Post-Ebola Liberia: documenting the role of women in containing the 2014 Ebola outbreak

Florence Wullo Anfaara
Western University, fanfaara@uwo.ca

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The 2014 Ebola outbreak in three West African countries, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, killed over 11,000. About 43% of the total deaths were recorded in Liberia alone, bringing the fragile health system to near collapse. Liberian women were at the forefront of containing the outbreak. Yet little is known about women’s Ebola containment interventions or about the gendered dimensions of their work. Using a qualitative/quantitative mixed-methods approach, this study will document and analyze the strategies women employed to support Ebola containment efforts and assess how these can be built into emergency preparedness programs for future outbreaks. This study builds on my prior work on infectious disease and community well-being in Ghana and my participation in an ongoing research project with Liberian women that examines the relationship between peacebuilding and gender equality. Findings from this study will contribute to the pursuit of Sustainable Development Goals 3, 5 and 16.