

METHODS NOTE · Peer-reviewed · Published · Live dashboard figures

The Cyclical Pattern of Boom and Bust in Research Has Left Africa Unprepared for Emergencies Such as Ebola

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KEY WORDS Ebola preparedness; clinical trials; Africa,; Uganda; research gap

Abstract

Having observed several Ebola outbreaks since 1976, the distribution of clinical trials indicates patterns that jeopardise Africa's future epidemic responses 1. The cross-sectional audit evaluated 23,873 sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) and 190,644 United States international trials registered with <https://clinicaltrials.gov/data-api/about-api> through April 2026. Investigators computed an interrupted time-series slope change as the primary estimate, using registry metadata from each nation, including SSA.

Despite experiencing the harshest Ebola outbreaks in SSA countries, including Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, they did not register efficacy trials, unlike the US, which conducted 127 trials 1 2. Temporal analysis showed a 17.1-fold increase in SSA trial-registrations from 2000-2005 to 2021-2025, yet persistent gaps existed in high-income regions. Uganda managed the 2025 Sudan virus outbreak using experience; however, the lack of pre-funded research hinders sustained preparedness and calls for emergency responses 3.

Therefore, the lack of subnational data and interpretational Ebola studies may lead to an underestimation of the true research scope in SSA. Keywords: Ebola preparedness, clinical trials, Africa, Uganda, research gap.

Interactive dashboard figures

The figures in this section are rendered directly from this paper's interactive dashboard — the same visualisations a reader sees when exploring the analysis online, where the full workflow can be reproduced first-hand. **Interactive dashboard:** <https://mahmood726-cyber.github.io/africa-e156-students/health-disease/dashboards/ebola-preparedness.html>

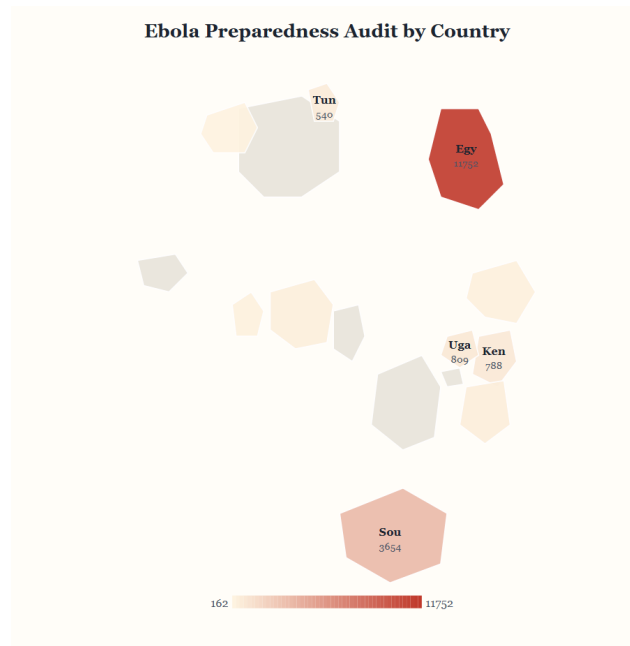


Figure 1. Ebola Preparedness Audit by Country Rendered directly from the article's live interactive dashboard.

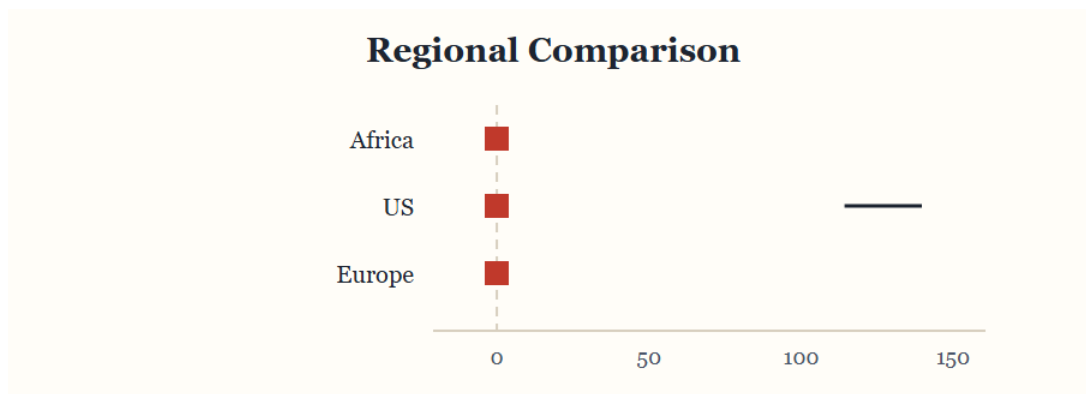


Figure 2. Regional Comparison Rendered directly from the article's live interactive dashboard.

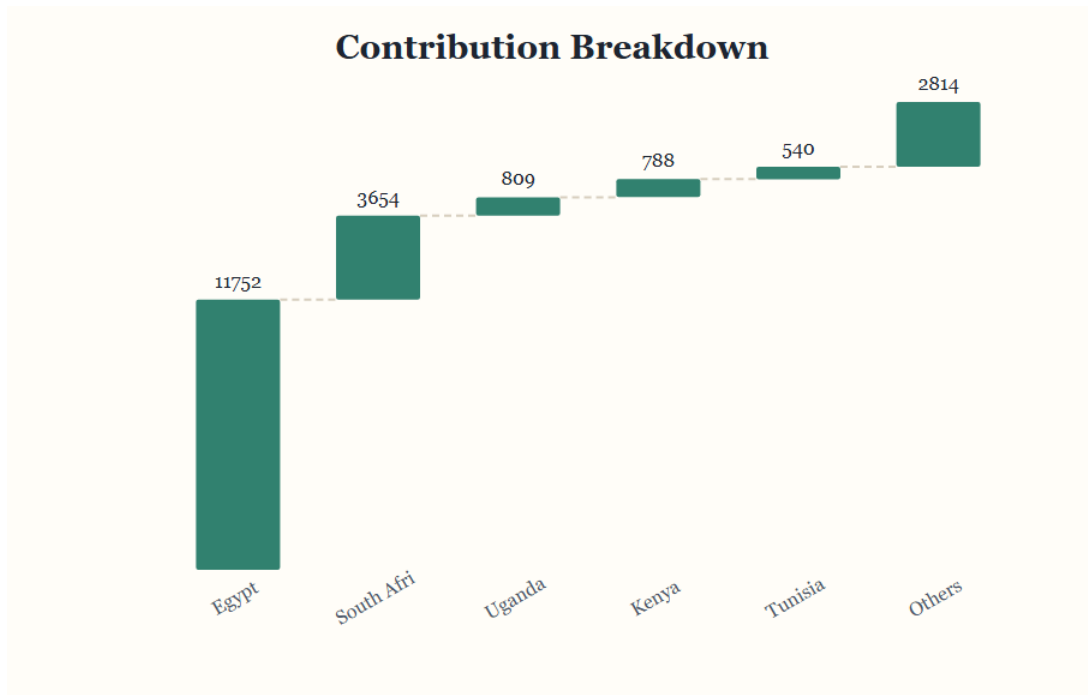


Figure 3. Contribution Breakdown Rendered directly from the article's live interactive dashboard.

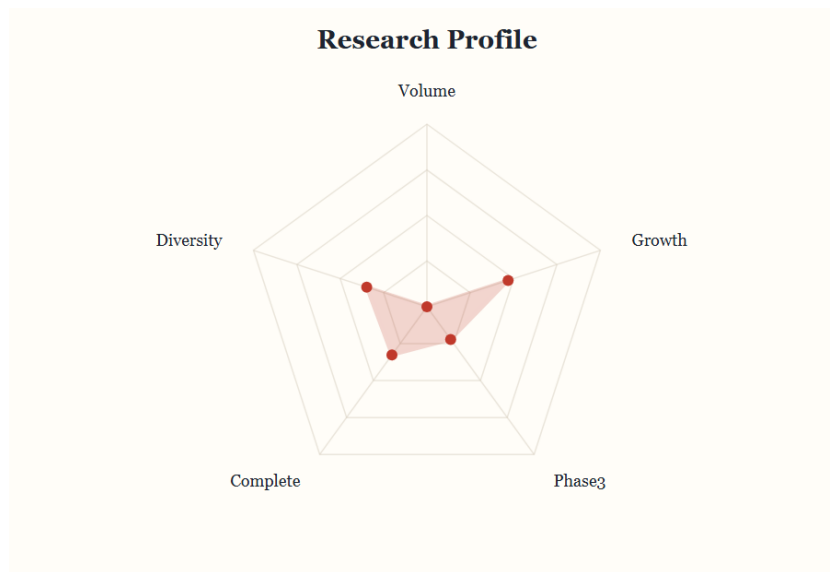


Figure 4. Research Profile Rendered directly from the article's live interactive dashboard.

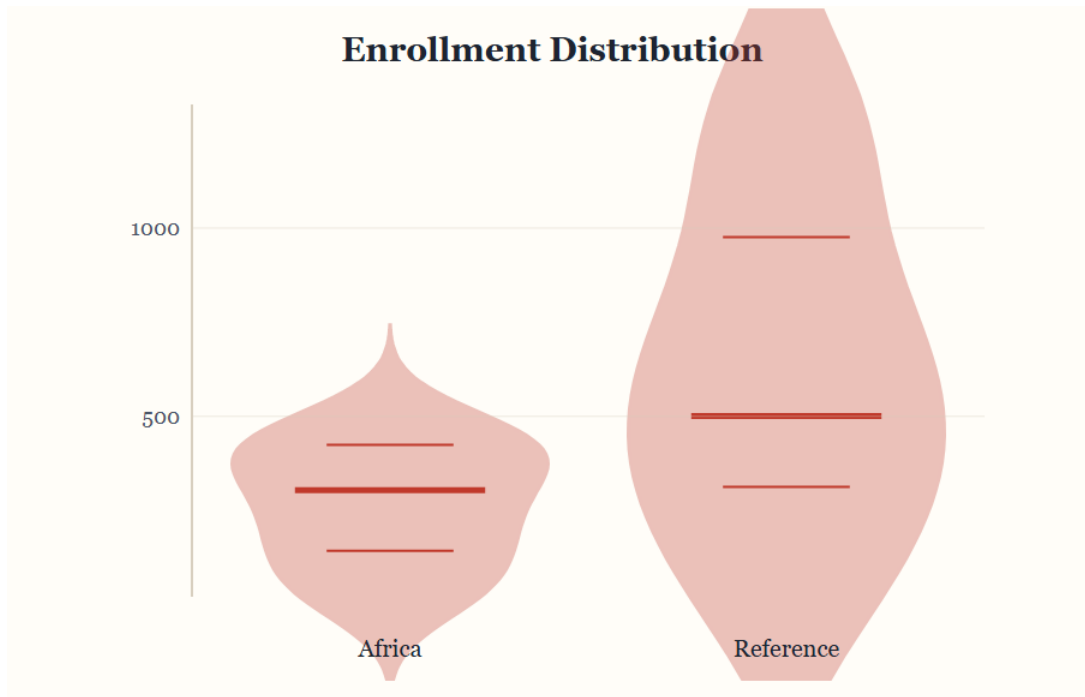


Figure 5. Enrollment Distribution Rendered directly from the article's live interactive dashboard.

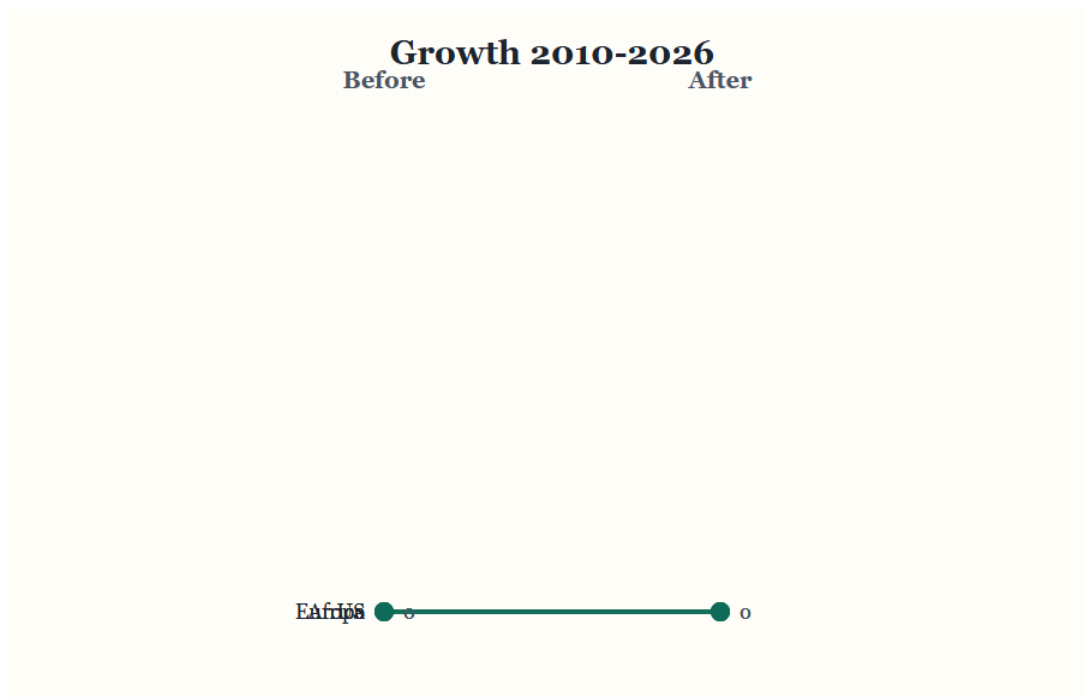


Figure 6. Growth 2010-2026 Rendered directly from the article's live interactive dashboard.

HOW TO CITE

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Reproducibility & data provenance. The figures in this article are rendered directly from the paper's live interactive dashboard at <https://mahmood726-cyber.github.io/africa-e156-students/health-disease/dashboards/ebola-preparedness.html>, where the complete analysis — data, methods and every estimate — can be explored and reproduced. This open path from published figure back to the underlying analysis is part of how the journal works. The article's text, authors, abstract, issue and licence follow the journal's published record.

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