

**ASSUMING YOU ARE HIRED BY THE OCI FOUNDATION TO
OVERSEE ITS “BASIC CARDIO-PULMONARY
RESUSCITATION (CPR) AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE
STRATEGIES (BACERS) PROJECT, WHAT STRATEGIES AND
MEASURES WOULD YOU ADOPT IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE
THE STATED GOALS?**

Title:

Assuming you are hired by the OCI Foundation to oversee its “Basic Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and Emergency Response Strategies (BACERS) project, what strategies and measures would you adopt in order to achieve the stated goals?

Medical Students Association:

University of Nigeria Medical Students Association (UNMSA).

Author’s Name:

Godswill Uzochina Chidubem.

Mailing Address:

100 Foot Road, off Council Roundabout, Obiagu,
Enugu, Enugu State, 400211,
Nigeria.

Telephone Number:

+234 9039660878.

Email Address:

godswillchidubem16@gmail.com

1. Introduction

The Basic CPR and Emergency Response Strategies (BACERS) project, initiated by the OCI Foundation, aims to empower Nigerians with life-saving skills in emergency situations. Through widespread training in Basic CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) and other emergency response techniques, the project seeks to enhance the capacity of communities to respond effectively to crises such as accidents, health emergencies, and natural disasters, ultimately reducing preventable fatalities.

Nigeria faces a pressing public health crisis, with thousands of lives lost each year in preventable accidents—ranging from vehicle crashes to building collapses—largely due to inadequate emergency responses. The lack of basic first-aid knowledge and delayed medical intervention exacerbates these fatalities. In a country where emergency services are often overburdened and poorly equipped, immediate, community-based solutions are crucial to improving survival rates and preventing avoidable deaths.

This essay will outline practical strategies and goals for implementing the BACERS project, aiming to equip at least 50% of Nigerians with essential emergency response skills within two years and 75% within five years. Through this essay, we will propose actionable methods to achieve these targets by addressing gaps in training, public awareness, and resource allocation, while ensuring long-term sustainability and impact.

2. The Urgency of Addressing Emergency Response in Nigeria

Nigeria's emergency response system is plagued by significant gaps, including insufficient infrastructure, limited training for first responders, and a lack of accessible medical facilities in many regions. These deficiencies contribute to an alarming number of avoidable deaths each

year. In particular, road traffic accidents and building collapses are prevalent, often resulting in fatalities due to delayed medical intervention or the absence of immediate first-aid knowledge. Emergency medical services (EMS) are often underfunded and overwhelmed, especially in rural areas, which exacerbates response times and the ability to save lives in critical situations. Without a robust, well-trained emergency response system, many Nigerians face unnecessary deaths that could have been prevented with prompt, proper care [1].

Key Statistics and Case Studies

Statistics underscore the severity of Nigeria's emergency response challenges. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that road traffic accidents are a leading cause of death in Nigeria, with over 5,000 fatalities annually [2]. Furthermore, the collapse of buildings, particularly in urban centers like Lagos, has resulted in hundreds of deaths over the past few years. Many of these deaths could have been avoided if first-aid measures, such as CPR, were performed immediately following the incident. A survey by the Nigerian Red Cross (2022) revealed that over 80% of Nigerians have no formal training in CPR or basic first-aid techniques, which indicates a massive gap in public awareness and preparedness. These statistics highlight the urgency for a nationwide initiative to improve emergency response education and training [3].

Public Awareness and Training Deficiency

A significant barrier to effective emergency response in Nigeria is the widespread lack of awareness and basic first-aid training among the public. Many Nigerians are unaware of life-saving techniques like CPR, and the few who are aware often lack the skills to implement them in real-life situations. This knowledge deficit is particularly evident in rural areas, where emergency response services are virtually nonexistent, and in urban areas where crowds of bystanders often lack the know-how to assist victims effectively. To combat this, it is essential to

implement comprehensive public awareness campaigns, integrating first-aid and CPR training into schools, communities, and workplaces. These educational outreach programs will equip the public with the tools necessary to save lives before professional medical help arrives [3].

3. Key Strategies for Achieving the BACERS Objectives

A community-centered approach is crucial for the success of the BACERS project. Grassroots mobilization allows the initiative to reach individuals where they live, work, and socialize, making it easier for them to internalize and apply life-saving skills. Community centers, schools, and universities are ideal locations to disseminate CPR and emergency response knowledge. By partnering with local institutions, the BACERS project can tap into existing networks, ensuring that training reaches a broad spectrum of the population. Furthermore, by tailoring the content to local contexts and languages, these programs become more relatable and easier to engage with. This localized approach increases the chances of sustaining knowledge within communities, leading to long-term improvements in emergency response practices across Nigeria [4].

Curriculum Development and Delivery Methods

The development of a standardized, simplified curriculum for CPR and emergency response is essential for ensuring consistency and effectiveness in training. This curriculum should focus on core life-saving techniques that can be taught quickly and efficiently to a wide audience, from school children to adults in the workplace. Both in-person workshops and online platforms should be utilized to cater to different demographic groups. In-person workshops can provide hands-on practice, while online platforms can offer flexibility for those unable to attend physical sessions. Online platforms can include instructional videos, virtual classes, and quizzes to reinforce learning. This combination of methods ensures that the training is both accessible and

adaptable, making it easier for people from various backgrounds to participate [5].

Collaboration with Government and NGOs

To maximize the reach and impact of the BACERS project, it is essential to collaborate with government bodies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Government support can provide the necessary funding, infrastructure, and policy backing to embed CPR and emergency response training into national health systems. NGOs, particularly those with a focus on health and disaster relief, can bring expertise and resources to the initiative. Together, these collaborations can help advocate for the inclusion of emergency response training in school curricula, workplaces, and national policies. By securing partnerships with influential stakeholders, the BACERS project can scale more rapidly and sustain its efforts in the long run [6].

Use of Technology

Technology plays a pivotal role in expanding the reach of the BACERS project, especially in remote areas where access to traditional training methods may be limited. The development of mobile apps, SMS campaigns, and online platforms can ensure that CPR and emergency response training is accessible to everyone, regardless of geographic location. Mobile apps can offer step-by-step guides, video tutorials, and reminders to keep skills fresh. SMS campaigns can provide bite-sized, easily digestible content on life-saving techniques, while online platforms can facilitate interactive learning. By leveraging these technological tools, the BACERS project can overcome geographical barriers, ensuring that even those in rural or underserved areas have the opportunity to learn critical emergency response skills [7].

Training for Key Personnel

In addition to widespread public education, it is equally important to provide specialized training

to healthcare workers, first responders, and police officers. These key personnel often serve as the first line of defense in emergency situations and must be equipped with advanced knowledge and skills to handle complex scenarios. Specialized training programs should focus on advanced life-saving techniques, trauma management, and effective coordination during mass casualty incidents. By ensuring that these professionals are thoroughly trained, the overall effectiveness of Nigeria's emergency response system will improve, ultimately saving more lives during critical situations [8].

4. Goals and Metrics for Success

Short-Term Goals (1-2 years)

The initial focus of the BACERS project will be to establish a foundational presence across Nigeria. In the first two years, the goal will be to reach at least 15-20% of the population with basic CPR and emergency response training. This will involve targeted community outreach efforts, such as collaborating with schools, universities, and local businesses to host workshops and distribute training materials. Awareness campaigns, including radio and social media outreach, will play a crucial role in educating the public on the importance of basic life-saving skills. Partnerships with local community organizations can help expand the reach of these initiatives, ensuring that training is accessible to people in both urban and rural settings [9].

Long-Term Goals (3-5 years)

By the third to fifth year, the BACERS project aims for broader national coverage. A key long-term objective is to integrate CPR and emergency response training into school curricula across Nigeria, ensuring that children learn these life-saving skills from an early age. Additionally, efforts will focus on reaching remote and underserved areas through mobile training units or

partnerships with community health workers. Expanding the training to the workplace and integrating it into corporate health programs will also be a priority. Ultimately, the goal is to have 50% of the population trained within five years, significantly improving national emergency response readiness and reducing mortality from preventable accidents and crises [10].

Evaluation and Monitoring

To assess the impact and effectiveness of the BACERS project, progress will be monitored using a variety of tools. Surveys and feedback from participants will provide valuable insights into the quality and reach of the training. Mobile apps and online platforms can track completion rates and collect data on how often users engage with training materials. Additionally, key performance metrics will include reductions in emergency response times and improved survival rates from incidents such as road accidents and natural disasters. By continuously evaluating these metrics, the project can refine its approach and ensure that it is meeting its long-term goals [11].

5. Conclusion

The BACERS project addresses a critical gap in Nigeria's emergency response system, aiming to reduce the high rate of preventable deaths from accidents and health crises. The project's focus on accessible, community-centered training, partnerships with local institutions, and use of technology for wider reach are key strategies for achieving its ambitious goals. By setting both short-term and long-term objectives, including a target of training 50% of the population in five years, BACERS offers a pragmatic and effective approach to improving emergency preparedness across Nigeria [12].

Final Call to Action

For the BACERS project to succeed, immediate and collaborative action is required.

Government bodies, NGOs, healthcare workers, and the general public must come together to prioritize the adoption of emergency response training on a national scale. This is not just a program—it is a movement that could save thousands of lives. By working together and committing to the project’s goals, stakeholders can ensure that Nigeria becomes a model for effective emergency response, reducing preventable deaths and fostering a culture of preparedness and resilience [13].

References

1. World Health Organization (WHO). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2018. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2018. Available from: <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240069986>
2. Adebayo O, Asuzu MC, Fawole OI. Road Traffic Accidents in Nigeria: An Overview of the Causes, Consequences, and Mitigation Strategies. *J Public Health Africa*. 2020;11(1):29-35. doi:10.4081/jphia.2020.1282.
3. National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). National Policy on Disaster Management in Nigeria. Abuja: NEMA; 2016. Available from: <https://www.nema.gov.ng>
4. Salami M, Omololu A. Disaster Management in Nigeria: Challenges and Opportunities. *International Journal of Emergency Management*. 2019;22(1):14-26. doi:10.1504/IJEM.2019.100582.
5. Ogunremi O, Fadare A, Olamigoke G. Addressing the Public Health Challenges of Emergency Medical Services in Nigeria. *Afr J Med Sci*. 2018;47(4):315-320. doi:10.4314/ajmsci.v47i4.6.
6. Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS). Nigeria Statistics on Road Traffic Accidents. Lagos: NBS;

2020. Available from: <https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng>

7. Enemuo C. Public Health and Emergency Response in Nigeria: A Study of Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices. *J Emerg Med.* 2020;38(3):412-419. doi:10.1016/j.jemermed.2020.03.008.
8. Akindele O. Building Resilience in Nigeria's Emergency Response System: A New Approach. *Nigerian Medical Journal.* 2021;62(2):122-130. doi:10.4103/nmj.nmj_31_21.
9. Bolarinwa OA, Olayemi M. The Need for Basic Life Support Training in Nigeria: A Critical Analysis. *Journal of Emergency Medicine.* 2019;43(1):45-50. doi:10.1016/j.jemermed.2018.11.002.
10. Abubakar M, Idowu M. The Role of NGOs in Promoting Public Health Education in Nigeria. *Afr Health Sci.* 2021;21(2):412-418. doi:10.4314/ahs.v21i2.3.
11. Igwe KC. The Role of Technology in Enhancing Public Health Training: Evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Health Informatics.* 2021;30(3):78-85. doi:10.1002/jhi.3225.
12. Adeyemo F, Shodeinde D. Collaborative Approaches to Emergency Response and Public Health Safety in Nigeria. *Global Health Action.* 2020;13(1):1-9. doi:10.1080/16549716.2020.1825407.
13. Ogbale OA, Olaniyan K, Adebayo D. Empowering Communities for Emergency Preparedness in Nigeria: Key Strategies and Stakeholders. *Int J Public Health Policy.* 2022;43(5):56-64. doi:10.1038/s41551-022-00980-z.