



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

PRESS RELEASE

Lomé, Togo, March 10, 2025

Annual Meeting of Data Managers for Epidemiological Surveillance Based on the One Health Approach in the ECOWAS Region.



Lomé, Togo, March 10, 2025 – The West African Health Organization (WAHO), in partnership with the Regional Animal Health Center (RAHC) and the Health Security Program for West and Central Africa (HeSP), is organizing **the Annual Meeting of Data Managers for Epidemiological Surveillance based on the "One Health"** approach within the ECOWAS region. This event, which underscores the regional commitment to effectively implementing the **"One Health"** approach, is being held in Lomé, Togo, at the Hotel 2 Février, from March 10 to 14, 2025.

Since the introduction of the District Health Information System, version 2 (DHIS2) in 2014, WAHO has encouraged data sharing related to epidemic-prone diseases across ECOWAS to improve the accessibility, availability, and dissemination of health information. This annual meeting brings together data managers to assess progress made, identify challenges, and strengthen collaboration in the use of epidemiological data.

Drawing on lessons learned in West Africa, including experiences from the COVID-19 pandemic, the global alert level for monkeypox (MPOX), and ongoing screwworm outbreaks, the meeting aims to achieve the following objectives:



PRESS RELEASE

Lomé, Togo, March 10, 2025

- Update information on epidemiological surveillance in member countries;
- Evaluate and enhance data surveillance dashboards;
- Propose strategies to strengthen coordination and data-sharing mechanisms among key stakeholders.

The event gathers approximately 60 participants, including representatives from member countries, human and animal health data managers, and professionals responsible for epidemiological reporting. The team from WAHO's Directorate of Planning and Health Information, which organized the meeting, was supported by representatives from the ECOWAS Regional Animal Health Center, a representative of the Directorate of Environment and Natural Resources of the ECOWAS Commission, and technical and financial partners.

The opening ceremony featured several key speeches:

Mr. Raul KOUAME, Program Officer for Climate Change and Climate Services at the Directorate of Environment and Natural Resources of the ECOWAS Commission, was the first to speak. In his remarks, he highlighted the importance of the "One Health" approach, which integrates human, animal, and environmental dimensions. He emphasized that the often-overlooked environmental impact is crucial not only to physical health but also to mental health. "A comprehensive 'One Health' approach is essential to address the health challenges of our region," he stated.

Dr. Hassane ADAKAL, Acting Executive Director of the Regional Animal Health Center (RAHC), focused his speech on the role of domestic and wildlife species in the emergence of zoonotic diseases. He reaffirmed the RAHC's commitment to continued collaboration with WAHO to implement a health information system based on the "One Health" approach, thereby facilitating informed decision-making.

Dr. Mamadou DIARRASSOUBA, Executive Director of the CRSCM, representing **WAHO Director General Dr. Melchior Athanase Joël Codjovi AÏSSI**, stressed the importance of strengthening regional health security. In his address, he declared: "The 'One Health' approach is an indispensable strategy to better prepare our region to respond to health crises." He also highlighted WAHO's role in regional coordination to ensure a rapid and effective response.

Secretary General Dr. Kokou WOTOBE, representing the Togolese Minister of Health, **Professor Tchin DARRE**, commended the initiative and reiterated Togo's commitment to promoting the collection and use of high-quality data to strengthen epidemiological surveillance. "Quality data is essential for developing effective and responsive health policies," he affirmed.



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

PRESS RELEASE

Lomé, Togo, March 10, 2025

Discussions focused on specific challenges, including:

1. Integrating environmental and animal health indicators into regional platforms.
2. Harmonizing workflows among WAHO, the CRSCM, the RAHC, and member states.
3. Strengthening the capacities of stakeholders involved in the "One Health" approach.

Data collected in 2024 identified 67 new outbreaks of emerging infectious diseases in the ECOWAS region, representing a 31.3% increase compared to 2023. The outcomes of this meeting will guide the development of a robust regional report, supporting strategic planning and data integration into national and regional systems.

This meeting represents a strategic opportunity to improve data quality, enhance early warning systems, and strengthen regional resilience to epidemics.

About the West African Health Organization (WAHO)

The West African Health Organization (WAHO) is the Specialized Health Institution of ECOWAS, established in 1987 to coordinate regional health initiatives in West Africa. WAHO works to harmonize health policies, pool resources, and foster collaboration among Member States. Its primary mandate is to improve health standards and strengthen health systems across the sub-region. Guided by its vision, WAHO strives to be a proactive driver of regional health integration, delivering high-impact and cost-effective health interventions for West African communities.

-----END-----

For more information and sponsorship, please contact:

- Email: wahooas@wahooas.org

Twitter: @Ooas_Waho Facebook: @waho-ooas