

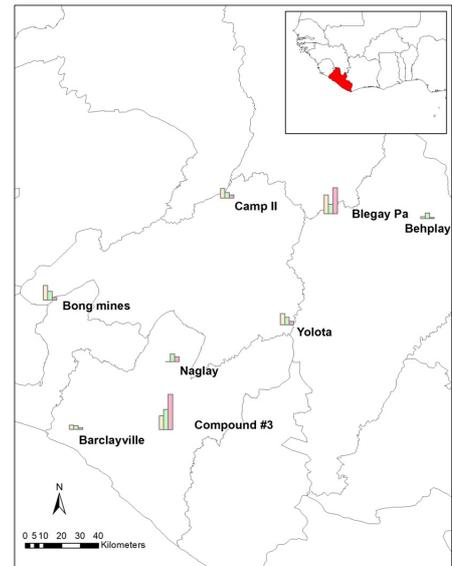
# Lassa Virus Prevalence in the Natural Rodent Host – *Mastomys Natalensis* – and other Rodents in Liberia

## Background

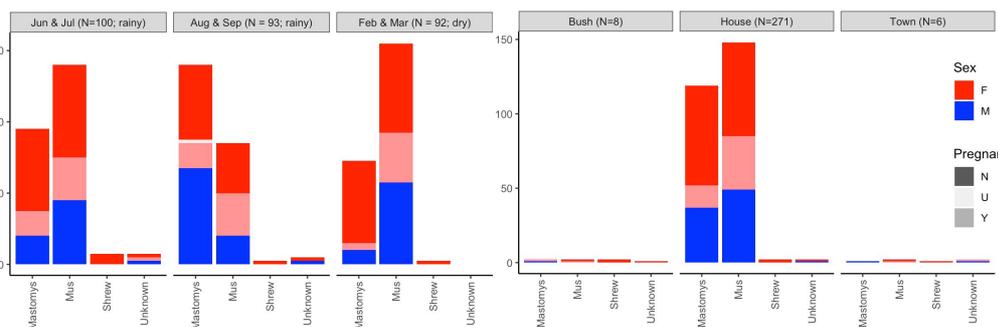
- ❖ Lassa fever is an acute viral hemorrhagic illness caused by Lassa virus and is associated with high mortality.
- ❖ Traditionally thought to only exist within the "Lassa Belt"
- ❖ Modeling and field efforts indicate cases outside of the so-called "Lassa Belt"
- ❖ Therefore, we **hypothesize that** Lassa fever in Liberia extends beyond the Lassa belt.

## Objective of study

- ❖ To assess the extent of Lassa virus infection prevalence in rodents



## Results



- ❖ Overall trap success: 5.04 (285 rodents)
- ❖ 43% of trapped rodents were *Mastomys*
- ❖ 32% were male
- ❖ 8/211 specimens (5 rodents) Lassa PCR+ (oral & rectal swabs)
  - ❖ 4 rodents from a site with no previous reports of Lassa
- ❖ Specimens corresponding to 185 rodents are pending testing (rounds 2 & 3)

## Methods

- ❖ Trapping in 8 communities across three counties
  - 5 rural, 2 semi urban, 1 urban
  - 2 with reported Lassa cases in the past 5 years
  - 6 without reports of Lassa cases in the past 5 years
- ❖ Sherman traps were set in and outside the community as well as inside houses
- ❖ Trapping occurred in each community once per quarter for 4 quarters to capture seasonal fluctuations in rodent abundance and Lassa virus prevalence



## Benefit of the research

The results from the study will provide a critical opportunity to enhance countries' understanding of viral spillover and augment sustainable national intervention, such as working with the communities to co-design activities that will prevent Lassa fever.

Our Findings have allowed doctors to request further training on Lassa diagnosis.