



**WEST AFRICAN (MONROVIA) WORKSHOP ON
POST-EBOLA GLOBAL REFORMS
THE WEST AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE**

28 & 29 July 2016, Monrovia, Republic of Liberia

FINAL COMMUNIQUE

The Liberian Ministry of Health and West African Health Organization (WAHO/ECOWAS) hosted a workshop to catalyze discussions and share perspectives of West African leaders and experts on key proposals for global systemic reforms in the wake of the Ebola outbreak. The Ebola outbreak exposed inadequacies in the global system's ability to protect the public – not only from the infection itself, but also from the far-reaching human, social, economic, and political consequences of disease outbreaks and other health emergencies.

In attendance were representatives from the Ministries of Health of Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone, regional and global inter-governmental organizations, humanitarian organizations, academics, civil society organizations, private companies, and funders. The meeting was spearheaded by the Ministry of Health, Liberia and co-organized with Chatham House and the Harvard Global Health Institute with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Big Win Philanthropies, and Rockefeller Foundation.

Workshop participants considered in detail, during study sessions in their own countries and finally in this forum, the items on the agenda of the meeting annexed to this communiqué. The deliberations were informed by a review of over 45 published analyses of the Ebola outbreak, and a synthesis of seven of these that met the criteria of taking a system-wide view and incorporating the views of multiple stakeholders.

We, the undersigned Ministers of Health,

1. We emphasize the importance of country ownership in the region, and alignment of partner agendas to support country priorities.
2. We call on all Member States to comply with their IHR obligations for early notification of potential outbreaks to WHO. And we call on the WHO Director General (DG) to ensure timely declarations of Public Health Emergencies of International Concern (PHEIC). We call on all Member States to respect WHO recommendations with respect to PHEICs.
3. We emphasize the importance of regional organizations, such as ECOWAS/WAHO, in supporting countries' response to health emergencies.
4. We call for the disproportionate impact of health emergencies on women and children to be recognized and addressed in future emergencies.
5. Recognizing the movement of populations across borders in our region, we call on regional and international actors to strengthen border health best practices.
6. Regarding the **International Health Regulations**: We the undersigned Ministers of Health:
 - underscore the importance of investing in building national core capacities to detect, prevent and respond to outbreaks
 - support joint external evaluation of national core capacities

- call for measures to stop unjustified trade/travel restrictions as agreed upon by all state parties in the IHR (2005). We call for stronger accountability mechanisms, frameworks for industry and partner collaborations, additional incentives for early reporting of outbreaks by countries. ECOWAS and WHO should play more active role in supporting countries to address unjustified trade and travel restrictions and countries should adhere to the regulations.

7. Regarding Knowledge, Data Sharing and Health Technology R&D:

- We concluded that developing and sharing effective community engagement strategies is critical for outbreak prevention, detection and response.
- We underscored the importance of investing in national scientific capacity to manage and conduct research
- The equitable management of Intellectual property rights and the principles in the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Framework should guide our collaborations within countries and international research partners.
- Measures needed to ensure (e.g. equitable access to drugs, vaccines, diagnostics and other technologies for most directly-affected populations)
- Research taking place in emergencies should be scientifically rigorous and ethical, and engage directly-affected communities. National authorities should have a stewardship role over research taking place within their countries.

8. On WHO and the UN System:

- We call on WHO and the UN to rapidly implement operational and institutional reforms that will ensure timely and effective responses to outbreaks and other health emergencies.

9. Regarding Financing, we concluded:

- Financing should be harmonized and aligned with country priorities.
- Improved coordination between funders is needed to ensure synergy and complementarity.
- Adequate financing from domestic and external sources, both traditional and innovative, are needed to invest in core capacities before, during, and after health emergencies.
- With regard to external financing, a larger proportion of financing should be structured as grants rather than loans.

To achieve the above-mentioned recommendations, we call for maximum support from all stakeholders.


11. We further call for consideration of these recommendations at the up-coming WHO AFRO and the ECOWAS Heads of States meeting that are slated for August and October, 2016 as well as other international meetings.


Done at Monrovia, 29 July 2016


Signatories


Dr. Bernice DAHN, Minister of Health, Liberia


Dr. Abdourahmane DIALLO, Minister of Health, Guinea


Hon. Zuliatu M. COOPER, Deputy Minister of Health and Sanitation, Sierra Leone


Professor Abdul NASIDI, Director of CDC/WAHO/ECOWAS, Representing the
Federal Minister of Health, Nigeria


H.E. Ambassador Babatunde O. Ajisomo, WAHO/ECOWAS