



WEST AFRICAN HEALTH ORGANISATION
ORGANISATION OUEST AFRICAINE DE LA SANTE
ORGANIZAÇÃO OESTE AFRICANA DA SAÚDE



WAHO MONTHLY NEWS

January 2025

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NEWS





WEST AFRICAN HEALTH ORGANISATION
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West African Health Organization's New Year's Greetings Campaign for the Beginning of 2025 - December 2024



The West African Health Organization (WAHO) wishes you a happy new year 2025. May this new year bring health, progress and hope to our communities, as we continue together our mission for a healthier West Africa.



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Inaugural Meeting of the Governing Body of the Coalition Against Lassa Fever (EGCL) - Abuja, 16 January 2025



WAHO and the Federal Ministry of Health of Nigeria have convened the first inaugural meeting of the Lassa Fever Coalition Governing Entity (LFCE), marking a major milestone in the fight against this endemic disease that affects hundreds of thousands of people each year in West Africa...

Link: <https://x.com/OoasWaho/status/1880310733663269274>

Link: <https://www.wahooas.org/web-ooas/index.php/fr/actualites/reunion-inaugurale-de-lentite-de-gouvernance-de-la-coalition-contre-la-fievre-de-lassa>



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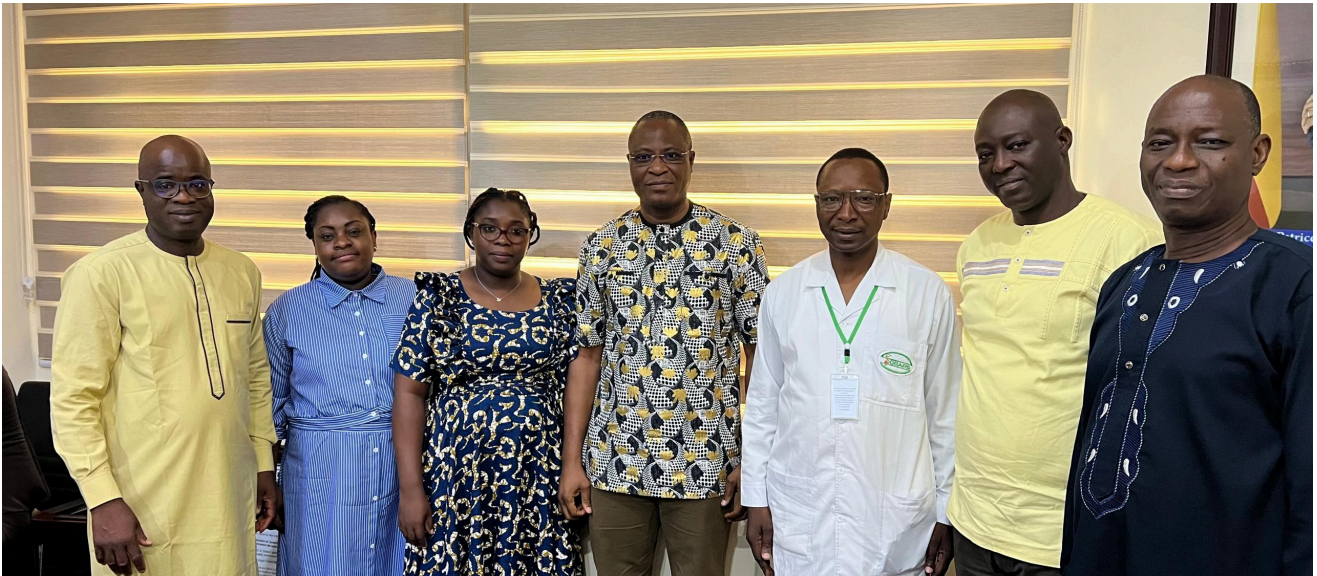
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Assessment mission of ECOWAS member countries on the preparation and response to the monkeypox (MPOX) epidemic - Benin, from January 20 to 24, 2025



WAHO, in partnership with several stakeholders, conducted an assessment mission to Benin from 20 to 24 January 2025 to analyse preparedness and response to the threat of the Mpox epidemic.

This initiative aimed to assess the effectiveness of the measures put in place, identify the challenges encountered and propose improvements to strengthen the response capacity to a possible epidemic outbreak.

The experts worked in collaboration with national authorities to share international recommendations, review existing public health measures, and analyse bottlenecks hindering the response. At the end of this mission, a roadmap was proposed to support ECOWAS countries in strengthening prevention, early detection and response to future epidemics.



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Assessment mission of ECOWAS member countries on the preparation and response to the monkeypox (MPOX) epidemic - Guinea, from 20 to 24 January 2025

WAHO also conducted the Mpox preparedness and response assessment mission in Guinea during the same period. This mission aimed to analyze existing systems, identify areas for improvement and propose recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness of health systems in the face of the epidemic.

Discussions with national authorities made it possible to share strategic recommendations and explore avenues for improvement to optimize response management. The mission also helped strengthen cooperation between WAHO and Member States, ensuring a coordinated and effective approach to emerging health challenges.

Beyond the fight against Mpox, this initiative is part of a broader dynamic of regional capacity building, enabling the countries concerned to improve their resilience to health emergencies and consolidate health security in the ECOWAS region.



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SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS





WEST AFRICAN HEALTH ORGANISATION
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Functional Simulation Exercise on the Functionality of National Public Health Emergency Operations Centers in the African Region: Review of Strengths and Gaps.

FUNCTIONAL SIMULATION EXERCISE ON FUNCTIONALITY OF NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTERS IN THE AFRICAN REGION: REVIEW OF STRENGTHS AND GAPS

Senait Tekeste Fekadu, Abrham Lilay Gebrewahid, Mary Stephen, Ibrahima Sonko, Wessam Mankoula, Yan Kawe, Zewdu Assefa, Olaolu Aderinola, Mathew T. M. Kol, Liz McGinley, Emily Collard, Tracy Ilunga, Vanessa Middlemiss, Paul Furtado, Timm Schneider, Alle Baba Dieng, Youssouf B. Kanouté, Otim Patrick Ramadan, Alice Lado, Chol Thabo Yur, Allan Mpairwe, Erika Garcia, Flavia Semedo, Jian Li, Womi Eteng, Ishata N. Conteh, Ariane Halm, Chuck Menchion, Emily Rosenfeld, Merawi Aragaw, Virgil Lokossou, Fiona Braka, and Abdou Salam Gueye

This study, published in **Health Security**, presents the results of a simulation exercise conducted on 6 and 7 December 2022 to test the functionality of **Public Health Emergency Operations Centres (PHECs)** in Africa. More than 1,000 representatives from 36 countries in the WHO African Region participated, including experts from WAHO, including Dr Virgil LOKOSSOU.

WAHO played a key role in providing its regional expertise and strengthening the evaluation of cross-border coordination mechanisms. The exercise showed that more than 90% of participants improved their understanding of emergency management and 95% of respondents gave a positive opinion on the experience.

The study recommends organizing such exercises regularly, at least once a year, to improve regional preparedness and coordination of responses to health emergencies, by consolidating collaboration between WHO, WAHO and regional partners.

Read the study: [MRHSJJ240039_Updated2.pdf](#)



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Rethinking the Methodologie of Global Indexes for Equitable Evidence-informe, Equitable Policy for Sustainable Development.

Rethinking the methodology of global indexes for equitable evidence-informed policy towards sustainable development

Kehinde O Ogunyemi¹, Chima Ohuabunwo², Virgil K Lokossou³,
Lionel S Sogbossi³, Simon Antara⁴, Tolbert Nyenswah⁵, Melchoir A Aissi³,
Scott McNabb¹, Senait Kebede⁶

This publication highlights the need to **review the methodology of global indices to better guide sustainable development policies**. It highlights the disproportionate impact of COVID-19, climate change and population growth on low-income countries and points out gaps such as lack of inclusiveness, data quality and limitations of rankings.

The contribution of WAHO, through its DG, Dr Melchior A. AÏSSI, Dr Virgil K. LOKOSSOU and Dr Lionel S. SOGBOSSI, is essential to understand the specific challenges of West Africa in the assessment and use of these indices.

The authors recommend a more equitable and inclusive approach to the design of these tools, with concrete improvements to optimize their relevance and impact on sustainable development policies.

Read the study: [jogh1403047.pdf](#)



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WAHO IN THE SPOTLIGHT





WAHO in the spotlight

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has implemented several health initiatives through its health institution, the West African Health Organisation (WAHO), aiming to improve health outcomes across its member countries. Here are some key initiatives:

1. Disease Control and Prevention:

- Ebola Response: ECOWAS played a significant role in the coordination of the response to the 2014-2016 Ebola outbreak, focusing on cross-border surveillance, response coordination, and community engagement.
- Mpox and Marburg Control: Enhanced surveillance and response strategies for emerging infectious diseases like Mpox and Marburg virus.

2. Health System Strengthening:

- Universal Health Coverage (UHC): Efforts to move towards UHC by improving health infrastructure, increasing access to essential medicines, and training health workers.
- Quality Health Systems: Initiatives to ensure quality in health service delivery, including accreditation of health facilities and standardization of health practices.

3. Vaccination and Immunization:

- Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI): Strengthening routine immunization programs to combat vaccine-preventable diseases.
- Lassa Fever Vaccine Development: Research and development support for vaccines against diseases like Lassa fever, which is endemic in several West African countries.

4. Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs):

- Programs to increase awareness, prevention, and management of NCDs like diabetes, hypertension, and cancers through lifestyle interventions and health education.





WAHO in the spotlight

5. Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH):
 - Initiatives aimed at reducing maternal and child mortality, improving family planning access, and enhancing adolescent health services.
6. Mental Health:
 - Strategies to integrate mental health into primary health care, reducing stigma, and increasing access to mental health services.
7. Health Security:
 - One Health Approach: Collaboration across human, animal, and environmental health sectors to address zoonotic diseases and antimicrobial resistance.
 - Cross-Border Health Threats: Enhanced regional cooperation to manage health threats that transcend national boundaries.
8. Capacity Building and Training:
 - Development of human resources for health through training programs, scholarships, and partnerships with educational institutions.
9. Health Information Systems:
 - Improving data collection, analysis, and dissemination for better health policy making and response to health emergencies.
10. Nutrition:
 - Programs aimed at reducing malnutrition, promoting breastfeeding, and addressing micronutrient deficiencies.

These initiatives reflect ECOWAS's commitment to a regional approach to health, recognizing that health challenges do not respect national borders and require coordinated efforts for effective management and improvement. However, the success of these initiatives often hinges on funding, political will, and the capacity of member states to implement policies effectively.





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