



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



# WAHO MONTHLY NEWS

February 2025

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# NEWS

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## WAHO commends Nigerian government for its robust response to Mpox outbreak - January 2025



The West African Health Organization (WAHO) expresses its appreciation to Nigeria for its effective management of the Mpox outbreak in 2024. The assessment highlighted the proactive measures taken by the government, including the rapid deployment of response teams, enhanced surveillance and access to vaccines. By the end of 2024, there were 1,484 suspected cases and 124 confirmed cases in 28 states...

Link: <https://x.com/OoasWaho/status/1887229899959656569>

Link : <https://www.wahooas.org/web-ooas/en/actualites/waho-commends-nigerian-governments-robust-response-mpox-outbreak>



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## WAHO on a supervision mission in Ivory Coast for the fight against Mpox - January 2025



The West African Health Organization (WAHO) carried out a supervision mission in Côte d'Ivoire at the end of January 2025 to assess progress in the fight against Mpox. This visit made it possible to note the progress of response activities, the use of funding granted to strengthen prevention and treatment efforts in the country, which has recorded 109 cases spread across 35 health districts since July 2024.

WAHO, a strategic and financial partner of the Ivorian Ministry of Health, was received at the Public Health Emergency Operations Center (COUSP) of the National Institute of Public Hygiene (INHP) in Treichville. During this meeting, Professor EKRA Kouadio Daniel, Director General of INHP, reassured the delegation led by Dr. Malick Coulibaly on the proper implementation of activities according to the response plan developed and adopted, thus demonstrating the effective collaboration between WAHO and national institutions in the management of this epidemic in West Africa.



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## WAHO Director General attends AREF 10th Anniversary - Banjul, 6-7 February 2025



Dr. Melchior Athanase Joël Codjovi AÏSSI, Director General of the West African Health Organization (WAHO), participated in the celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the Africa Research Excellence Fund (AREF) in The Gambia. During this event, he presented the WAHO Strategy 2024-2027 and participated in several strategic meetings aimed at strengthening collaboration for the development of health research...

Link: <https://x.com/OoasWaho/status/1889826078136606809>

Link : <https://www.wahooas.org/web-ooas/en/actualites/director-general-waho-dr-melchior-athanase-joel-codjovi-aissi-participates-10th>



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## Assessment mission of ECOWAS member countries on preparedness and response to the Mpox epidemic - Bissau, from 10 to 14 February 2025



The West African Health Organization (WAHO) conducted a monitoring mission to Guinea-Bissau from 10 to 14 February 2025 to assess the implementation of the Mpox Fund. This mission involved experts who conducted field visits and strategic meetings with national health authorities, ECOWAS, WHO and the chair of the steering committee. The visits covered key institutions such as the Ministry of Health, the National Institute of Public Health, hospitals (including the Military Hospital and the Cumurá Hospital), the Molecular Biology Laboratory and the health control system at the Osvaldo Vieira International Airport. This mission reflects WAHO's commitment to strengthening the capacities of ECOWAS member countries to respond to health emergencies, with a comprehensive report that will guide future regional actions against epidemics.

Link: <https://x.com/OoasWaho/status/1891564846782492883>



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## Liberia-Côte d'Ivoire Cross-Border Bilateral Meeting on Monkey Pox - San Pedro, February 11-13, 2025



The West African Health Organization (WAHO) organized a bilateral cross-border meeting between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire in San Pedro from 11 to 13 February 2025. This joint initiative with the Ministries of Health and National Public Health Institutes of both countries demonstrates the regional commitment to strengthen health security and improve the response to monkeypox in West Africa.

WAHO plays a central role in the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Cross-Border Strategy, aimed at strengthening cooperation and health diplomacy, while facilitating resource mobilization and pooling among Member States. Through this collaborative approach, the organization contributes to the establishment of more integrated and resilient health systems, the strengthening of disease surveillance and the creation of rapid response mechanisms, essential in a context where infectious diseases know no borders.



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## 60th Independence Day of the Republic of Gambia - 18th February 2025

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INDEPENDENCE DAY

REPUBLIC OF  
**THE GAMBIA**

FEBRUARY 18, 1965

**Dr. Melchior Athanase J. C. AÏSSI**  
Director General of the West African Health Organization (WAHO)

Wishes The **Gambia** a happy **60th Independence Anniversary** and celebrates the resilience of its people who perpetuate the richness of their cultural diversity along the banks of the Gambia River.

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## Ghana-Côte d'Ivoire Cross-Border Meeting on Monkeypox Outbreak - Takoradi, February 19-21, 2025



The West African Health Organization (WAHO) organized a cross-border meeting between Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire to coordinate the fight against the monkeypox outbreak. This initiative brought together various key stakeholders: health authorities, border officials, customs, security officials, animal health specialists, opinion leaders and technical and financial partners.

This meeting illustrates WAHO's multi-sectoral and collaborative approach to strengthening disease surveillance and improving outbreak response in West Africa. The objectives were to intensify cross-border collaboration, optimize the public health response to monkeypox and other infectious diseases, and develop an action plan for sustainable cross-border health security, confirming WAHO's central role in regional public health coordination.





# HEALTH DAYS





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**World Cancer Day - February 4, 2025**

## **United against cancer!**

Early detection and access to treatment save lives. Let's raise awareness in our communities and encourage good practices to prevent and fight cancer.

**Let's act now for a future without cancer!**

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February 4th marks World Cancer Day, an opportunity to raise awareness, prevent and take action against one of the most devastating diseases of our time. Cancer remains a major public health challenge, with millions of lives affected each year. However, thanks to prevention, early detection and medical advances, many cancers can be prevented or effectively treated.

This day reminds us of the importance of collective action to reduce risk factors, promote healthy lifestyles and ensure equitable access to care. Communities play a vital role in this fight: by informing, supporting patients and advocating for robust public health policies, they help save lives.

Let's commit to acting together, at all levels, for a future where cancer is no longer inevitable. Through local actions and global solidarity, we can make a difference.

**#WorldCancerDay #TogetherAgainstCancer**



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## International Congenital Heart Disease Awareness Day - February 14, 2025

### Early diagnosis makes all the difference!

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 INTERNATIONAL CONGENITAL HEART  
DISEASE AWARENESS DAY

14th February

**International  
Congenital Heart  
Disease Awareness Day**

**The smallest hearts need the greatest care!**

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**International Childhood Cancer Day - February 15, 2025**

## **Let's give every child the hope of beating cancer!**

Every year, thousands of children in West Africa are diagnosed with cancer. Early detection, appropriate treatment and psychosocial support are essential to increase the chances of recovery.

**Together, let's fight pediatric cancer!**

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On February 15, we celebrate International Childhood Cancer Day, a day dedicated to raising awareness and mobilizing against pediatric cancers. Thousands of children around the world and in West Africa are diagnosed with cancer, a difficult ordeal for them, their families and their communities. However, with early diagnosis, appropriate treatment and psychosocial support, many children can recover and return to a fulfilling life.

This day highlights the importance of community action and solidarity to improve the management of childhood cancers. Communities play a key role in supporting families, raising awareness of symptoms and advocating for equitable access to care and research.

Together, we can make a difference by offering hope and support to children with cancer and their loved ones. Let's take action for a future where every child, everywhere, has the chance to grow up healthy.

**#ChildCancer #TogetherForThem**





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## International Rare Disease Day - February 28, 2025

# Rare diseases, a public health challenge!

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 RARE  
DISEASE  
DAY

28th February

**International  
Rare Disease  
Day**

Together, let's support research and access to  
care for all!

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# WAHO IN THE SPOTLIGHT





## THE WEST AFRICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION: A STRATEGIC PLAYER IN THE MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH CRISES

The West African Health Organization (WAHO), a specialized agency of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), asserts itself as an essential pillar in the coordination and support of health initiatives across its 12 Member States, particularly in times of crisis. Its fundamental mission - to protect the health of the populations of West Africa - is structured around the harmonization of policies, the pooling of resources and enhanced cooperation between Member States.

### **The WAHO intervention framework in crisis situations**

Faced with regional health challenges, WAHO has developed a structured intervention framework based on five major axes:

1. **Regional coordination:** WAHO acts as a regional nerve center, aligning national health responses with technical support and adapted resources.
2. **Rapid deployment:** The organization facilitates immediate interventions, including the deployment of experts and medical supplies, often in collaboration with partners such as the World Health Organization (WHO) or the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).
3. **Capacity building:** WAHO works to strengthen health systems, before and after crises, through training and infrastructure support.
4. **Surveillance and preparedness:** The organization supports disease surveillance networks for early detection and rapid response to outbreaks.
5. **Resource mobilization:** WAHO relies on the political mandate of ECOWAS to secure funding and assistance from international partners.







## THE WEST AFRICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION: A STRATEGIC PLAYER IN THE MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH CRISES

### Major interventions and lessons learned

Over the years, WAHO has demonstrated its adaptability and leadership in several major health crises:

- Ebola outbreak (2014-2016): WAHO played a central role in coordinating the regional response, particularly in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. This crisis highlighted the need for more robust regional surveillance systems, leading to the establishment of the ECOWAS Regional Centre for Disease Surveillance and Control (RCDCS).
- COVID-19 pandemic (2020-present): WAHO led efforts for evidence-based decision-making, organizing regional workshops on diagnostics, surveillance and outbreak simulation exercises. It also distributed essential medical supplies and supported the development of guidance notes for Member States. This period demonstrated WAHO's ability to adapt quickly, while exposing funding and logistical challenges, particularly in reaching rural areas.
- Recurrent outbreaks (e.g. Lassa fever, Cholera): WAHO responded to frequent outbreaks of diseases such as Lassa fever and cholera by providing technical support and advocating for improved water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) policies. A key lesson was the persistence of weaknesses in the preparedness of national health systems, which WAHO seeks to address through long-term capacity building.





## THE WEST AFRICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION: A STRATEGIC PLAYER IN THE MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH CRISES

### Major interventions and lessons learned

- Mpxv outbreak (2024-2025): In the context of the recent Mpxv outbreak, WAHO was involved in the regional response, including supporting ECOWAS countries with \$100,000 per country. Its work with WHO and Africa CDC to distribute vaccines and strengthen laboratory capacity illustrates its growing role in planning for vaccine deployment.

### Strengths and challenges

- Strengths: WAHO's regional authority allows it to transcend linguistic and political divisions (Anglophone, Francophone, Lusophone states), and its partnerships amplify its reach. Its emphasis on simulation exercises and training has strengthened frontline preparedness.
- Outlook for improvement: WAHO is actively working to strengthen its financing mechanisms to ensure an efficient response to the health needs of ECOWAS populations. The organization is also engaging in strategic partnership with Member States to jointly develop national health infrastructure, learning from past experiences such as Ebola and COVID-19 to build more resilient systems.





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