



**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

The events of this week demonstrate the combination of ongoing security concerns, changing geopolitical factors, and public health pressures throughout Africa and beyond. A complex environment where health crises, climate risks, and geopolitical manoeuvring increasingly intersect is reflected in the emerging patterns, which range from the resurgence of infectious diseases in Nigeria and Southern Africa to evolving great-power competition in the Sahel and rising regional security tensions.

Climate shocks are projected to intensify malaria transmission across Africa by disrupting disease-control programs. The United States is recalibrating its engagement in the Sahel through a “security-for-minerals” diplomatic strategy aimed at countering the growing influence of Russia and China in the region. Political transitions are also unfolding elsewhere, with Somalia approving constitutional amendments to strengthen governance structures, while Nepal holds a major general election following youth-led protests that reshaped the country’s political landscape.

Security concerns remain prominent, with Boko Haram and ISWAP militants reportedly attacking communities in Borno State, highlighting the continued threat of insurgency in the Lake Chad Basin. Globally, reports that Ghanaian nationals have been killed while fighting in the Russia

Ukraine war raises concerns about the recruitment of foreign fighters from economically vulnerable regions. At the same time, rising tensions between Iran, Israel, and the United States have heightened fears of broader regional escalation.

Nigeria reported 82 new Lassa fever cases and 20 deaths in one week, bringing total deaths in 2026 to 75 with a 23% case fatality rate, higher than the same period in 2025. Nigeria's drug regulator also warned against certain malaria and HIV diagnostic kits produced by Meril Diagnostics due to quality concerns following a WHO audit. Meanwhile, breast cancer cases reached 53,500 in 2023, reflecting a sharp long-term increase linked to limited screening and treatment access. Regionally, cholera cases are rising in Southern Africa, particularly in Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, and Namibia, driven by flooding, displacement, and poor sanitation.

All things considered, the events of this week show how geopolitical rivalry, climatic pressures, and public health risks are becoming more intertwined. To reduce developing risks and stop localized crises from turning into more widespread regional instability, early warning systems must be strengthened, health surveillance must be improved, and governance and security frameworks must be amplified.

HOW A CRISIS OVER A STOCKPILE OF URANIUM CREATED AN OPENING FOR U.S. REENGAGEMENT IN NIGER

A recent *Atlantic Council* analysis explains how a crisis over Niger's seized uranium stockpile has created a diplomatic opening for renewed U.S. engagement with Niger's ruling military junta. Following a failed coup in neighbouring Benin, Niger's junta finds itself increasingly isolated and unable to resolve the standoff over roughly 1000 tons of uranium yellowcake it seized from the French company Orano. Efforts to export the material have stalled due to legal barriers, closed borders and rising security threats near Niamey's airport, leaving the stockpile immobilised and politically toxic for the junta. This deadlock has put pressure on Niger's leadership, forcing it to consider compromises. For the United States, quietly facilitating a face-saving resolution between Niger and Orano, and helping negotiate transit solutions or alternative export arrangements, could help Washington re-establish strategic ties, especially in counterterrorism cooperation denied since U.S. troop withdrawals after the 2023 coup. A successful intervention would not only address a pressing diplomatic dilemma but also counter Russian influence in the Sahel, support nuclear material security and re-open channels for broader engagement in governance and stability efforts across the region.

The early warning implication of this uranium impasse is that unresolved resource disputes, compounded by political isolation and legal constraints, can rapidly become leverage points that reshape diplomatic alignments and security partnerships; proactive monitoring of such stress indicators can help anticipate abrupt geopolitical shifts before crises escalate or strategic openings close.

US MINERALS DIPLOMACY TESTS SAHEL COUNTRIES' PARTNERSHIP CHOICE

The United States is recalibrating its strategy in the Sahel, pivoting toward a "security-for-minerals" diplomatic framework to counter the entrenched influence of Russia and China. Driven by a strategic need for critical minerals - specifically lithium in Mali and uranium in Niger - Washington has adopted a pragmatic, conciliatory approach toward the military juntas of the Alliance of Sahel States (AES). This shift represents a departure from traditional "principles-based" diplomacy that previously prioritized democratic norms. In 2025 and early 2026, the US offered "American solutions" to Mali and Burkina Faso, including intelligence support and infrastructure-linked mining deals, to position itself as a viable alternative to the Kremlin-aligned Wagner Group and Chinese refining monopolies. However, this strategy faces significant hurdles: many key mineral assets are already under Russian or Chinese control, and the dismantling of traditional development agencies like USAID limits the tools available for robust re-engagement. Ultimately, the US aims to secure supply chains while preventing further Russian security penetration in a region where previous counter-terrorism efforts have largely failed.

The early warning implication of this diplomatic shift sends a risky signal to West African political actors: "political endurance" and resource wealth can eventually override international condemnation of coups. By normalizing relations with military-led regimes to secure minerals, the US may inadvertently undermine regional efforts by ECOWAS and the African Union to deter future power grabs, potentially triggering a new wave of "resource-backed" coups across the continent.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT

CLIMATE SHOCKS, NOT JUST WARMING, THREATEN MALARIA CONTROL EFFORTS IN AFRICA

A new *Nature* analysis highlights that climate change's threat to malaria in Africa stems less from gradual warming and more from extreme climate shocks and weather variability that can undermine disease control programmes. Traditional models have focused on how temperature and rainfall affect mosquito survival and parasite development, sometimes predicting shifts in where malaria might spread. However, recent research shows that the real-world interaction between climate, health systems, infrastructure, and socioeconomic conditions is crucial for understanding future malaria risk. Rather than expanding malaria into previously unaffected areas, climate change

is expected to intensify transmission mostly within current endemic regions by disrupting ongoing control efforts. Extreme weather events - such as floods, droughts and storms - can damage infrastructure, displace people, interrupt access to preventive measures like bed nets and sprays, and hinder diagnosis and treatment. Projections show climate change could lead to tens to hundreds of millions more cases and hundreds of thousands more deaths in Africa by 2050 if control measures remain at current levels, with much of this additional burden attributable to disruptive weather rather than slow changes in suitability. This underscores the need to integrate climate resilience into public-health planning for malaria.

The early warning implication of this is that malaria control strategies should include climate-linked early-warning systems that combine weather forecasts, surveillance data, and health system readiness. Such systems could signal elevated outbreak risks following extreme weather, allowing faster deployment of resources and targeted responses to prevent spikes in transmission and protect vulnerable communities.

GOVERNANCE & ELECTION

SOMALI PARLIAMENT APPROVES FIRST SUBSTANTIVE CONSTITUTION IN DECADES

Somalia's Parliament has approved amendments to the country's Provisional Constitution, formally ending nearly 14 years of governance under a temporary charter and ushering in what leaders described as a new era. Lawmakers described the move as a historic milestone, signalling Somalia's transition from a fragile post-conflict framework toward a more permanent constitutional order. The amendments reportedly clarify the distribution of powers between the federal government and member states, strengthen the executive structure, and lay the groundwork for a more coherent electoral and judicial system. Since the collapse of the Siad Barre regime in 1991, Somalia has struggled with state fragmentation, insurgency, and clan-based political contestation. The 2012 Provisional Constitution was designed as a temporary arrangement to stabilize governance while broader consultations continued. However, political disagreements between Mogadishu and federal member states repeatedly delayed its finalization. By approving these amendments, federal authorities argue they have now provided clearer legal certainty and institutional direction.

The early warning implications of Somalia's new constitutional amendment, which would put an end to governance under a temporary charter, provide a stronger constitutional foundation and strengthen government and institutional legitimacy. But on the other hand, Somalia's federal structure remains fragile if federal member states perceive the amendments as recentralizing power in Mogadishu, tensions could escalate. Security threat is a possibility as armed groups like Al-Shabaab may exploit political disagreements to undermine the legitimacy of the federal government.

NEPAL FIRST ELECTION FOLLOWING GEN Z-LED PROTEST

Nepal is holding a crucial general election, marking the first national vote since youth-led protests in September 2025, which forced the resignation of then-Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and dissolved parliament. The demonstrations, driven by Gen Z and young Nepalis demanding an end to corruption, job creation, and cleaner governance, have helped reshape the country's political landscape. Nearly 19 million of Nepal's 30 million citizens are eligible voters in this election and are expected to cast ballots to elect 275 members of the House of Representatives, with 165 seats decided by first-past-the-post and 110 by proportional representation. Campaigning focused heavily on employment, economic opportunities, anti-corruption, and systemic reform, reflecting widespread public frustration with political instability and economic stagnation that has long driven Nepalis to seek work abroad.

The early warning implication of the Nepal election is such that there can be more post-election grievances if the results are perceived to be manipulated, delayed, or lack transparency. Renewed mass protests and civil unrest led by Gen Z and young people are also likely if the results turn out to be manipulated. Political fragmentation and coalition instability are possibilities if no party secures a clear majority, and fragile coalition negotiations could lead to prolonged government formation delays.

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

BOKO HARAM AND ISWAP ATTACK BORNO COMMUNITY

Suspected militants from Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province reportedly attacked a community in Borno State, killing several residents and abducting others during the raid. According to reports, the attackers stormed the area, targeting civilians and causing widespread panic and displacement. Local authorities indicated that the assault reflects the continued operational capacity of extremist groups in Nigeria's northeast despite years of military operations against insurgents. Security officials have expressed concern about the persistent threat posed by insurgent groups who continue to carry out attacks on remote communities, security positions, and civilian populations across the Lake Chad Basin region.

The early warning implications of the attack include the risk of renewed escalation of insurgent activities in northeastern Nigeria, particularly in rural and poorly secured communities. Continued attacks could lead to increased displacement, humanitarian crises, and disruption of livelihoods such as farming and fishing, further deepening socio-economic vulnerability in affected areas. Persistent violence in Borno State may also spill into neighboring states such as Yobe State and Adamawa State, complicating ongoing counterinsurgency efforts.

CITIZENS KILLED WHILE FIGHTING IN RUSSIA-UKRAINE WARS

Reports indicate that several citizens from Ghana have been killed while fighting in the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine. According to officials and media reports, the individuals were reportedly recruited to join the Russian military, raising concerns about the growing involvement of foreign fighters in the conflict. The development highlights the growing trend of recruiting individuals from economically vulnerable regions into overseas conflicts, often through informal or deceptive channels. Authorities in Ghana have expressed concern about the circumstances surrounding the recruitment and deployment of their citizens, as the Russia–Ukraine war continues to draw foreign combatants from different parts of the world.

The early warning implication of this development includes the risk of increasing recruitment of African nationals into foreign conflicts, particularly among unemployed or economically vulnerable youth seeking financial opportunities abroad. If such recruitment networks expand, it could expose more individuals from countries such as Ghana and neighboring states to exploitation, combat risks, and human rights abuses. Also, there is a potential security risk associated with the eventual return of foreign fighters to their home countries. Individuals with combat experience acquired in the Russo-Ukrainian War may possess advanced weapons training and exposure to organised violence, which could increase the risk of involvement in criminal networks, mercenary activities, or armed groups within West Africa.

IRAN-ISRAEL-US TENSIONS ESCALATE AMID REGIONAL SECURITY CONCERNS

Tensions between Iran, Israel, and the United States have intensified following recent military developments and escalating rhetoric among the three actors. Reports indicate increased military preparedness, strategic warnings, and heightened security alerts across the region, as both sides signal readiness to respond to potential threats. The situation reflects a broader confrontation involving concerns over Iran's military capabilities, regional influence, and the continued involvement of U.S. and Israeli forces in countering Iranian-aligned networks across the Middle East. The developments have heightened international concern over the possibility of further escalation, particularly given the presence of multiple armed actors and ongoing conflicts across the region.

The early warning implications of the escalating tensions significant risk that the confrontation could intensify existing proxy conflicts in countries such as Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, where Iran-aligned armed groups maintain operational presence. Escalation in these areas could increase civilian casualties, displacement, and humanitarian pressures. Also, heightened instability may threaten key maritime routes and energy infrastructure across the Gulf region, potentially disrupting global oil supplies and triggering economic volatility. Prolonged tensions could also deepen geopolitical polarisation among global powers, increasing the risk of miscalculation and prolonged regional instability.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

LASSA FEVER: NIGERIA RECORDS 82 CASES, 20 DEATHS IN ONE WEEK - NCDC

Nigeria recorded 82 new Lassa fever cases and 20 deaths in one week, according to the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC). The cases were reported across 14 states, with Bauchi, Ondo, Taraba, and Edo accounting for about 84% of infections. From the start of 2026 to week seven, the country has recorded 75 deaths, with a case fatality rate of 23%, higher than the 19.7% recorded during the same period in 2025. Lassa fever spreads mainly through contact with food or surfaces contaminated by rat urine or faeces. Health authorities urge improved hygiene, proper food storage, and early medical care to reduce infections and deaths.

The early warning implications include a high fatality rate, which has risen above the level recorded during the same period in the previous year, may indicate delays in early diagnosis, limited access to timely treatment, or possible pressure on healthcare facilities managing severe cases. The concentration of most infections in Bauchi, Ondo, Taraba, and Edo also shows that transmission continues to follow established endemic patterns, particularly in states where environmental sanitation challenges and rodent exposure remain common. Because Lassa fever peaks during the dry season, continued transmission could place additional pressure on hospitals in affected states. If surveillance and community awareness remain weak, outbreaks may spread quietly in rural areas before authorities detect them.

NAFDAC WARNS AGAINST MALARIA AND HIV DIAGNOSTIC KITS OVER QUALITY CONCERNS

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) has warned Nigerians about certain malaria and HIV diagnostic test kits produced by Meril Diagnostics Pvt. Ltd (India) due to quality and safety concerns. The warning followed a World Health Organization (WHO) audit that found the company was not operating according to required manufacturing and quality standards. NAFDAC listed several affected products, including Meriscreen malaria and HIV test kits. Although these kits were previously registered, the marketing company confirmed they have not been officially imported into Nigeria. Any such products found in the country will be treated as counterfeit or illegally imported. The agency has ordered surveillance to remove them and urged healthcare providers to avoid using or distributing the kits.

This early warning implication of this signal shows how weak supply chain monitoring in the health sector can quickly create national public health risks. Even though the kits have not been officially imported, the fact that regulators are already preparing to seize them means authorities believe they could still enter the country through informal or illegal medical supply routes. In

Nigeria, where many clinics and pharmacies source medical supplies through private distributors, substandard diagnostic tools can easily circulate without immediate detection. If faulty malaria or HIV test kits circulate in clinics or pharmacies, patients may receive wrong diagnoses, leading to delayed treatment or unnecessary medication. In the long run, unreliable diagnostic tools can also distort disease surveillance data. When test results are inaccurate, the government may underestimate or overestimate disease spread, complicating public health planning.

NIGERIA RECORDS 543% SURGE IN BREAST CANCER CASES AS AFRICA TOPS GLOBAL RISE - STUDY

Nigeria recorded 53,500 new breast cancer cases in 2023, representing a 542.9% increase since 1990, according to a Global Burden of Disease Study published in *The Lancet Oncology*. The age-standardised incidence rate rose by 108.8%, while deaths reached 26,200, a 408.3% increase over the same period. Breast cancer remains the most common cancer among women globally, with an estimated 2.3 million new cases in 2023. The study projects breast cancer deaths could rise 44% by 2050, especially in low- and middle-income countries, due to rising risk factors and limited access to early detection and treatment.

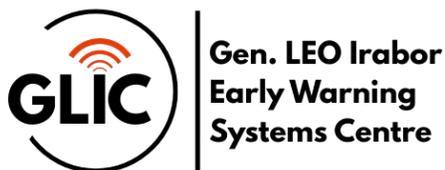
The early warning implication of the sharp increase in breast cancer cases in Nigeria signals a growing public health burden that the healthcare system may not yet be prepared to handle. While population growth partly explains the rise, the scale of the increase suggests deeper structural issues, such as weak early-detection systems, low screening coverage, and cases often detected late, when treatment becomes more difficult and expensive. If the trend continues, pressure on oncology services, treatment centres, and health funding will likely increase, and the gap between demand for cancer care and available medical capacity will widen significantly. Without stronger screening programmes and awareness campaigns, cancer mortality could rise steadily over the coming decades.

WHO WARNS OF LOOMING CHOLERA EMERGENCY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The World Health Organization has warned of a looming public health emergency in Southern Africa following a sharp rise in cholera cases across the region. According to health authorities, 4,320 cases and 56 deaths were reported between 1 January and 15 February 2026, representing a significant increase compared with the same period last year. Mozambique accounts for the majority of infections, while additional cases have been reported in Zambia, Malawi, and Namibia. Health experts say flooding, displacement, and poor sanitation systems are contributing to the rapid spread of the disease across affected communities.

The early warning implication of this is that even though the outbreak is currently concentrated in Southern Africa, it still carries broader implications for countries across the continent, including Nigeria. Disease outbreaks in one region can easily spread through travel, migration, and trade connections between countries. Nigeria also faces its own challenges with sanitation and access to

clean water in many communities, which are key factors in cholera transmission. The situation in Southern Africa highlights how environmental conditions such as flooding and displacement can quickly trigger large outbreaks when sanitation systems are weak. For Nigeria, it serves as a reminder of the importance of maintaining strong disease surveillance and public health preparedness, especially in flood-prone areas where similar outbreaks could occur if preventive measures are not strengthened.



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