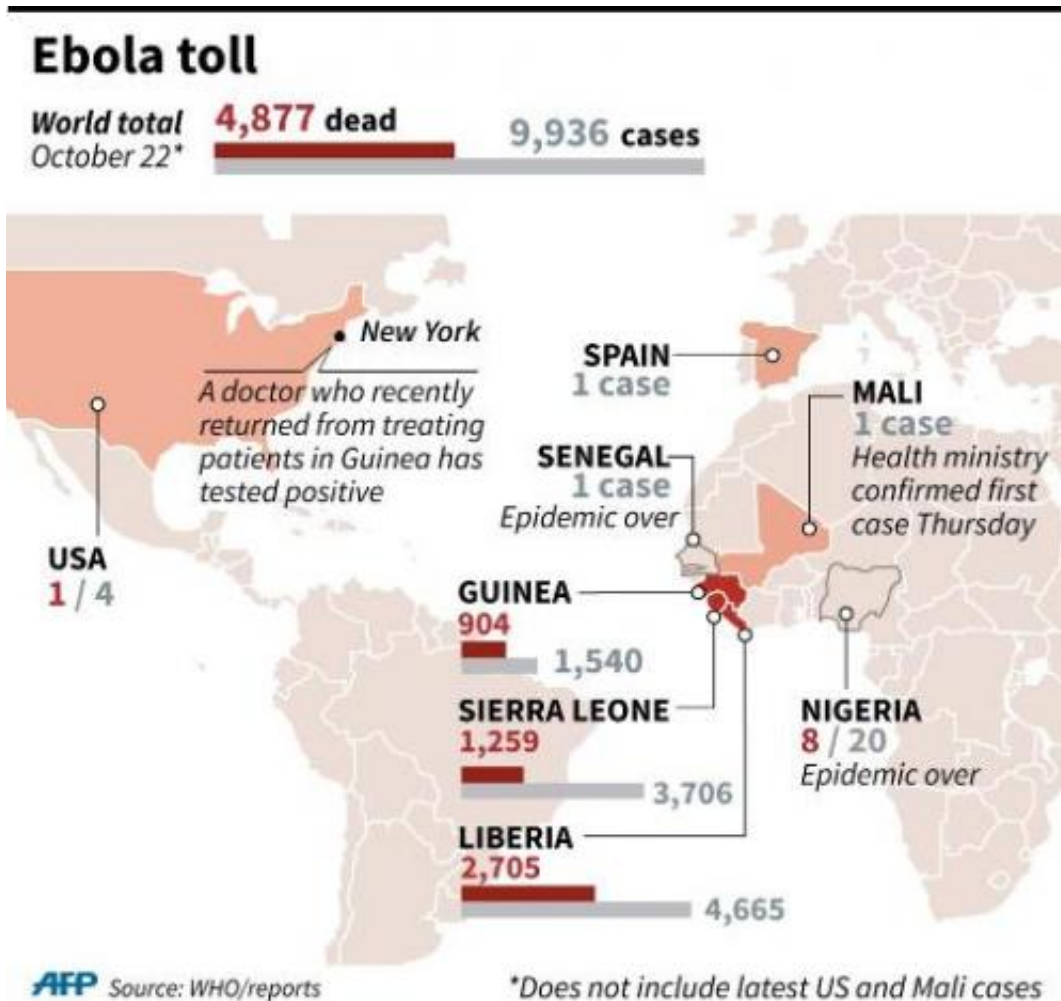


Mobile app helps track Ebola epidemic

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Map showing total Ebola cases and deaths by country

A new mobile telephone based mapping service has been created in a bid to track Ebola and better help communities hit by the virus in west

Africa, developers said Monday.

The system, a collaboration between technology giant IBM, mobile telephone companies and academics, allows people in affected areas to send free text messages about Ebola to track problems and trends, with the program mapping the exact location from where it is sent.

"It has already brought to light specific regions with growing numbers of suspected Ebola cases which require urgent supplies like soap and electricity, as well as faster response times for body collection and burials," IBM said.

The company claims it can create a range of maps to track needs and problems, to better allow health workers and governments tackle them.

"We saw the need to quickly develop a system to enable communities directly affected by Ebola to provide valuable insight about how to fight it," IBM Research Africa's chief scientist Uyi Stewart said in a statement.

"Using [mobile technology](#), we have given them a voice and a channel to communicate their experiences directly," Stewart said.

More than 10,000 people have contracted the deadly virus in west Africa, according to the latest World Health Organization figures.

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