



Organise Response to Disease Epidemics Maintaining Routine Health Care

ORDER-HC

Duration

2017–2021

Budget/year

approx. 252,000 EUR

Partner countries

Guinea

Liberia

Sierra Leone

Challenges addressed by the project

Health crises such as the Ebola epidemic in West Africa (2014–2016) require rapid mobilisation of resources to manage the outbreak. When existing resources and measures are concentrated and re-allocated to cope with an outbreak, routine health care can be severely compromised. In addition, fear of infection among the population and health workers can reduce uptake and provision of health services. The consequences can include the undersupply of antenatal care and skilled birth attendance as well as treatment gaps for other diseases such as malaria. In addition to the serious effects of the epidemic itself, these shortcomings can lead to additional morbidity and mortality. The experience in West Africa shows that epidemics caused by high consequence infectious diseases have the potential to cause the collapse of an entire health system. During the recent COVID-19 pandemic, similar challenges are also experienced by health systems considered robust and well-resourced.

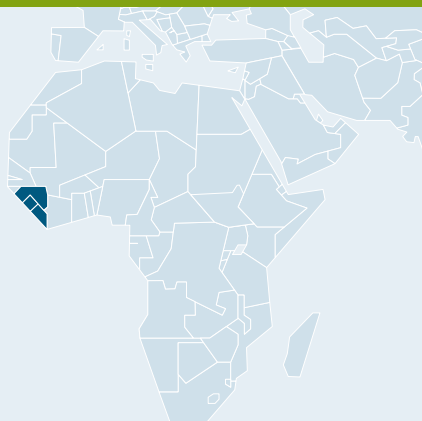
Objectives

Strengthening the resilience of health systems in West Africa in order to maintain routine health care during epidemics through:

- » Development of recommendations for maintaining routine health care during epidemics of high consequence infectious diseases through joint studies with local partners in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone
- » Capacity building of local partners in planning and conducting studies on health systems as well as data analysis and publication of scientific results
- » Recommendations for training curricula for health care professionals

Overview of activities

- » Workshops on health systems research and scientific methods
- » Literature study on side effects of the Ebola epidemic on public health and health systems in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone
- » Joint implementation of studies:
 - » Study on health care utilisation in the post-Ebola phase, in comparison to the use before and during the epidemic
 - » Study on strategies to maintain routine health care during the Ebola epidemic and subsequent epidemics of Lassa fever and SARS-CoV-2
 - » Study to assess health care worker awareness and risk perception of SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19
 - » Study on COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among the general population and health care workers in West African countries



Supported by:



Federal Ministry
of Health

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First workshop on health systems research and scientific methods with participants from Guinea and Liberia, January 2018



Preparation of the first study in Liberia:
Adaptation of the data collection instruments
to the local context, June 2018



Workshop on qualitative data analysis in Guinea,
March 2019 (Photo ©RKI / BNITM)



Data collection in a health facility in Sierra Leone,
September 2019

Photos (unless otherwise indicated) ©BNITM

Partner institutions

- » Santé Plus, Guinea
- » University of Liberia – Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation Africa (UL-PIRE Africa), Liberia
- » College of Medicine and Allied Health Sciences (COMAHS), University of Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone

Supporting institution in Germany/Contact

- » Bernhard Nocht Institute for Tropical Medicine
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