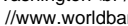




## **Ebola: New World Bank Group Study Forecasts Billions in Economic Loss if Epidemic Lasts Longer, Spreads in West Africa**

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With the latest death toll from Ebola now at 3,439 in the three worst-affected countries of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, a new economic impact assessment from the World Bank Group says that if the epidemic was to significantly infect people in neighboring countries, some of which have much larger economies, the two-year regional financial impact could reach US\$32.6 billion by the end of 2015. The new World Bank Group report notes, "as it is far from certain that the epidemic will be fully contained by December 2014 and in light of the considerable uncertainty about its future trajectory, two alternative scenarios are used to estimate the medium-term (2015) impact of the epidemic, extending to the end of calendar year 2015. A "Low Ebola scenario corresponds to rapid containment within the three most severely affected countries, while "High Ebola corresponds to slower containment in the three countries, with broader regional contagion. According to the World Bank Groups new analysis, the economic impacts of Ebola are already very serious in the core three countries - particularly Liberia and Sierra Leone - and could become catastrophic under a slow-containment, High Ebola scenario. In broader regional terms, the economic impact could be limited if immediate national and international action stop the epidemic and alleviate the "aversion behavior or fear factor that is causing neighboring countries to close their borders, and airlines and other regional and international companies to suspend their commercial activities in the three worst-affected countries. The successful containment of Ebola in Nigeria and Senegal so far is evidence that this is possible, given some existing health system capacity and a resolute policy response. With Ebolas potential to inflict massive economic costs on Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone and the rest of their neighbors in West Africa, the international community must find ways to get past logistical roadblocks and bring in more doctors and trained medical staff, more hospital beds, and more health and development support to help stop Ebola in its tracks, says Jim Yong Kim, the President of the World Bank Group. The World Bank  
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