



**Gen. LEO Irabor
Early Warning
Systems Centre**



The Early Warning Monitor

GLIC Weekly Report

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	HIGH RISK
	MEDIUM RISK
	LOW RISK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This week's report highlights emerging climate, security, governance and public health risks across multiple regions. Militants in northern Burkina Faso attacked Ghanaian traders, underscoring cross-border threats in the Sahel. Northern California experienced a major avalanche, emphasising hazards from extreme winter conditions. In West Africa, the withdrawal of Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso from ECOWAS raises concerns over regional mobility, institutional stability, and governance.

Escalating security and geopolitical risks are also evident in Nigeria's Kebbi State, where coordinated armed attacks killed at least 33 civilians, and in Kenya, where over 1,000 youths have reportedly been recruited into the Russia–Ukraine conflict, raising concerns over trafficking and exploitation. Rising U.S.–Iran tensions further threaten stability in the Middle East.

In West Africa, the Ivory Coast has resumed legislative elections in Toumodi and Dualla-Massala following the annulment of earlier results due to post-election disputes. The Independent Electoral Commission has emphasised transparency and security, urging voter participation, while the Constitutional Council's involvement underscores ongoing efforts to strengthen electoral credibility and oversight in contested districts.

Public health threats continue to mount globally. Nigeria is grappling with a severe Lassa fever outbreak marked by high fatalities and healthcare worker infections. The United States faces a resurgent measles outbreak linked to declining vaccination rates. International travel and food safety risks continue, including Shigella and Salmonella outbreaks linked to Cape Verde and drug-resistant Salmonella in moringa powder, highlighting vulnerabilities in sanitation, global supply chains, and disease prevention systems.

Together, these developments illustrate the widening intersection of climate change, security, health, and governance challenges worldwide.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT

9 SKIERS MISSING, 6 TRAPPED AFTER NORTH CAROLINA MOUNTAINS AVALANCHE

A major avalanche struck the Sierra Nevada mountains in northern California, leaving several skiers missing and trapping others under hazardous winter conditions. The incident occurred near Castle Peak, northwest of Lake Tahoe, during a guided backcountry skiing trip. Rescue teams deployed emergency responders despite severe weather, including heavy snowfall, strong winds, and unstable snowpack, which significantly complicated rescue operations. Survivors relied on avalanche beacons and emergency preparedness measures, including temporary shelters, to increase their chances of rescue. Some rescued individuals sustained injuries requiring hospitalization. Authorities warned that avalanche risk remains extremely high due to ongoing winter storms depositing significant snow accumulation across the region.

The incident highlights the vulnerability of recreational and mountainous areas to sudden weather-related disasters, especially during extreme winter conditions. Authorities also temporarily closed ski areas and restricted access to high-risk zones to prevent further casualties. The avalanche underscores the importance of preparedness, early warning systems, and coordinated emergency response to reduce fatalities. It also reflects broader risks associated with severe weather patterns affecting mountain regions, increasing threats to public safety, tourism activities, and emergency response operations.

Early warning implications of this include the increased likelihood of additional avalanches due to continued heavy snowfall and unstable snowpack, posing risks to residents, tourists, and rescue teams. Severe weather conditions may disrupt transport, tourism, and emergency response capacity. Furthermore, the incident underscores the importance of avalanche monitoring systems, emergency preparedness, and real-time communication tools such as locator beacons, which proved critical in rescue efforts. These conditions may persist as extreme weather patterns intensify, increasing future disaster risks.

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

ATTACK ON GHANAIAN TOMATO TRADERS IN BURKINA FASO: JNIM MILITANTS BEHIND DEADLY ASSAULT – GHANA EMBASSY – STATE MUST HEIGHTEN SECURITY ALERTNESS

An attack by militants linked to Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wal Muslimin (JNIM) targeted Ghanaian tomato traders in Titao, northern Burkina Faso, resulting in fatalities and the destruction of multiple trucks transporting goods. According to Ghana's embassy, male traders and drivers were killed while several trucks were burned, highlighting the vulnerability of cross-border traders operating in volatile Sahel regions. Authorities confirmed that the attack reflects ongoing militant activity in northern Burkina Faso, which has experienced repeated extremist violence since 2019. Ghanaian officials are working with local authorities to identify victims and assist survivors. Security experts warned that although Ghana has not experienced terrorist attacks, the incident underscores the growing threat posed by extremist groups operating near its borders and the need for heightened vigilance. Experts also stressed the importance of strengthening border monitoring, preventing illicit arms proliferation, and enhancing national security preparedness to mitigate potential spillover risks.

The early warning implication of the attack highlights an increased risk of cross-border militant violence affecting civilians and traders, particularly along insecure Sahel trade corridors. It signals the potential for extremist groups to expand operational reach toward neighbouring countries, increasing the threat of infiltration, arms trafficking, and destabilization. Continued insecurity may disrupt regional trade, livelihoods, and economic stability, while also placing additional pressure on border security systems and requiring enhanced surveillance, inter-state coordination, and preventive counterterrorism measures.

ECOWAS WITHOUT THE SAHEL STATES: HOW THE SPLIT IS TESTING FREE MOVEMENT AND REGIONAL LEGITIMACY

The withdrawal of Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso from ECOWAS to form the Alliance of Sahel States (AES) has intensified concerns over regional integration, migration governance, and institutional stability in West Africa. The exit followed diplomatic tensions and sanctions imposed after military coups, exposing ECOWAS' structural weaknesses and legitimacy challenges. Although visa-free travel and free movement protocols technically remain in place, mobility conditions are gradually changing due to stricter border controls, new biometric identity systems, and administrative uncertainty. AES countries have introduced new identification frameworks, signalling a gradual shift away from ECOWAS mechanisms. These changes are occurring amid broader pressures, including external influence on migration control and ECOWAS' funding and implementation constraints. Limited financial resources, weak compliance among member states,

and declining public trust have undermined ECOWAS' ability to effectively enforce migration protections and maintain regional cohesion.

Early warning implications of the Sahel states withdrawal and these new developments indicate a growing risk of regional fragmentation, weakening ECOWAS' authority and capacity to coordinate migration and security responses. Increasing administrative barriers, identity system changes, and policy divergence could disrupt cross-border trade, livelihoods, and population mobility, potentially increasing irregular migration and local economic hardship. Institutional weakening and declining legitimacy may also reduce cooperation on shared security threats, raising the risk of instability and limiting effective responses to transnational challenges across the Sahel and wider West African region.

ARMED GROUP KILLED 33 IN FRESH SIMULTANEOUS ATTACKS

At least 33 people were reportedly killed in attacks by armed assailants in communities in Kebbi State, northwestern Nigeria. According to local authorities and residents, the attackers stormed villages, burning homes and killing civilians in what appeared to be coordinated raids. The violence has heightened fears among residents already facing insecurity linked to banditry, communal clashes, and criminal networks operating across the region. Security agencies have been deployed to restore order, while state officials have condemned the killings and vowed to strengthen protection for vulnerable communities. The incident underscores the persistent security challenges confronting Nigeria's northwest, where rural communities remain exposed to recurring attacks and displacement.

The early warning implications of the attacks include the risk of escalating insecurity across northwestern Nigeria, particularly in rural and border communities in Kebbi State. Continued violence could trigger large-scale displacement, humanitarian pressures, and food insecurity, especially as many affected communities depend on agriculture for livelihoods. The attacks may also strengthen criminal and bandit networks, enabling them to expand operations into neighbouring states such as Sokoto and Zamfara states, thereby worsening regional stability.

RECRUITMENT OF OVER 1000 KENYANS TO FIGHT IN THE RUSSIAN UKRAINE WAR

A recent report indicates that more than 1,000 Kenyans have reportedly been recruited to fight in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine. According to investigators and rights groups, many of those recruited were allegedly lured with promises of employment opportunities and financial benefits, only to find themselves deployed in combat roles. The development has raised concerns among Kenyan authorities and civil society over human trafficking, labour exploitation, and the involvement of foreign actors targeting economically vulnerable youth. This issue highlights growing risks linked to private military recruitment networks operating across Africa.

The early warning implication of this development includes the risk of expanding foreign mercenary recruitment networks across Africa, particularly in economically vulnerable states such as Kenya. If left unchecked, these networks could increasingly target unemployed youth, contributing to irregular migration, human trafficking, and exploitation. The return of trained fighters could also pose long-term security threats, as individuals exposed to warfare may become involved in organised crime, militancy, or political violence within their home countries.

RUSSIA WARNS OF ESCALATING IRAN TENSIONS AMID US MILITARY BUILD-UP

Russia has warned that rising tensions involving Iran could spiral further amid reports of an expanding U.S. military presence in the region. Russian officials cautioned that increased deployments and heightened rhetoric risk destabilising the Middle East at a time when regional security dynamics are already fragile. The warning follows indications of additional U.S. military assets positioned near Iran, reportedly as a deterrent against potential threats to American forces and allies. Moscow criticised what it described as escalatory actions, urging restraint and dialogue to prevent a broader confrontation. The developments come against the backdrop of strained U.S.–Iran relations, unresolved nuclear concerns, and ongoing proxy dynamics across the region.

The early warning implications of the escalating tensions include the risk of direct or indirect military confrontation between the United States and Iran, either through miscalculation or proxy engagements. Increased military build-up heightens the possibility of accidental clashes in strategic waterways such as the Strait of Hormuz, which could disrupt global energy supplies and trigger sharp increases in oil prices.

There is also a risk that the situation could deepen geopolitical polarisation, drawing in external actors such as Russia and China into diplomatic or strategic alignment with Iran, thereby intensifying great-power rivalry in the Middle East. Escalation could undermine ongoing diplomatic efforts surrounding Iran’s nuclear programme and weaken non-proliferation frameworks.

GOVERNANCE & ELECTION

IVORY COAST: RESUMPTION OF LEGISLATIVE ELECTION IN TOUMODI AND DUALLA-MASSALA

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) assures that it has taken all necessary measures to guarantee the transparency, security, and smooth running of the elections happening in Toumodi and Dualla-Massala. The institution calls on the populations of the constituencies concerned to demonstrate civic responsibility and to mobilize massively for this new democratic event.

The recent pause in parts of the legislative elections in the Ivory Coast followed the annulment of results in selected constituencies after post-election disputes. While the parliamentary elections

were conducted nationwide, complaints were filed regarding alleged irregularities in certain districts. These petitions were reviewed by the Constitutional Council of Côte d'Ivoire, the country's highest authority on electoral disputes. After examining the evidence, the Council invalidated the results in Toumodi and Dualla-Massala, effectively suspending the confirmation of those parliamentary seats. This action did not amount to a nationwide suspension of the legislative elections but rather a targeted legal intervention affecting only the contested districts. As a result, representatives from those areas could not be sworn into office pending fresh elections.

The early warning implications of the pause and how it can affect the election set to take place, electoral legitimacy is a serious concern because if repeated, public trust in elections may decline, increasing the risk of protests or opposition boycotts. Rising political tension can lead to escalation of inflammatory rhetoric, street mobilisation, or legal battles. High risk of localized violence with increased security presence or politically motivated arrests in affected districts. Institutional stress on the electoral body can be seen as a perceived bias by the electoral body or incompetence can weaken democratic credibility ahead of future elections in the country.

PUBLIC HEALTH

LASSA FEVER: NCDC RAISES ALARM AS LASSA FEVER KILLS TWO, INFECT 15 HEALTH WORKERS.

Nigeria recorded 1,034 suspected Lassa fever cases, 240 confirmed, and 51 deaths from the start of 2026 through early February. The case fatality rate is at 21.3% - higher than the same period in 2025. In just one week (February 2–8), 74 new cases were confirmed and 15 people died. Healthcare workers are among those infected. The NCDC flagged the main problems as: people coming in too late for treatment, high costs stopping people from seeking care, poor sanitation in affected communities, and low public awareness. The rat that carries the virus remains uncontrolled in many areas.

Early warning signs implication of this is the deaths of healthcare workers from the disease they are treating indicate a serious breakdown in hospital infection prevention and control systems, increasing the risk of further transmission within health facilities. Hospitals then become places that spread Lassa fever rather than stop it. People will start avoiding hospitals out of fear, which means other illnesses also go untreated. If nothing changes, the outbreak will run past the dry season, spread to more states, and eventually cross into neighbouring countries. There is no licensed vaccine for Lassa fever - prevention is the only real option available. The Nigerian healthcare sector should provide the necessary kits for the healthcare workers so as to avoid another Pandemic or outbreak as we had in 2020.

MEASLES RETURNS

As of February 19, 2026, the US confirmed 982 measles cases across 26 states. Seven new outbreaks started in 2026 alone, and 89% of cases are linked to active outbreaks. South Carolina had 962 cases in Spartanburg County with multiple public exposure sites, meaning the virus is moving freely in communities. The cause is falling vaccination rates driven by years of anti-vaccine messaging. The United States was declared measles-free in 2000. This is a disease that was already beaten coming back because of a failure in public health communication and trust.

Early warning Implications of this is measles can spread to up to 18 people from a single infected person - one of the highest infection rates of any known disease. Once it gets into a community with low vaccination, it cannot be stopped without either mass vaccination or mass infection. The people most at risk are infants too young to be vaccinated, pregnant women, cancer patients, and anyone with a weakened immune system. If vaccination rates keep falling, measles will become permanently re-established in the US. Other countries watching this may follow the same path, and decades of global progress against the disease could be lost within a few years. Looking at all these implications the early warning situation that should be acted upon should be the quarantine of people and products coming from Abroad most especially the United States, this would reduce the risk of Nigerians getting infected, as it is highly contagious and deadly.

CAPE VERDE/EUROPE: TOURIST DEATH FROM CONTAMINATED FOOD AND WATER

The UK Health Security Agency confirmed 158 cases of Shigella since October 2025, with 112 linked to travel to Cape Verde - mainly the Santa Maria and Boa Vista resort areas. An additional 43 Salmonella cases were also tied to the same destination. At least six British tourists died and over 150 fell seriously ill. Cases were also reported in the Netherlands, Sweden, France, and Ireland. Hurricane Erin damaged water and sanitation infrastructure in Cape Verde in August 2025. The outbreak source - whether contaminated water, buffet hygiene, or food supply - has still not been definitively identified after three years of recurring outbreaks affecting over 800 people.

The recurrence of the same outbreak over three years without a confirmed source indicates that the contamination is structural and persistent, not a one-off incident. Each tourist season brings new victims, and in Cape Verde—where the economy depends heavily on tourism—continued fatalities will inevitably trigger travel advisories and a collapse in visitor numbers that could take years to reverse.

The danger extends beyond Cape Verde. Shigella is becoming increasingly resistant to antibiotics worldwide, and every uncontrolled outbreak accelerates this resistance, making future cases harder to treat everywhere. When travelers from affected regions enter Nigeria, they risk introducing the infection into a population of over 200 million. Such a scenario could spark widespread panic and potentially escalate into a nationwide health crisis.



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