

## **Advancing implementation of One Health approach in the ECOWAS Region: West African Health Organization key achievements in the past three years**

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### **Introduction**

The One Health (OH) approach is essential to addressing public health threats in the ECOWAS region, where human, animal, and environmental health are deeply interconnected. The West African Health Organization (WAHO) has championed this integrated strategy. This study presents the key achievements recorded over the past three years.

### **Methods**

A qualitative implementation study was conducted using data collected from 2022 to 2024. The study synthesizes outcomes from multiple regional and national activities, including strategy development, capacity building, and deployment of operational tools. Stakeholder discussions and workshops informed the findings. Narrative analysis was used to extract key achievements and lessons.

### **Results**

A key milestone was the development of the ECOWAS OH Strategy (2025–2029) and Governance Manual, providing a framework for intersectoral coordination. Capacity-building efforts included the ECOWAS OH Leadership Course, implemented in collaboration with the

University of Ghana and the Benin Regional Institute of Public Health, which trained 82 OH leaders. In addition, awareness courses targeted over 160 frontline professionals in Ghana, Guinea Bissau, and The Gambia. WAHO organized a Training of Trainers for the Tripartite Zoonoses Guide tools, including the Joint Risk Assessment (JRA OT) and the Surveillance and Information Sharing (SIS OT) and the Workforce Development (WFD OT) Operational Tools. WAHO conducted SIS OT implementation workshops in five ECOWAS countries: Mali, Guinea, Senegal, Nigeria, and Côte d'Ivoire between October 2023 and February 2025. The WFD OT was implemented in Côte d'Ivoire in November 2024. Despite these achievements, challenges persist in institutionalizing functional OH platforms, securing sustainable funding from governments and partners, and ensuring continued workforce development. Full operationalization of the Tripartite tools remains a priority.

### **Conclusion**

WAHO has made significant strides in advancing OH in West Africa by building strategic frameworks, enhancing human resources, and deploying surveillance tools. Sustaining these gains

will require strong political will, ongoing investment, and committed multisectoral collaboration.