

# MAURITANIA NATIONAL SURVEY

## Insights on Ebola Knowledge



A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS STATED THEY WERE  
**UNAWARE OF HOW THE VIRUS WAS TRANSMITTED FROM AN INFECTED TO A NON-INFECTED INDIVIDUAL.**



### CONTEXT

In response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, Mauritania

banned entry of nationals from Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone, and attempted to close its border with Mali and Senegal. Mauritania's porous and conflict prone borders with Mali and Algeria, combined with frequent direct flights to major international cities such as Paris and Istanbul, increased the risk of rapid transmission of Ebola. Given these risks, organizations such as the Qatar Red Crescent started to utilize radio, television, pamphlets, and training sessions to increase awareness and knowledge of the Ebola virus among the Mauritanian people.



### INITIAL FINDINGS

The vast majority of Mauritians were aware of the Ebola virus, where only 16% of respondents stated that they were unaware of Ebola. However, gaps in knowledge still exist between urban and rural populations, as **24% of rural households never heard of the Ebola virus, compared to only 8% of urban households.**



Within urban areas, traditional media played a major role in educating the population about the Ebola virus as demonstrated when:

**61%** REPORTED RECEIVING INFORMATION ABOUT EBOLA PRIMARILY FROM TELEVISION



and



**14%** OF URBAN RESPONDENTS REPORTED RECEIVING INFORMATION FROM RADIO.



Conversely, informal methods of communication dominated knowledge dissemination in rural areas where:

**47%** WERE INFORMED ABOUT THE VIRUS FROM FRIENDS, FAMILY MEMBERS, OR NEIGHBORS



an additional

**35%** OF RURAL RESPONDENTS STATED THEIR PRIMARY SOURCE OF INFORMATION RELATED TO EBOLA WAS RADIO.



## UNDERSTANDING EBOLA TRANSMISSION

The Ebola virus is transmitted through direct contact with

infected blood or body fluids. A common misconception is that the virus can also

be spread through air particles. **To assess knowledge levels among Mauritians, a multiple response question related to modes of Ebola transmission was administered to those nationals who had heard about Ebola.**

Urban respondents were more likely to believe that Ebola was transmitted through the exchange of bodily fluids and through personal contact with an infected individual. Although they knew the correct modes of virus transmission,



**32% OF URBAN RESPONDENTS and 16% OF RURAL RESPONDENTS**

**BELIEVED THAT EBOLA WAS ALSO TRANSMITTED THROUGH THE AIR.**

A lack of knowledge about virus transmission was evident from this survey. A significant proportion of respondents, although they may have stated

**Furthermore, 9%**



**OF RURAL RESPONDENTS BELIEVED THAT IT WAS TRANSMITTED THROUGH DRINKING WATER.**

the correct means of Ebola transmission, stated they were actually unaware of how the virus was transmitted from an infected to a non-infected individual. This gap in knowledge demonstrates a need for further interventions aimed at increasing prevention and treatment knowledge for highly infectious diseases like Ebola.

IN URBAN AREAS,

**25% OF MAURITANIANS'S STATED THAT THEY WERE UNSURE HOW THE INFECTION WAS CONTRACTED.**

**while**

IN RURAL AREAS,

**40% OF RESPONDENTS STATED THAT THEY WERE UNSURE HOW THE INFECTION WAS CONTRACTED.**



**KNOWLEDGE OF EBOLA TRANSMISSION IS SHOWN TO BE LOWEST IN THE AREA BORDERING MALI.**



## FUTURE ANALYSIS

D3 is currently conducting an in-depth analysis of the data to

create logistic regression models, which take the complex design into account, to determine predictors of knowledge about the disease.



## METHODOLOGY

The Mauritania Wave 1 Pilot study is a face-to-face survey of 1,031 Mauritians over the age of 18. The sample was created using the 2013 census and was stratified by Wilaya and urban/rural status. Settlements and urban blocks were selected using a multi-stage cluster probability sample. Households were selected using enumeration and a team of 18 male and female local interviewers collected data on tablets with the **Research Control Solutions** program. Interviews were conducted in Arabic and French. Data quality was ensured using GPS coordinates, field photos, back-checks, and direct supervision by field supervisors and managers. The final weight includes a base weight, non-response weight and a post-stratification weight.