



SITUATION: LASSA FEVER OUTBREAK	LOCATION: LIBERIA
DATE OF REPORT: JULY 26, 2024	OUTBREAK START DATE: JAN 6, 2022
REPORTING PERIOD: JULY 20 -26, 2024	SITREP NO: 111

HIGHLIGHTS

- **One (1) new confirmed case reported from Bong County**
- Sixteen (16) contacts including 2 healthcare workers (HCWs) line listed
- Total of 34 contacts including 18 HCWs under 21 days follow up
- A total of 155 confirmed cases including 46 deaths reported
- **Cumulative Case Fatality Rate (CFR): 30% (46/155)**
- Two counties are currently in outbreak

SITUATIONAL CONTEXT

Lassa fever (LF) is an acute viral hemorrhagic illness that is endemic in West Africa, including Benin, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria. The incubation period ranges from 2-21 days and transmitted to humans via contact with food or household items contaminated with infected rodent urine or feces. The signs and symptoms are usually gradual, but start with fever, general weakness, malaise, and later headache, sore throat, muscle pain, chest pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, cough, and abdominal pain or facial swelling, and bleeding.

LF is a major public health concern in Liberia. To date, eight (8) out of the fifteen (15) counties (Bong, Grand Bassa, Nimba, Margibi, Lofa, Montserrado, Grand Kru, and River Gee) have reported confirmed cases. Bong, Grand Bassa, and Nimba counties are endemic, while Margibi, Lofa, Montserrado, Grand Kru, and River Gee have reported sporadic cases.

In 2021, the country recorded 12 outbreaks including 25 laboratory-confirmed cases with 15 deaths accounting for a 60% case fatality rate (CFR). These outbreaks generated 325 contacts of which 196 were healthcare workers (HCWs).

From January 6, 2022 to present, we recorded 21 outbreaks. The ongoing outbreak, which started January 6, 2022 in Bong County, has recorded 155 laboratory-confirmed cases including 46 deaths (CRF 30%). A total of 1299 contacts have been recorded including 467 healthcare workers.

Table 1: Summary of Lassa fever Outbreak, Liberia, January 6, 2022 – July 26, 2024

County	Outbreak Districts	Outbreak Start Date	Total suspected	Total confirmed	HCWs confirmed	Total Deaths	Deaths in HCWs	CFR %	Total Contacts	# HCW contacts	Contacts_became cases	Contacts under follow up	Contacts completed	Days in countdown	Outbreak Status
Montserrado	Bushrod	13-Feb-23	17	1	0	0	0	0%	29	21	0	0	29	Completed	Ended
	Central Monro	27-Nov-23	1	2	0	1	0	50%	49	0	0	0	49	Completed	Ended
	Central Monro	3-Mar-23	38	2	0	1	0	50%	28	27	0	0	28	Completed	Ended
	Bushrod	30-Apr-24	2	1	0	0	0	0%	14	6	0	0	14	Completed	Ended
Bong	Suakoko	21-Apr-23	192	54	18	13	2	24%	496	114	6	0	417	Completed	Ended
	Jorquelleh	15-Oct-23	14	6	3	1	1	17%	121	86	3	0	169	Completed	Ended
	Kokoyah	6-Jun-24	3	1	0	0	0	0%	8	0	0	0	8	27	Countdown
	Suakoko	23-Feb-24	31	3	0	0	0	0%	29	14	0	0	29	Completed	Ended
	Salala	8-Mar-24	2	2	0	1	0	50%	21	0	0	0	21	Completed	Ended
	Jorquelleh	11-Apr-24	3	2	0	1	0	0%	41	30	0	0	41	20	Countdown
	Jorquelleh	22-Jul-24	1	1	0	0	0	0%	14	2	0	14	0	Active	Ongoing
Grand Bassa	District 3A&B	21-Aug-23	87	44	0	10	0	23%	177	40	40	0	159	Completed	Ended
	Buchanan	11-Aug-23	2	1	0	1	0	100%	4	2	0	0	4	Completed	Ended
	District 3A&B	30-Apr-24	6	3	0	1	0	33%	12	3	0	0	12	Completed	Countdown
Nimba	Saclepea-Mah	21-Nov-23	4	2	0	1	0	50%	5	0	0	0	5	Completed	Ended
	Sanniquellie-Mah	6-Feb-23	43	15	0	6	0	40%	43	35	8	0	43	Completed	Ended
	Tappita	20-Nov-23	12	5	0	3	0	60%	88	39	4	0	77	Completed	Ended
	Bain-Garr	1-Jun-23	25	6	0	3	0	50%	61	25	0	0	31	Completed	Ended
	Bain-Garr	15-Apr-24	5	2	0	1	0	50%	25	7	0	0	25	Completed	Ended
Bain-Garr	18-Jul-24	2	1	0	1	0	100%	20	16	0	20	0	Active	Ongoing	
River Gee	Putupo	25-Nov-22	2	1	0	1	0	100%	14	0	0	0	14	Completed	Ended
Total			492	155	21	46	3	30%	1299	467	61	34	1175		

Bong County: Jorquelleh, Suakoko and Kokoyah Districts

- ☞ **One (1) new confirmed case reported from Jorquelleh District**
- ☞ **AK**, a 6-year-old male, resident of Rubber Factory Community, Jorquelleh District, Gbarnga City, Bong County.
 - The onset of illness was on 8 July 2024 and presented with fever, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, headache, bodily aches and constant weakness.
 - He visited Phebe Hospital on 14 July 2024, was assessed, and diagnosed for Sepsis and Complicated Malaria to R/o Lassa fever. Immediately, he was admitted for care and management. Not responding to care and treatment, he was suspected of Lassa fever on day 2 of admission.
 - Blood sample was collected on day 2 and sent to the UNC Phebe Lab on July 15, 2024 where a positive result was released later on 15 Jul 2024. A second specimen was collected on July 17, 2024, sent to the National Public Health Reference (NRL) Lab and tested Lassa fever positive on July 22, 2024.
 - He was isolated at the Lassa Treatment Unit and Ribavirin Treatment initiated immediately. A total of 14 contacts including 2 HCWs have been line listed and under follow up. There has been no epidemiological linked established.
- ☞ Cumulative confirmed cases for the current outbreak: 9
 - Suakoko District: 3
 - Salala District: 2
 - Jorquelleh District: 3
 - Kokoyah: 1
- ☞ CFR (2/9): 22.2%
- ☞ Total of 116 contacts including 42 healthcare workers line listed
- ☞ Sixteen (16) contacts including 2 healthcare workers under 21 days follow up
- ☞ Safe and dignified burials were conducted for deceased cases

Nimba County: Bain-Garr District

- ☞ No new confirmed case reported
- ☞ Cumulative confirmed cases for the current outbreak: 1
- ☞ CFR (1/1): 100%
- ☞ No confirmed case in isolation
- ☞ Twenty (20) contacts including 16 healthcare workers under 21 days follow up
- ☞ Safe and dignified burial was conducted for deceased case

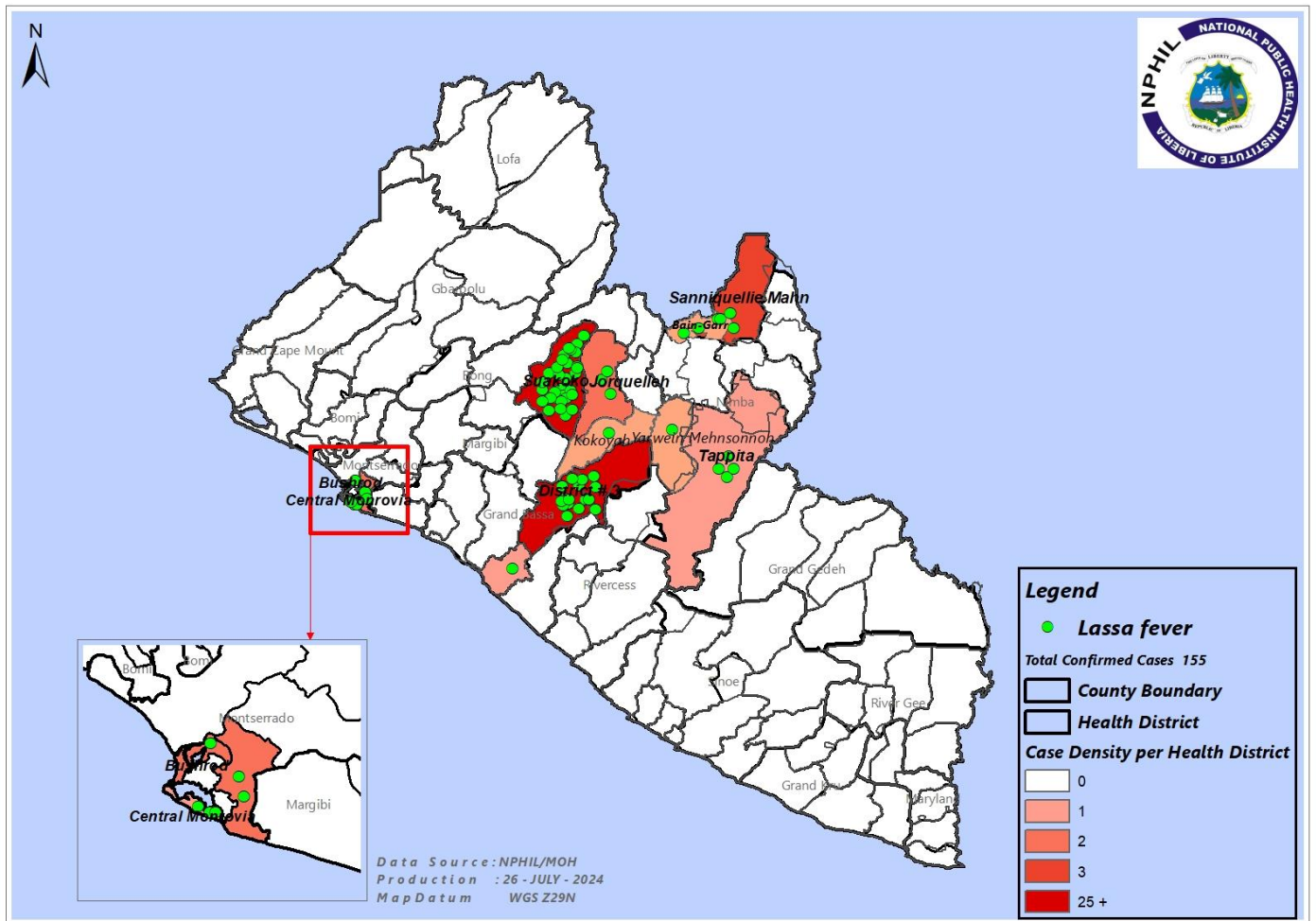


Figure 1: Distribution of Confirmed Lassa fever cases by Health District, Jan 6, 2022-July 26, 2024

Table 2: Summary of Lassa fever cases and samples, Liberia, Jan 6, 2022–July 26, 2024

Variables	2022 & 2023	2024	Total
	Epi wk 1-52	Epi wk 1-29	
Total suspected cases reported to the national level	439	127	566
Total samples collected	437	127	564
Total samples tested	416	121	537
Total samples not collected OR samples collected but not sent to NRL	20	4	24
Total samples pending testing	0	2	2
Total samples collected & rejected by the Laboratory	3	0	3
Total Laboratory confirmed	138	17	155
Total confirmed cases alive	97	12	109
Total deaths among confirmed cases	41	5	46
Overall case fatality rate (CFR)	30%	31%	30%
Total confirmed cases currently in isolation	0	0	0
Total suspected cases in isolation	0	0	0

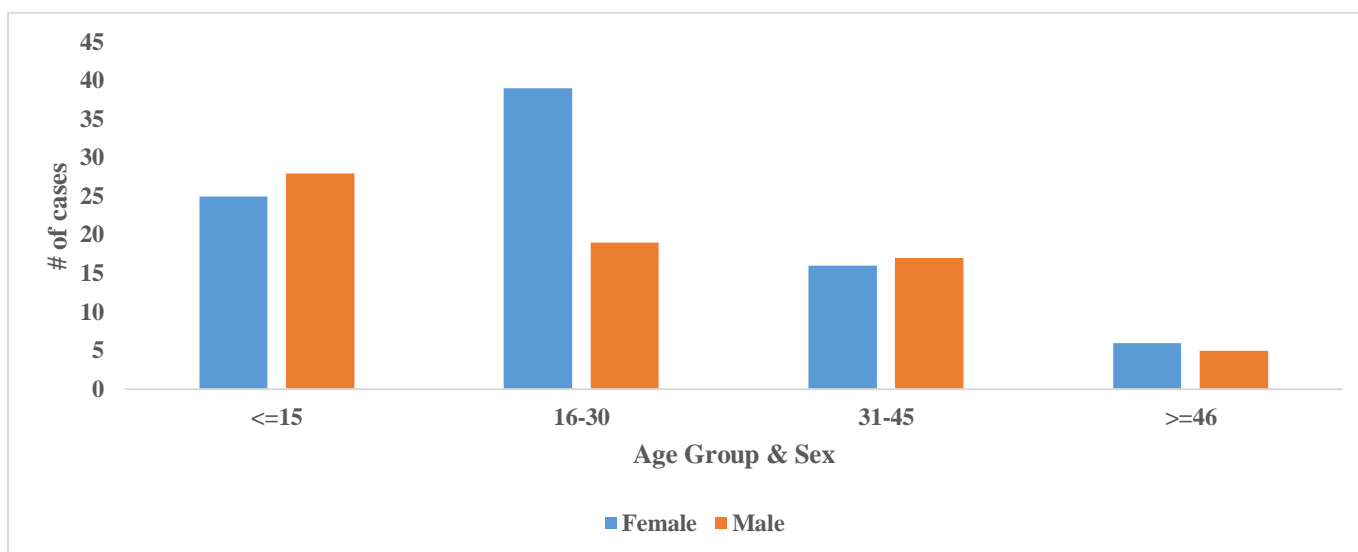


Figure 2: Distribution of confirmed Lassa fever cases by Age and Sex, Lib, Jan.2022-July 26, 2024



Figure 3: Distribution of confirmed Lassa fever cases by Occupation and Sex, Lib, Jan. 6, 2022 – July 26, 2024

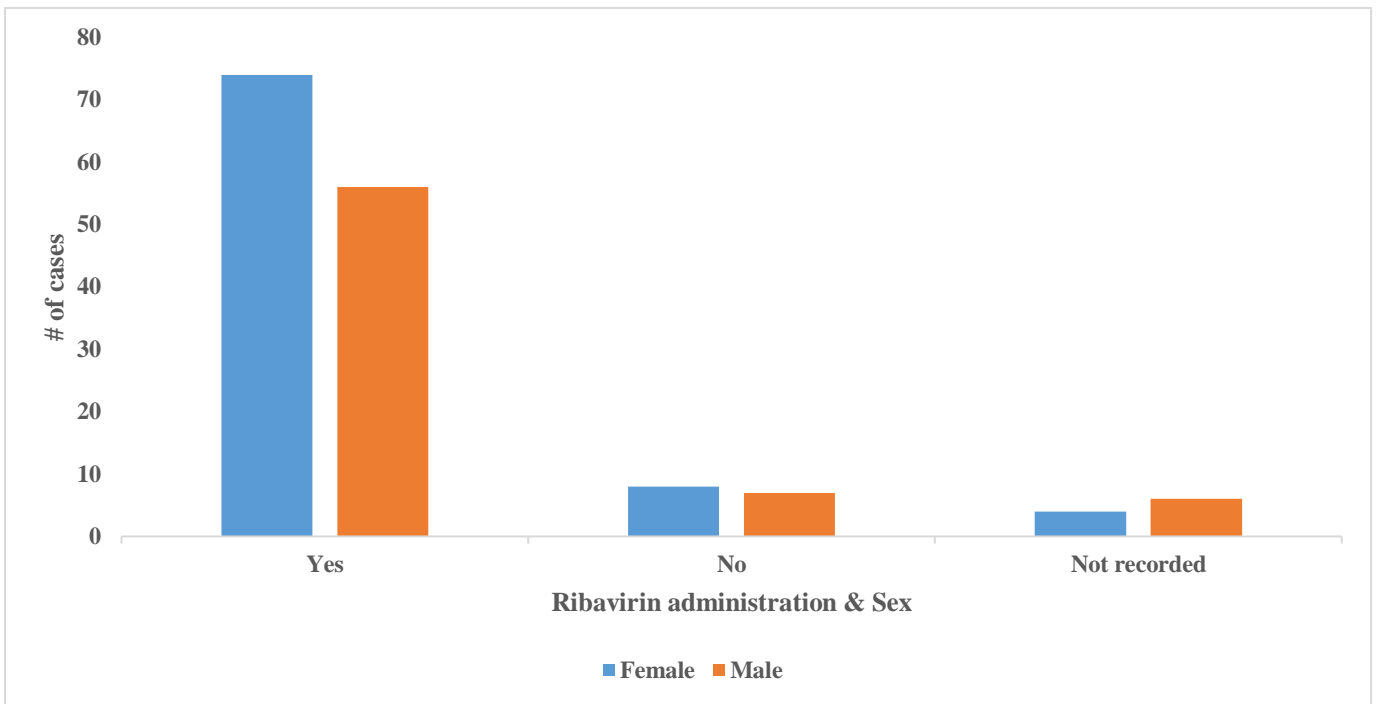


Figure 4: Confirmed Lassa fever cases by Ribavirin administration and Outcome, Liberia, Jan. 6, 2022 – July 26, 2024

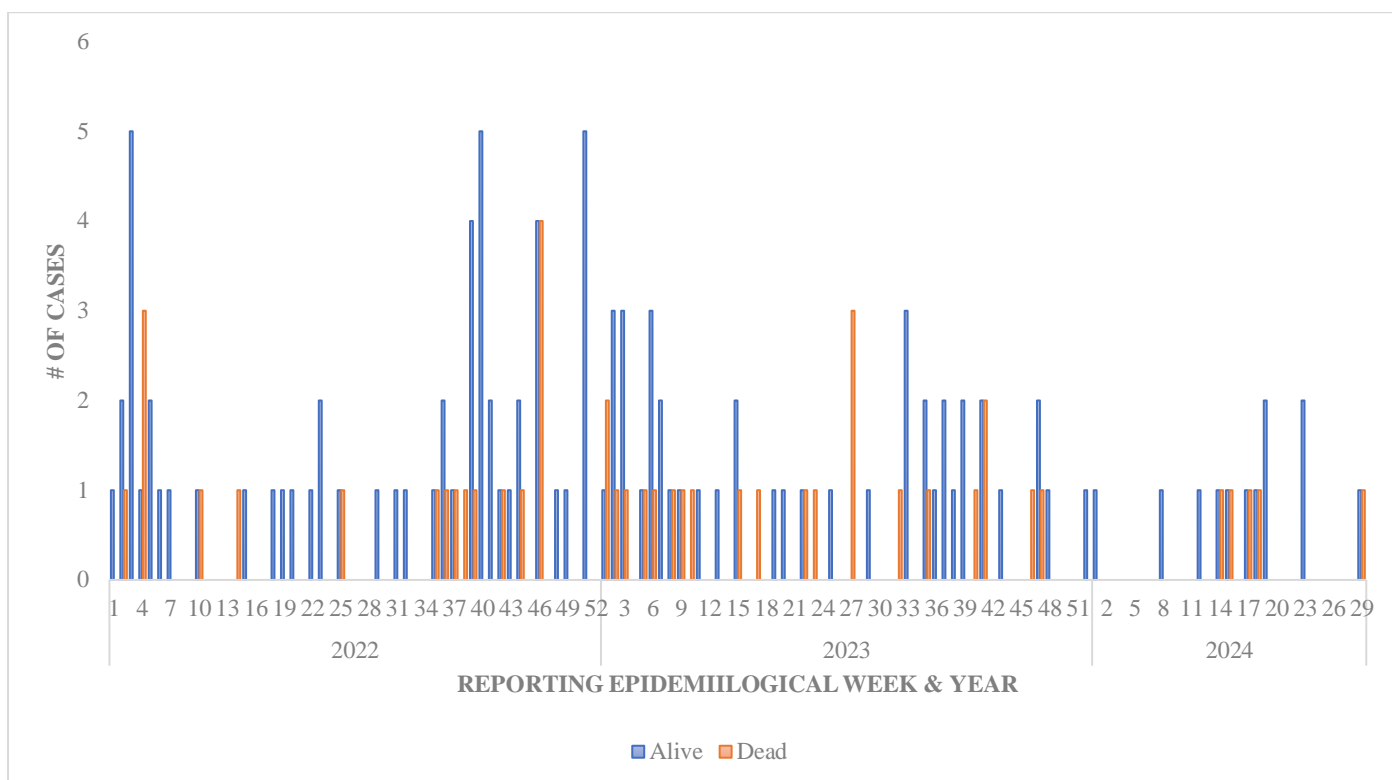


Figure 5: Epi-curve of confirmed Lassa fever cases and deaths by reporting Epi week & Year, Liberia, January 6, 2022-July 26, 2024

PUBLIC HEALTH INTERVENTIONS

Since the inception of the 2022 outbreak, several measures including response initiatives have been instituted including surveillance and laboratory testing, vector surveillance and control, case management, etc. These interventions aim to protect at-risk populations; prevent international spread; containing outbreaks rapidly. Below are details of the measures taken in the ongoing outbreak:

I. Coordination

- The response has been led by the County Health Teams with technical support from the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL), the Ministry of Health (MOH) and partners
 - The Incident Management Systems (IMSs) have been activated in the affected counties
 - The PHEOCs in the response counties are in response mode coordinating the response

II. Surveillance

- Active case search ongoing in affected communities
- Thirty-four (34) contacts including 18 healthcare workers line listed and under 21 days follow-up
- Weekly sit-reps developed and disseminated to stakeholders



Photos of field investigation and burial team, Nimba County, July 18 & 19, 2024

III. Case management and IPC

- Ribavirin distributed to all affected counties
- Cases treated with ribavirin and discharged

IV. Laboratory

- The National Public Health Reference Laboratory continues testing of Lassa fever samples
- A total of 155 Lassa fever cases have been confirmed since this outbreak

V. Risk Communication and Community Engagement

- Risk communication and community engagement ongoing in affected and surrounding communities

VI. Dead Body Management

- Total of 46 confirmed deaths recorded and were buried under safe and dignified condition

VII. Key Challenges

- Limited supply of IPC materials in affected counties
- Lack of logistics (gasoline, communication cards, fuel, etc) to support active case search and contact tracing in affected county
- Limited stationeries in the EOC to produce case alert forms, contact tracing form and other tools for investigation
- Lack of computer for County Surveillance Officer (Bong County)

For comments or questions, please contact:

Emmanuel Dwalu, BSc, BSEd, PDGE, MPH, FETP
Epidemiologist/Lassa fever Disease Lead
Division of Infectious Disease and Epidemiology, NPHIL
Cell: (+231-770883760)
Email: dwaluemmanuel2@gmail.com

Ralph W. Jetoh, MD, MPH
Director
Division of Infectious Disease and Epidemiology, NPHIL
Cell: (+231-777372655)
Email: ralphica2000@gmail.com

Issuing Authority:
Hon. Jane A. MaCauley, MPH
Director General
National Public Health Institute of Liberia
Cell: +231 (0555)-152-926
Email: janemacauley2@gmail.com