

Enhancing regional collaboration for disease control in Nigeria

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Introduction

Nigeria continues to grapple with recurrent public health emergencies such as Lassa fever, cholera, and COVID-19. These outbreaks reveal persistent systemic weaknesses in coordination and response, particularly at regional levels. The need for integrated collaboration frameworks is urgent to enhance outbreak preparedness and mitigate future health crises.

Methods

A mixed-methods approach was employed, including desk review of outbreak reports, policies, and operational guidelines. Data were collected through focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and stakeholder consultations across Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. These engagements explored lived experiences, coordination structures, and challenges encountered during past outbreaks. Coordination mechanisms were analyzed to identify systemic gaps and opportunities for regional improvement.

Results

Findings highlighted poor inter-agency collaboration, fragmented response systems, weak surveillance data flows, and limited regional-level emergency preparedness. The analysis revealed

duplication of efforts, communication gaps, and uncoordinated funding mechanisms among stakeholders.

Conclusion

A Regional Disease Control Coordination Model (RDCCM) was developed to promote integrated surveillance, interoperable data systems, shared simulation exercises, and unified resource mobilization. Institutionalizing such a model can foster efficient, timely, and sustainable responses to public health threats in Nigeria. Regional collaboration offers a scalable solution for strengthening national health security.