

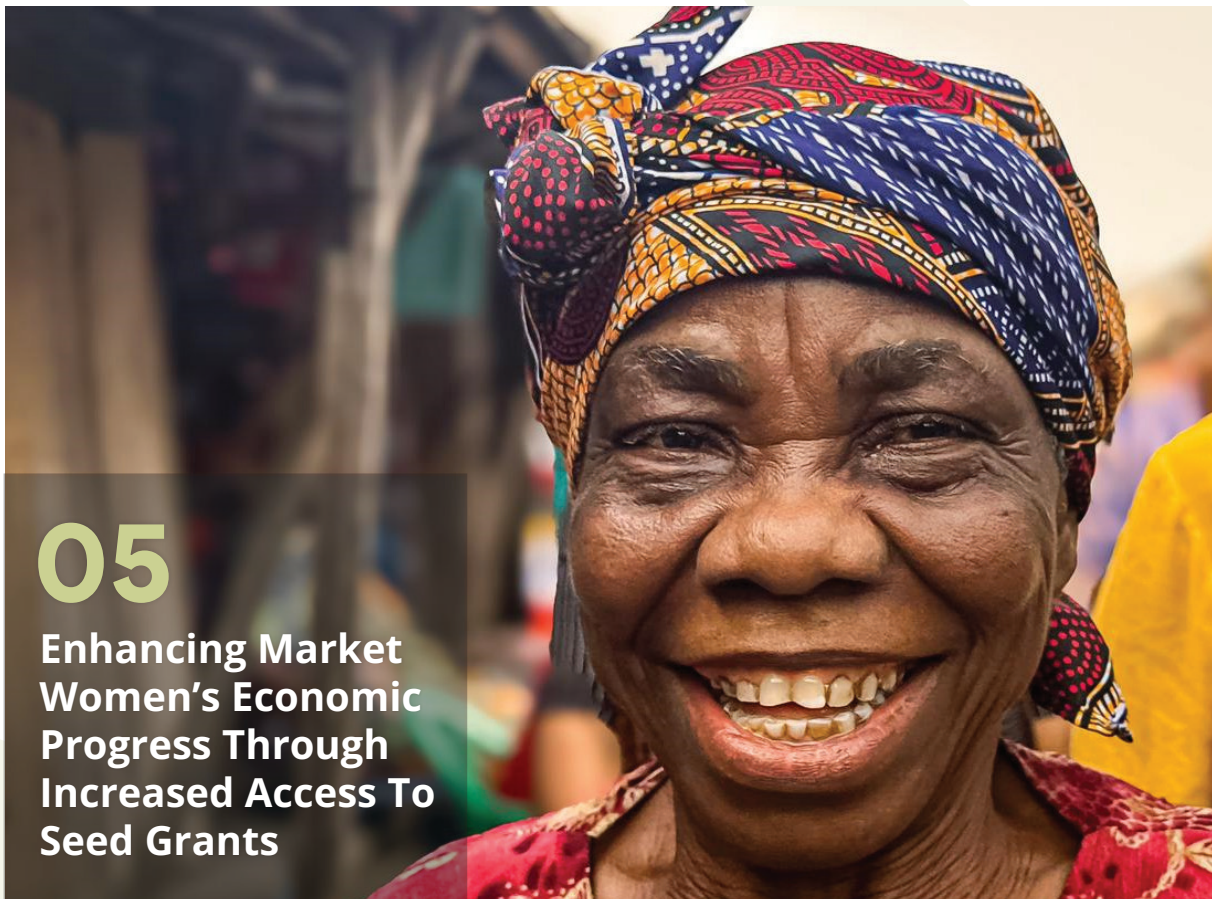
# ECEWS Rising



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## From the Editor-in-Chief



As we flip through the pages of another enlightening edition of our newsletter, I am filled with pride and thankfulness to observe our community's unwavering spirit in action. Each story, article, and activity highlighted on these pages exemplifies the unwavering commitment and passion that propel us ahead in our purpose.

This edition features inspiring stories of change-makers who are making a difference in the lives of many people, overcoming obstacles with fortitude, and paving the path for a brighter, more inclusive future. Their tales highlight the transforming power of compassion, collaboration, and determination.

We are also excited to share updates on our ongoing projects, upcoming events, and opportunities for you to get involved. Your support, whether through volunteering, donations, or advocacy, plays a crucial role in amplifying our impact and bringing about meaningful change.

As we navigate through these challenging times, let us remember that our strength lies in unity and solidarity. Together, we can create a world where every individual has the opportunity to thrive, regardless of their circumstances.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey. Your unwavering support and belief in our cause fuel our efforts and inspire us to reach greater heights.

Let's continue to stand together, uplift each other, and build a brighter future for all.

With gratitude,

*Andy Eyo*

Editor-in-Chief



## ECEWS Reinforces Commitment To Championing Equality In Vulnerable Communities Across Africa

We had a big experience in Akwa Ibom State. The U.S. Consul General Will Stevens visited, and was at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital (UUTH) where we joined the hospital management to welcome him. His visit highlighted PEPFAR's investments in growing local capacity to achieve sustainable control of the HIV epidemic in Nigeria. While in UUTH, Mr Stevens commissioned the three (3) newly installed Anility machines,

a 150KVA generator, and a 150KVA dedicated solar system at the UUTH Molecular Laboratory provided with funding from PEPFAR through USAID. Present at the ceremony were the Commissioner for Health Prof. Augustine Vincent Umoh, the Chief Medical Director of UUTH, Prof. Emem Bassey, the CEO of ECEWS, Dr. Andy Eyo, the Chief of Party of ACE-5 project, Dr Adeoye Adegboye, among other dignitaries along with some frontline healthcare workers.



## Validating the Functionality of AP3 Program in Osun State

**A**ccelerating Progress in Paediatrics and Prevention of Mother-To-Child-Transmission (AP3) program, a key component of the Sustainable Program for HIV Epidemic Control & Equitable Service Delivery (SPEED) project, is pivotal in closing treatment gaps for paediatric and adolescent populations and preventing mother-to-child HIV transmission in Osun State. Recently, Centre for Disease Control Atlanta and U.S. CDC Nigeria, along with ECEWS, collaborated to assess the impact of AP3 in Osun state. The review involved stakeholders from the State Ministry of Health, focusing on program progress, challenges, achievements, and interviews with service providers.



The visit included an in-brief at the ECEWS state office, site visits to health facilities, and a courtesy visit to the Osun State Commissioner for Health.

**C**entre for Disease Control team praised the AP3 program's setup and functionality, highlighting practices like community PMTCT testing, EID testing for infants, and strong community-facility linkages. Areas for improvement were also identified, such as enhancing treatment of Orphan and Vulnerable

Children collaboration and increasing viral suppression among Children and adolescents living with HIV.

The visit emphasized the importance of collaboration between CDC, State Health Authorities, partners, and healthcare providers. The findings and recommendations aim to guide Osun State in addressing challenges, building on successes, and strengthening (AP3) program, reflecting a commitment to improving paediatric HIV care, and Prevention of Mother-To-Child-Transmission services.

## Seed Grants: Enhancing Market Women's Economic Progress Through Increased Access To Seed Grants



Access to financial resources for women is a critical human issue, particularly in Nigeria. Since 2005, ECEWS has collaborated with Nka Uforo Iban, USA on an initiative to support women's empowerment and sustainable economic development in Nigeria, with focus on Akwa Ibom. This initiative has empowered over 200 ultra-poor women since 2015, across major markets in Akwa Ibom State, through seed grants and training on bookkeeping, savings strategies, and credit management. One of the key successes of this initiative has been the empowerment of women to support their households, fund their children's education, and enhance their business growth. This was evident during a monitoring and evaluation visit to Urua Mbakara Market in Ikot Ekpene by ECEWS and Nka Uforo Iban executives, where women shared their experiences learning from each other and supporting one another. ECEWS continues to distribute seed grants and monitor the progress of beneficiaries, as well as the impact of the grants.

# STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS AND CAPACITY BUILDING

ECEWS AND HELEN KELLER INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATE  
FOR NTD INTERVENTIONS IN AKWA IBOM STATE

**H**elen Keller International's acting Country Director, Dr. Aliyu Muhammed, along with the Director of Finance, recently visited our headquarters, where they congratulated ECEWS on becoming a registered member of the Non-Governmental Development Organisations (NGDO) Non-Tropical Diseases (NTD) coalition group. The team expressed their enthusiasm for partnering with ECEWS to support the state, following an extensive capacity-building program. Our CEO, Dr. Andy Eyo, highlighted our efforts in the fight to curb NTD. As a result, Helen Keller International plans to strengthen their partnership with ECEWS to facilitate the implementation of NTD activities in Akwa Ibom State. In response, the ECEWS ACE-5 Chief of Party, Dr. Adeoye Adegboye, expressed his gratitude to the visiting team for recognising ECEWS as a valuable partner. HKI appreciated ECEWS's active participation in NTD programs since 2022 and announced plans for sub-granting ECEWS to implement community-based preventive chemotherapy for Onchocerciasis in four endemic LGAs in the state. On a good ending note, the HKI team has committed to providing continuous mentoring and capacity building to the ECEWS NTD team throughout the proposed intervention.





# Revitalizing Moribund Boats For Improved Healthcare Access To The Creeks In Delta State

For communities living in flood prone areas, access to basic resources and opportunities is a perpetual challenge. Riverine communities lack basic infrastructure and services including healthcare with people making long journeys to get basic health services.

ECEWS in collaboration with the Government of Nigeria through the SPEED project funded by CDC, refurbished two neglected boats to support community care and treatment (CCT) in hard-to-reach areas of Delta State. The boats now serve as mobile health conveyors, providing healthcare services to over 500 people from 27 villages and communities. The initiative has increased trust between health workers and community members, enhancing the capacity to provide essential medical services to underserved populations in hard-to-reach areas.



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Rising



## ECEWS Unites With Stakeholders For NTD

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2024 WORLD  
NTDs DAY CELEBRATIONS

The essential need to strengthen health systems enables institutions in improving its capacity to deliver comprehensive healthcare to reduce disease burden, improves population health, and boosts multisectoral collaboration. This was the driving force as the ECEWS NTDs team actively participated in the 2024 World NTDs Day events themed "Unite, Act, Eliminate NTDs." Prior to the event, the Akwa Ibom State NTDs Coordinator and team paid a courtesy visit seeking support from ECEWS's CEO, Dr. Andy Eyo. To commemorate the day, there was a road show and carnival walk, covering major streets and markets in Uyo. Sensitisation flyers were distributed, carrying essential information about NTDs, while brief talks aimed to raise public awareness. Participants included representatives from various health organizations, academic institutions, and local communities.

The pursuit of social and economic justice is key in our efforts to improve the lives of vulnerable people in Africa. The CEO of ECEWS, Dr. Andy Eyo paid a courtesy visit to Justice Eno Isangedighi at the High Court in Abak Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, expressing gratitude to all luminaries serving humanity through the judiciary. The meeting highlighted our continued commitment to champion meaningful causes for equality and empowerment across the continent.

## ECEWS CEO, Dr. Andy Eyo Visits Abak High Court





# ECEWS Enhances Laboratory Capacities With New Centrifuges



Following the Needs Assessment conducted upon start-up of the US-CDC funded SPEED Project implemented by ECEWS in the 3 HIV Treatment, Care and Support program states of Delta, Ekiti, and Osun, it was observed that the capacity of select Health Facilities (HFs) to provide Viral Load (VL) services was hampered by incessant equipment breakdown, especially at high volume facilities. To address this, new centrifuges were procured and deployed to support Therapeutic Drug Monitoring of PLHIV clients on HAART. The US-CDC Nigeria Laboratory Branch provided technical assistance, recommending calibration of the equipment and securing service contracts and warranties. Presentations of the centrifuges were made to the state governments, with ten for Delta, eight for Osun, and six for Ekiti, aiming to improve VL sample integrity, processing, and reliability, ultimately impacting the quality of lives of PLHIV and contributing to HIV Epidemic Control efforts.

# ECEWS Enhances Lab Quality

Sustainability, Motivation, And Effective Job Aids In Delta State's Qms Training

Laboratory Quality Management System (LQMS) is an essential framework that ensures quality in all aspects of laboratory operations. In furtherance of this goal, ECEWS conducted a 5-day comprehensive QMS training in February 2024 in Asaba, Delta State, to build the capacity of Healthcare facility laboratory personnel, the State Quality Improvement, and Implementation Team (SQIIT) members, and other key state actors, in quality laboratory service delivery. The overall goal of the training was to create a culture of quality across the entire laboratory processes and

organizations. A total of 20 participants (10 M and 10 F) which included the SQIIT members, Laboratory QA officers from laboratories selected for accreditation, Directors of Laboratory at the State HMB & SMOH, and staff of the ECEWS-SPEED project were trained. The message was clear from the Director Laboratory Services ECEWS, – Nkemjika Uwakwe, to the participants at the QMS training “Say what you do, do what you say, and record what you did”. She also highlighted the importance of employee motivation in fostering commitment among staff, stating that “Motivated staff are committed staff.” The participants expressed enhanced knowledge and skills, and renewed commitment to quality laboratory services, not only in HIV/ART Services but in all laboratory services extended beyond the SPEED-supported facilities to all facilities in the State.





## ECEWS Commemorates World Tuberculosis Day 2024 With Theme “Yes We Can End TB”



## Upcoming Events

- ✦ **25 Apr** | World Malaria Day
- ✦ **01 May** | Workers' Day
- ✦ **27 May** | Children's Day
- ✦ **07 Jun** | World Food Safety Day
- ✦ **19 Jun** | ECEWS 23rd Anniversary





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