



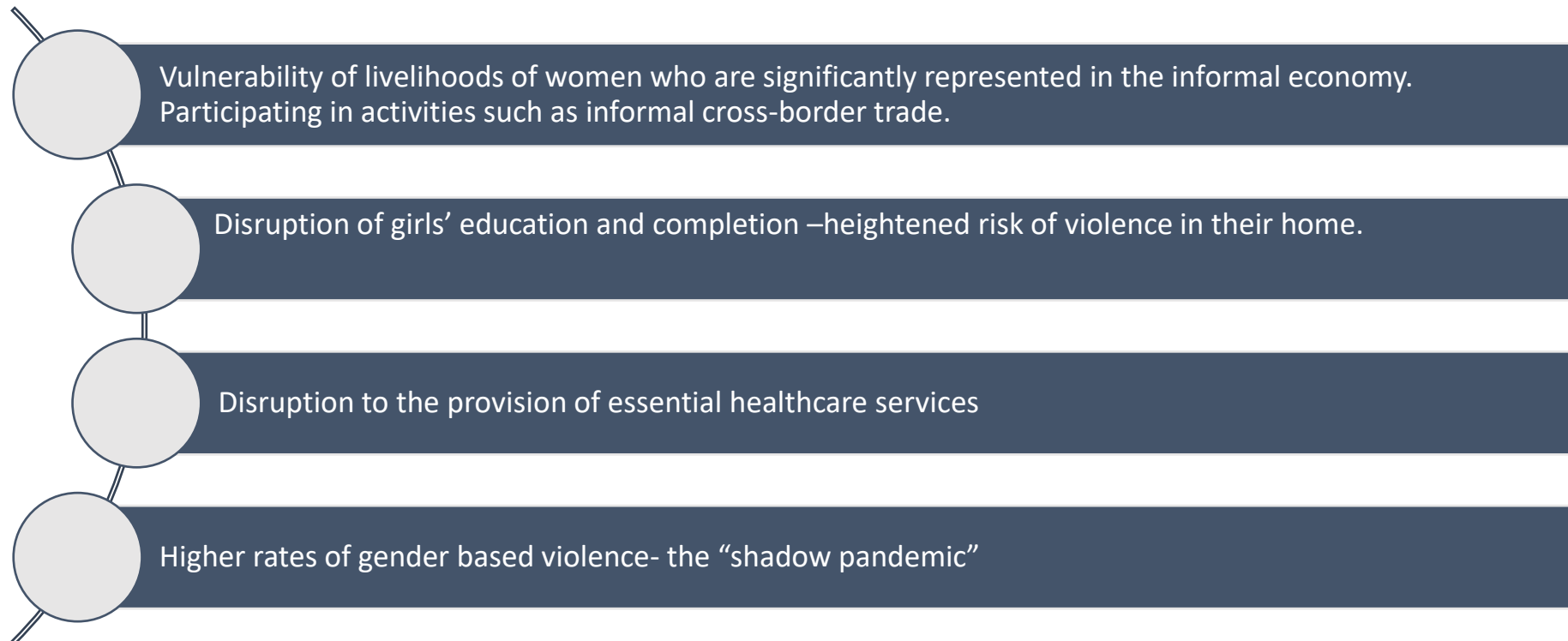
GENDER RESPONSIVE MECHANISMS FOR EPIDEMIC PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE IN ECOWAS

Overview of the ARC-BMGF Project

20 March 2023

THE CHALLENGE OF GENDER INEQUALITY AND ITS INTER-SECTION WITH PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES

- Africa’s challenge to rapidly and adequately respond to disease outbreaks is compounded by the continent’s existing gender inequalities. These inequalities amplify the impact of disease outbreaks on girls and women and deepen existing vulnerabilities.
- Delayed responses to outbreaks often result in extended restrictions on the movement of people and goods using strategies such as lockdowns, quarantines, and school and market closures as measures of containment.



Poor understanding of Gender and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) linkages at the policy and practitioner levels

Lack of institutional and individual capacity and tools to mainstream Gender and DRM

Lack of genuine political accountability and financial resources for advocacy and action on Gender and DRM

Marginalization of gender issues within organizations resulting in gender issues being treated as 'add-ons' rather than as integral components of DRM.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Support Economic Community of West African States countries to provide rapid and appropriate gender sensitive responses to outbreaks and epidemics in the region

28 November 2022 – 30 December 2023***

Objectives of the project

1. To improve health and disaster risk management capacities in priority ECOWAS member states to effectively manage outbreaks of epidemic and pandemic potential;
2. To support governments adopt inclusive and proactive approaches to effectively manage acute risks to global health;
3. To support governments to form gender balanced Technical Working Groups equipped with health emergency and disaster risk management skills;
4. To contribute to improved health emergency and disaster risk management capacities at community level;
5. To support Gender transformative financing mechanisms such as GTF and ARC's parametric insurance for high-impact disease outbreaks



KEY IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

Strengthening Epidemic Preparedness and Response Capacities in ECOWAS Member States and beyond



Expand on ARC's risk profiling tool to include more pathogens & set up a novel continental index – the Africa Epidemic Preparedness Index – to measure preparedness level in all members states for diseases of epidemic and pandemic potential



Build the capacities for surveillance, disease prevention, response and resilience to epidemics and other health emergencies in ECOWAS member states



Support regional capacities for epidemiological surveillance and outbreak response across the African region (risk assessment, contingency planning); and test the capability of a country to respond to a simulated event (e.g. Ebola simulation exercise)



Provide technical support and outreach activities on Polio virus in West Africa: risk assessment, outbreak modelling, and contingency planning



Plan of Work

Gender responsive mechanisms for epidemic preparedness in ECOWAS

OUTCOME	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMING
<p>Empowering ECOWAS Member States</p>	<p>Consultant to conduct the Gender analysis and collection of age and sex-disaggregated data of member state’s DRMF strategies and policies.</p> <p>Training on Gender and O&E for Public Health Practitioners.</p> <p>Incorporate gender-responsive strategies in technical assistance and support to member states experiencing outbreaks.</p>	<p>Empower member countries with capacity building skills and tools to manage outbreaks and epidemics through incorporating gender responsive strategies to outbreak preparedness and response activities.</p> <p>Ensure a gendered approach to capacity building.</p> <p>Build and work with Technical Working Groups (TWG) ensuring a gender balanced composition of the TWG.</p> <p>Help each country develop a gender sensitive contingency plan for priority pathogens and Polio</p>	<p>TBD by Member State</p>

OUTCOME	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMING
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Health outcomes for populations

Epidemic risk profiling and assessments on preparedness and capacity.

Epidemic risk modelling

Contingency planning to ensure rapid and adequate responses to reported outbreaks

Improve governments’ ability to manage and contain outbreaks and epidemics.

Minimize disruptions to routine healthcare services during an outbreaks event.

Strengthen and improve in-country healthcare services, especially for women and children.

Ensure ongoing collection of gender-responsive data and stats in participating countries to record the management of new threats.

TBD by Member State

OUTCOME	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMING
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Health outcomes for populations

Simulation exercise to test the capability of a country to respond to a simulated event (e.g. Ebola)

Build the capacities for gender transformative surveillance, disease prevention, response and resilience to epidemics and other health emergencies

TBD by Member State

OUTCOME	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMING
Economic impact of the project	National Policy Dialogue to disseminate results and recommendations of the gender analysis to policy makers. Basis for creation of Gender Transformative Fund (GTF)	Creation of a GTF to ensure there is direct impact at the micro and meso levels through support to communities.	
	Donors Round Table for the GTF.	Encourage Investment into O&E insurance as it is significantly cheaper than managing disease outbreaks from ad hoc funding sources.	TBD by Member State
	Support advocacy initiatives in favour of women representation in decision-making and an increase of national budgets for women and O&E.	Strengthening women’s economic empowerment and resilience building through the GTF as a micro-meso financing mechanism.	

OUTCOME	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMING
<p>Building gender awareness and facilitating transformation</p>	<p>Establish a national network of trainer of trainers on gender and O&E</p> <p>Training and capacity building on mainstreaming gender in O&E</p> <p>Advocacy and sensitization sessions at national level – Roadshow and Community Meetings</p>	<p>Sensitisation of member states on the importance of gender inclusion in managing disease outbreaks.</p> <p>Awareness raising at all levels (community, government) to influence behavioural change in regards to harmful practices against women.</p> <p>Reduction of the disproportionate adverse effects of containment measures on women.</p> <p>Inclusion of women in all interventions and processes by supporting women’s representation and participation.</p> <p>Promote continued access to healthcare services and resources (sexual and reproductive health, maternal healthcare and immunizations) during an outbreak.</p>	<p>TBD by Member State</p>

OUTCOME	ACTIVITIES	EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMING
<p>Evaluation and Learning</p>	<p>Special studies to share best practices and lessons learnt of gender mainstreaming in O&E among the ECOWAS countries to strengthen regional collaboration.</p> <p>Regional workshop to share lessons learnt and best practices.</p> <p>Through the Gender and DRM Platform established by ARC and AU, publicize case studies and policy briefs emanating from the regional lessons learnt.</p>	<p>Influence regional and continental approaches and mechanisms of gender in DRM in the perspective of O&E</p>	<p>TBD by Member State</p>



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