Juba-based radio station run by the Catholic Church and announced the detention of its news editor. She noted the State Department is following the situation closely and has continued to urge the Government of South Sudan to fully adhere to its constitutional guarantees and international obligations regarding freedom of expression. Deputy Spokesperson Harf's comments were transcribed [here](#).

Central African Republic

On August 19th, U.N. Special Representative for the Central African Republic (CAR) Babacar Gaye briefed the U.N. Security Council on developments in the country. While welcoming the political progress made at the summit of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, and the meeting of the International Contract Group in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Special Representative Gaye warned that the overall humanitarian and security situation in the CAR remains volatile. In particular, Special Representative Gaye expressed concern for ongoing tensions between Christian and Muslim communities in advance of next month's transfer of authority from the current African Union (AU) – led International Support Mission to the CAR (MISCA) to the U.N. Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the CAR (MINUSCA). Highlights from the briefing were noted [here](#).

United States – Africa Relations

White House

On August 19th, the White House issued a press release on World Humanitarian Day, which commemorates the attack on U.N. headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq, that occurred 11 years ago. Recognizing the humanitarian challenges of today, the White House noted that millions of people need shelter, food, water, and medical care in the wake of factional fighting in the CAR and the clash among South Sudan's political leaders has put millions of people at risk of famine. In addition, the White House commended the humanitarians assuming risk in Somalia and in West Africa to combat the Ebola outbreak. The full statement was posted [here](#).

State Department

On August 14th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a press statement congratulating the Republic of Congo (ROC) on its commemoration of 54 years of independence. Secretary Kerry said the U.S. and the ROC share a close friendship, working with government officials, private sector leaders, and a broad spectrum of Congolese civil society to strengthen democratic institutions, improve regional security, and promote economic growth and development, sustainable environmental stewardship, and human rights for all people. He also noted the U.S. is working closely with the ROC to bring peace and stability to the CAR. Secretary Kerry's full statement can be read [here](#).

On August 14th, the State Department issued a media note detailing the announcement of the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA) at the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit. Slated for launch at the U.N. Secretary-General's Climate Summit on September 23rd, GACSA is expected to engage a range of government, multinational organizations, private sector, farmers, and civil society stakeholders to achieve sustainable increases in agricultural productivity, greater resilience, and a reduction of agriculture-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Participants will include the U.S., Liberia, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, and Tanzania. Additional information can be found [here](#).

On August 17th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement mourning the death of career Ambassador Terence Todman, who passed away on August 13th. Ambassador Todman had previously served as U.S. Ambassador to Guinea and U.S. Ambassador to Chad, among a number of other diplomatic posts. Secretary Kerry's statement can be seen [here](#).

On August 19th, Secretary of State John Kerry delivered a statement on World Humanitarian Day. Recognizing the humanitarian workers who were killed in the past year, Secretary Kerry remembered one Kenyan, five Somali, and two South African nationals killed at the U.N. compound in Mogadishu, Somalia. He also paid tribute to five South Sudanese aid workers killed earlier this month only for being ethnic Nuer. Secretary Kerry's full statement on World Humanitarian Day can be viewed [here](#).

On August 19th, State Department Deputy Spokesperson Marie Harf responded to the Egyptian Foreign Ministry calling on the U.S. to exercise restraint and deal with the protests in Ferguson, Missouri, in accordance with U.S. and international standards. Deputy Spokesperson Harf distinguished the U.S. response to the shooting of Matthew Brown from human rights violations in Egypt over the past year and said the U.S. will continue to approach this domestic incident with transparency and honesty. Deputy Spokesperson Harf's comments were transcribed [here](#).

On August 19th, former Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson published an op-ed reflecting on the recent U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit. By Assistant Secretary Carson's assessment, the Summit was a success and likely achieved a great deal more than most observers expected. The Summit allowed the Obama Administration to reaffirm its commitment to the continent and to encourage American companies to invest and trade in Africa's emerging markets. In addition, U.S. Government leaders called for African partners to improve their adherence to democracy, good governance, and human rights, while also pledging to work with the continent to stop the spread of terrorist organizations. The full op-ed is available [here](#).

On August 20th, Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement on Gabon National Day. Secretary Kerry commended Gabon's contributions to regional peace and stability and welcomed the growing bilateral partnership on environmental preservation, maritime security, and other issues of mutual importance. Secretary Kerry's full statement can be read [here](#).

U.S. Agency for International Development

On August 12th, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah authored a post for USAID's *Impact Blog* on the agency's efforts to address four, simultaneous humanitarian crisis, including violence in South Sudan and the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. In South Sudan, Administrator Shah noted USAID is working with the U.N., NGOs, and other local partners to provide food, hygiene kits, and safe spaces for victims of the conflict. In West Africa, USAID has deployed epidemiologists to help track the spread of the Ebola virus. The full blog post can be accessed [here](#).

On August 15th, Celia Karp, a public affairs intern in the Global Health Fellows Program II working in USAID's Office of HIV/AIDS posted on USAID's *Impact Blog* about how gender analyses shaped the future of microbicides. As part of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), USAID is committed to expanding the array of woman-controlled HIV prevention methods and has done so by conducting gender analyses in South Africa and Kenya. The full article can be read [here](#).

On August 18th, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah issued a statement in recognition of World Humanitarian Day, celebrated on August 19th. In his statement, Administrator Shah highlighted the work of USAID colleagues who are assuming personal risk to respond to humanitarian crises in South Sudan, the CAR, and the region of West Africa impacted by the Ebola outbreak. Administrator Shah also noted that last year was the most dangerous year for aid workers in the past decade, with 155 relief staff killed, 171 injured, and 134 kidnapped. The full statement was shared [here](#).

On August 19th, Director of USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance Jeremy Konyndyk published a post on USAID's *Impact Blog* on World Humanitarian Day. Director Konyndyk highlighted how the international humanitarian system has been stretched by the crises this year in the CAR and South Sudan and the more recent crisis of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. The full piece was posted [here](#).

On August 19th, Eric King and Kate Gage of USAID's U.S. Global Development Lab and Stephanie Santoso of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) wrote an article for USAID's *Impact Blog* about both offices' participation in the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). Earlier this month, USAID and White House officials met with Mandela Washington Fellows to discuss transforming the way things are designed and produced to spur Africa's economic and community development. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On August 20th, USAID, the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the National Cancer Institute (NCI) announced 46 new research projects in developing countries through the Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) program. Among the new projects announced is a project in East Africa that will map multiple geothermal areas and identify new forms of geothermal activity across Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Kenya. A press release was issued [here](#).

Department of Defense

On August 14th, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) Commander General David Rodriguez participated in a presentation ceremony for AFRICOM's FY14 Combined Federal Campaign Overseas program. The check for \$18,994 represents a collection of donations from AFRICOM staff and will support the garrison communities. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On August 15th, the U.S. Naval Forces Europe Band visited Mauritania. The goal of the visit was to participate in performances and engagements to enhance U.S.-Mauritania relations and build ties with military musical counterparts. The visit was noted [here](#).

On August 15th, AFRICOM reported on the outcomes of last month's Exercise Southern Accord 14, held in Malawi. The two-week exercise allowed military personnel from ten countries to receive instruction from the U.N. Integrated Training Service and the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, and to participate in a simulated deployment of a peacekeeping force. In addition, the staff developed a plan to engage government and host-nation forces, humanitarian aid organizations, and displaced civilians. An article on the exercise was published [here](#).

Overseas Private Investment Corporation

On August 15th, the *Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) Blog* featured a post on the opportunities for private investment in Africa. The blog post highlighted an event held as part of the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit during which OPIC President and CEO Elizabeth Littlefield, Wells Fargo Executive Vice President Thomas McCaffery, and Morocco's Attijariwafa Bank Chairman and CEO Mohamed El Kettani signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to help expand lending to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Morocco and other African countries where Attijariwafa

operates. More information was posted [here](#).

On August 19th, in conjunction with the celebration of World Humanitarian Day and the U.N.'s theme "The World Needs More...", OPIC highlighted the world's need for more power, especially in sub-Saharan Africa where 600 people lack access to reliable electricity. OPIC noted that it has supported multiple projects to bring more power to the continent and is playing a key role in President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative and in the U.S.-Africa Clean Energy Finance (U.S.-ACEF) program. More information was provided [here](#).

Export-Import Bank of the U.S.

On August 18th, President and CEO of technology and services company Itron Phillip Mezey authored an op-ed arguing that congressional reauthorization of the charter of the Export-Import (Ex-Im) Bank of the U.S. is the most important step the U.S. can take to drive Africa's economic development. In particular, Mezey highlights the role that Ex-Im Bank and OPIC are playing in President Barack Obama's Power Africa initiative to help address energy infrastructure needs in Africa's fast growing economies. The full op-ed can be read [here](#).

Millennium Challenge Corporation

On August 20th, as part of the Millennium Challenge Corporation's (MCC) second compact with Cape Verde, the MCC unveiled the Cape Verde Constraint Analysis Study, which seeks to identify the constraints that hinder economic growth and poverty alleviation in the country. The study examines the Cape Verdean financial sector to assess whether deficient finance is a hindrance to growth, the complementary factors of production to assess if there is scarcity or other weaknesses that may impede economic progress, and the macroeconomic and investment climate to analyze the risks that may impact investment activities. The full study can be downloaded [here](#).

On August 20th, the MCC provided a report to Congress on countries that are candidates for MCC account eligibility for FY15 and countries that would be candidates but face legal provisions that would prohibit assistance. The MCC reported that candidate countries include Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, the CAR, Chad, the DRC, the ROC, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia. The countries that would be eligible but are legally prohibited from receiving assistance include Eritrea, Sudan, and Zimbabwe. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

Congress

On August 20th, *McClatchy DC* ran an article on Congressman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) and his role as Chairman of the House Select Committee on Benghazi. Congressman Gowdy said the Committee's investigation of the September 2012 attacks on U.S. facilities in Benghazi, Libya, will be fair and straightforward. The Committee will begin public hearings on the attack when Congress returns from recess in September. The full article was posted [here](#).

North Africa

On August 14th, the AU-U.N. Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) expressed deep concern over recent security raids conducted by the Sudanese Government in camps for displaced people in South Darfur. UNAMID indicated it is taking actions to mitigate the impact of these operations on civilians, including monitoring the trials of those arrested and detained as part of security searches. The full story is available [here](#).

On August 15th, U.N. Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Sudan Mashood Adebayo Baderin issued a news release calling on the Government of Sudan to release political detainees as part of an effort to foster an inclusive national dialogue. In particular, Independent Expert Baderin expressed concern for the arrest and detention of Deputy Leader of the Sudan National Umma Party Meriam Al-Mahdi and the Leader of the Sudanese Congress Party Ibrahim Al-Sheikh. In addition, Independent Expert Baderin said that an inclusive dialogue in Sudan should ensure the guarantee of fundamental civil

liberties and freedoms for political leaders. More information can be seen [here](#).

On August 20th, Egyptian President Abdul Fattah Al-Sisi issued a presidential decree amending some provisions of Egypt's real estate tax law. The new decree creates tax exemptions for buildings owned by NGOs, labor organizations, educational institutions, hospitals, shelters, political parties' headquarters, and youth centers. President Sisi's changes to the tax law were noted [here](#).

East Africa

On August 15th, Ethiopian Airlines Chief Executive Tewolde Gebremariam said the company will make a decision within the coming week on purchasing planes from either Boeing or Airbus as it seeks to add as many as 70 new carrier jets to its fleet. The deal could be worth as much as \$8 million. In addition, Ethiopian Airlines noted it is also considering adding 20 more long-haul planes to its fleet. More information can be found [here](#).

On August 17th, at a ceremony marking its first year in Puntland, U.N. Special Representative for Somalia and head of the U.N. Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM) Nicholas Kay said that the Puntland region has made important political, economic, and security progress in the past year. Special Representative Kay also outlined the challenges ahead, including the need to establish a federal system of governance, as well as the need for authorities in Puntland to work with the Somali Government to review the provisional constitution and to prepare for 2016 elections. Special Representative Kay's comments were recorded [here](#).

On August 19th, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced that Ethiopia has overtaken Kenya as the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa. By UNHCR's measures, Ethiopia is currently sheltering 629,718 refugees, while Kenya has registered 575,334 refugees. The refugees in both countries are predominantly from South Sudan, Eritrea, and Somalia. More information can be viewed [here](#).

On August 19th, the World Bank highlighted the success of the Kampala Institution Infrastructure Development Project (KIIDP) in Uganda. The three-year, \$33.6 million project was designed to provide a more concentrated and comprehensive focus on institutional and fiscal strengthening of the city government. As part of the project, local authorities in Kampala have improved drainage systems to reduce flooding, rehabilitated roads, and extended the Kitezi Landfill. Additional achievements under KIIDP were highlighted [here](#).

On August 21st, *CNN* profiled Worldreader, a nonprofit organization based in San Francisco, California, that has partnered with 28 schools in Kenya to prove modern technologies, including Kindles, to help improve literacy rates in poverty stricken villages in Africa. According to Worldreader, donating electronic books is much more effective in Africa than donating paper books because e-readers are more portable and much more likely to reach the intended end users. The e-readers also provide Kenyan students with access to a greater variety of reading materials. Details can be seen [here](#).

West Africa

On August 16th, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned a suicide attack targeting a U.N. Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) base in Timbuktu. The attack killed two U.N. peacekeepers and injured seven others. Secretary-General Ban expressed condolences to the families of the peacekeepers who were killed and wished those who were injured a speedy recovery. He also condemned two additional incidents earlier in the week that wounded three other U.N. peacekeepers in northern Mali. The incidents were noted [here](#).

On August 18th, *Voice of America* reported that the area near Cameroon's border with Borno State, Nigeria, is becoming increasingly deserted following attacks, lootings, and kidnappings perpetrated by Boko Haram. While the Cameroonian Government has tried to persuade residents to return to the area, civilians continue to express concern for their safety. Furthermore, commerce has slowed as truck drivers more frequently refuse to transport food items to the border region. Details were shared [here](#).

On August 19th, *Venture Burn* profiled the upcoming DEMO Africa startup competition, which will be held

September 24th-26th in Lagos, Nigeria. The conference will kick off with a special investor summit focused on the future of angel investing on the continent, which is expected to bring together investor networks such as Cairo Angels, Lagos Angels Network, Ghana Angel Investors Network, Africa Angels Network, and Angel Africa to exchange best practices and share lessons learned. Following the investor Summit, 40 innovative companies will pitch their startup ideas. Additional participants are likely to include representatives from the World Bank, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Business Angels Networks (EBAN), and VC4Africa's Investor Network. More information can be seen [here](#).

On August 21st, She Leads Africa announced its top ten finalists for the 2014 Entrepreneur Showcase. Selected from 380 applicants, the young, female entrepreneurs will present their businesses to a panel of business leaders, investors, venture capitalists, and media on September 20th in Lagos, Nigeria. The winner of the competition will be awarded \$30,000 and other prizes to support their business concept. The finalists were listed [here](#).

Sub-Saharan Africa

On August 14th, U.N. Special Representative for the DRC and Head of the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) Martin Kobler condemned the murder of six family members living in Matarule. Following the killings, MONUSCO forces were put on alert and began working with Congolese security forces to locate the assailants of the attack and bring them to justice. Special Representative Kobler called on all parties in the region to exercise restraint and to avoid an escalation of the violence. Comments from Special Representative Kobler were captured [here](#).

On August 15th, South African retail company Takealot announced it is the first store on the continent to stock the Google Glass. Takealot CEO Willem Van Biljon said the company will keep a limited stock of the glass available in their online store. While the technology currently retails for \$1,500 in the U.S., the product will sell for as much as \$2,557 in South Africa. More information was posted [here](#).

On August 17th, Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe accepted the chairperson's badge for the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Addressing a SADC Council of Ministers meeting, President Mugabe urged the SADC not to claim so much independence when approximately 60 percent of the SADC's programs are funded by foreign aid. President Mugabe cautioned that foreign funding of a majority of the SADC's programs compromises the organization's independence. President Mugabe's comments were highlighted [here](#).

On August 18th, during the meeting of the SADC Council of Ministers held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, the SADC directed its Finance Subcommittee to establish a region fund to assist member States in emergency medical situations. The decision was made in light of the ongoing Ebola outbreak in West Africa. In addition, the SADC moved to create a task force to help facilitate a regional women's economic empowerment program. The meeting was summarized [here](#).

On August 18th, China Railway Construction Corporation announced the completion of construction on Angola's Benguela railway line. The Benguela line, which is the longest railway line in the country, connects Lobito and Luau. The construction involved the rebuilding of 67 stations and will allow a maximum train speed of 90 kilometers per hour with capacity for 20 million tons of cargo per year. The project was detailed [here](#).

On August 19th, South Africa's Standard Bank released a new study finding that the African middle class has tripled in size over the past 14 years and the boom is gathering speed. As part of the study, researchers analyzed 11 of the biggest economies in sub-Saharan Africa, which account for roughly half the region's population and GDP. The study concludes that over the next 15 years, an additional 25 million households in the target region will become middle class. The study was described [here](#).

On August 19th, speaking at the six year anniversary memorial celebration to mark the death of former Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa, former First Lady Maureen Mwanawasa called for the country to declare August 19th Mwanawasa Day to recognize the contributions President Mwanawasa made to Zambia's development efforts. Details were shared [here](#).

On August 20th, the Ga-Rankuwa Magistrate Court outside of Pretoria, South Africa, dropped charges

against 279 miners who were arrested during the August 2012 clashes at Lonmin's Marikana mine. While the group of defendants had been charged with public violence, illegal gathering, possession of dangerous weapons, and intimidation, the court noted the charges were ultimately dropped because the State would be unable to prove their cases if the matter went to trial. More information was reported [here](#).

General Africa News

On August 15th, the *Wall Street Journal* ran an article on the popularity of mobile financial services in Africa, where few mobile subscribers have traditional bank accounts. According to the World Bank, less than a quarter of all Africans have a bank account, while more than 40 percent own a mobile phone. In addition, researchers have found that approximately 4,361 out of 100,000 people in sub-Saharan Africa are using mobile-payment services, a figure that is roughly six times the global average. By contrast, in Europe and Asia, just 416 of every 100,000 people are using mobile financial services. The full article can be read [here](#).

On August 18th, the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* published a new study finding that more African elephants are being killed each year by poachers than are being born. Since 2010, researchers estimate an average of 35,000 elephants is killed annually on the continent. If the current rate of poaching continues, the study warns that African elephants will be extinct within the next 100 years. The study can be downloaded [here](#).

On August 20th, *Ventures Africa* reported on the last week's launch of online movie streaming service, Aflix, in Nigeria, Kenya, and Ghana. Aflix will allow customers to access Hollywood titles, classics, new releases, and Blockbuster hits via smartphones. Users can sign up to receive a two-week free trial after which they can subscribe for a monthly rate of \$10 or a pay-per-view option at roughly \$3 per film. More information can be found [here](#).

On August 20th, the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars hosted an event on "Preempting Environmental and Human Security Crises in Africa: Science-Based Planning for Climate Variability Threats." Participants including Monde Muyanwa of the Africa Program, Coleen Vogel of the University of Pretoria, Abdulahi Sanusi of the Lake Chad Commission, Ezechiel Long of the Global Water Partnership, Kevin Rosner of the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security, Abebe Aynete of the Ethiopian International Institute for Peace and Development, Marius Claassen of The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, Tony Otoa of Advocates Coalition for Development and Environment, Elizabeth Khaka of the U.N. Environment Programme (UNEP), and Raymond Gilpin of ACSS. A recording from the event can be watched [here](#).

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