

## **Strengthening the workforce: Drafting the ECOWAS regional FETP strategic plan, 2026-2030**

Mariame Bonkano Laurent Comlan<sup>1,&</sup>, Aishat Bukola Usman<sup>2</sup>, Virgil Kouassi Lokossou<sup>2</sup>, Kerton Richard Victory<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Economic Community of West African States Regional Center for Surveillance and Disease Control, Abuja Nigeria, <sup>2</sup>West African Health Organization, Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso, <sup>3</sup>Division of Global Health Protection, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, United States

**&Corresponding author:** Mariame Bonkano Laurent Comlan, Economic Community of West African States Regional Center for Surveillance and Disease Control, Abuja, Nigeria, **Email:** [m laurentcomlan@support.wahooas.org](mailto:m laurentcomlan@support.wahooas.org)

**Citation:** Mariame Bonkano Laurent Comlan et al., Strengthening the workforce: Drafting the ECOWAS regional FETP strategic plan, 2026-2030. *Journal of Interventional Epidemiology and Public Health*. 2025;8(ConfProc5):00306.

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.37432/JIEPH-CONFPRO5-00306>

**LINK:** <https://afenet-journal.org/strengthening-the-workforce-drafting-the-ecowas-regional-fetp-strategic-plan-2026-2030/>

**Received:** 31/05/2025 **Accepted:** 09/07/2025 **Published:** 07/08/2025

**Keywords:** Field epidemiology, Workforce development, One Health, Regional strategy

This is part of the proceedings of the ECOWAS 2nd Lassa fever International Conference in Abidjan, September 8 – 11, 2025

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### **Introduction**

The West African Health Organization (WAHO), through the Regional Center for Disease Surveillance and Control (RCSDC), collaborated with the US CDC and AFENET to conduct a one-day consultative workshop on November 8, 2023, in Mombasa, Kenya. The workshop brought together FETP country directors, coordinators, resident advisors, partners, and experts from ECOWAS member states. Its objectives were to analyze the current state of FETP programs in the region and propose strategic priorities for the 2026-2030 regional workforce development plan.

### **Methods**

Before the workshop, member states completed a situational analysis questionnaire. During the workshop, participants reviewed a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis of FETP programs and engaged in group discussions. These activities helped identify key regional strategies and activities for the 2026-2030 strategic plan.

### **Results**

Thirty participants, including representatives from all 15 ECOWAS countries and key partners, attended the workshop. The situational analysis revealed strengths such as strong capacity-building practices, One Health training, policy frameworks,

and university affiliations for advanced programs. However, weaknesses included poor documentation of best practices, weak resource mobilization, lack of FETP institutionalization, limited career pathways for graduates, and unstable funding. Key opportunities included AFENET's networking support, ECOWAS advocacy structures, university partnerships, and regional training centers.

### **Conclusion**

Despite challenges in FETP implementation, the workshop successfully identified critical strategies for strengthening workforce development in the ECOWAS region. Recommendations included improving documentation, securing sustainable funding, institutionalizing FETP programs, and leveraging regional partnerships for long-term success.