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# From the CEO's Desk



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 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*

Chief Executive Officer, ECEWS

# ECEWS Joins Akwa Ibom State to Commemorate 2025 United Nations International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking



On Thursday, June 26, 2025, the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) and the Akwa Ibom State Drug Control Committee commemorated the United Nations International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking at Ibom Hall, Uyo. The event's theme, "The Evidence is Clear: Invest in Prevention," highlighted the importance of evidence-based strategies in fighting substance abuse. ECEWS, represented by

Dr. Paul Otu, Senior Technical Advisor for TB/HIV, emphasized the centrality of prevention in its public health approach. Dr. Otu noted that ECEWS embeds prevention in every layer of its response, from lifestyle education to early detection and management of life-altering conditions. During the event, ECEWS partnered with the Hope for Family Development Initiative (HFDI) to conduct a free HIV testing outreach, providing services to over

103 individuals. The outreach aimed to raise awareness on HIV prevention and promote stigma-free access to testing services. The event featured a novelty quiz competition for secondary school students, reinforcing prevention messages and promoting academic excellence. ECEWS' participation reflected its commitment to multi-sectoral collaboration and community-centered public health.



## Empowering Rural Health: ECEWS collaborative Outreach in Osun State

As part of our commitment towards strengthening healthcare access in rural communities, ECEWS, in collaboration with the Jennifer Etuh Foundation and Pro-Health Impact recently conducted a comprehensive health outreach in Ifewara in Osun State. During the outreach, ECEWS provided crucial health services to the community, including free vital HIV, hepatitis and syphilis testing for more than 40 pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. We also offered HIV testing services to children and adolescents, a key step in early detection and care.

Beyond testing, we also delivered consultations, free routine medications, and MAMA packs containing essential baby items and diapers, and delivery items. Participants also benefitted from comprehensive health education and counselling sessions, fostering greater health literacy within the community.

This outreach underscores ECEWS's commitment to the triple elimination strategy for elimination of mother-to-child transmission (EMTCT). By providing integrated, patient-centered care, and community-centred care, we ensure that essential health support is accessible and tailored to the unique needs of the communities we serve.



## Partnership for Health: Rotary and ECEWS Unite to Improve Child Health Outcomes in Akwa Ibom State



Embodying the spirit of 'Service Above Self,' Rotary Club International South-East region took a monumental step towards improving healthcare outcomes in Akwa Ibom State with a delegation led by Former District 9142 Governor, Dr. Akan Emah visiting ECEWS Headquarters office to strengthen partnerships for better health outcomes through the Rotary Health Communities Challenge initiative. This initiative aims to combat preventable diseases such as diarrhea, pneumonia, and malaria among children under 5 years old within the selected six Local Government Areas of Eket, Onna, Oruk Anam, Nsit Ibom, Ibesikpo Asutan, and Ikono in Akwa Ibom State. The team, welcomed by Dr. Adeoye Adegboye, expressed interest in leveraging ECEWS's expertise to ensure successful project implementation, which will be led by PACT. The initiative employs a data-driven approach, utilizing community case management systems with digital tools for real-time monitoring and evaluation. Primary Health Care workers will also receive training to strengthen their capacity. Dr. Adeoye pledged ECEWS's support, stating the organization's willingness to collaborate and improve health outcomes in the selected communities. This collaborative effort is expected to yield significant improvements in healthcare delivery, ultimately enhancing the well-being of children and families in the targeted communities.

# ECEWS and FHI 360: Strengthening HIV Program Implementation in Delta State

ECEWS, through the SPEED project, in collaboration with FHI360, conducted a five-day Total Quality Leadership and Accountability (TQLA) technical assistance visit to selected health facilities in Delta State. The visit aimed to strengthen HIV program implementation through targeted technical support to improve data management, enhance the quality of ART service delivery, and promote mutual accountability.

The team, led by Dr. Ekele Ochedomi David of ECEWS and Dr. Bashir Malgwi of FHI360, visited four health facilities, comprising of Federal Medical Centre (FMC) Asaba, Kwale Central Hospital, Issele-Ukwu General Hospital, and St. Joseph's Catholic Hospital, Delta State. Commendable practices were identified, such as strong stakeholder involvement and integration of ART pharmacy. However, systemic challenges were observed, including poor documentation, weak data use practices, and stock-outs of essential commodities. To address these issues, the team provided real-time mentoring and recommended strengthened community advocacy, improved documentation and data management practices, targeted staff capacity enhancement, and enhanced commodity management.

In a related development, a team from the Division of Strategic Information (DSI) conducted a supportive supervisory visit to Central Hospital Warri on July 9, 2025. The team evaluated the usage of the Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system, the availability and application of national M&E tools, and the overall state of data quality systems within the hospital. The visit highlighted both strengths and areas for improvement, including concerns about data privacy and incomplete data entries. The team recommended immediate actions, such as redistributing underutilized tools, securing patient registers, activating critical EMR modules, and conducting a health informatics-focused data quality assessment.

ECEWS remains committed to strengthening HIV program implementation and improving health outcomes in Delta State. Through sustained implementation of theory-driven TQLA approaches and strong collaborations, the project aims to ensure optimal HIV program outcomes and support better health outcomes through improved information management practices.





# AviClaire Farms Expands with 6 New Greenhouses, Boosting Crop Productivity

AviClaire Farms, in partnership with Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), has recently procured an additional six (6) greenhouse structures as part of its ongoing expansion strategy to improve productivity and crop resilience in a controlled environment. The newly acquired Direct Current Electricity (DC) 8m x 48m greenhouse kits are designed to enhance efficiency and provide optimal growing conditions for a wide range of high-value crops. This expansion is a direct response to the overwhelming demand generated by the farm's initial four (4) greenhouse units. The success of those structures demonstrated the need for increased capacity to meet the rising expectations of customers and institutional buyers who rely on AviClaire Farms for consistent and high-quality produce.

The additional greenhouse structures will help the farm scale up production and ensure a more consistent supply of crops throughout the year, regardless of weather challenges. It will also improve crop resilience by reducing exposure to pests, diseases, and climate-related disruptions, ultimately leading to better yields and reduced post-harvest losses. Beyond productivity, the expansion is expected to create more opportunities for training, employment, and community engagement, particularly for youth and women.

AviClaire Farms continues to demonstrate its commitment to innovation, sustainability, and food security by investing in modern agricultural infrastructure and scalable models that can transform farming practices across the region.

This development marks another significant milestone in AviClaire's journey toward building a future-focused, climate-smart farming system in Nigeria.

# Strengthening Program Delivery through Knowledge Sharing: ECEWS and FHI 360's Conducts States Learning Initiative



ECEWS Knowledge Management team under the United States Center for Disease Control (US CDC) funded Sustainable Program for HIV Epidemic Control and Equitable Service Delivery (SPEED) Project, in collaboration with FHI 360, recently hosted the "Stakeholders Learning Forum 2025" in Osun, Ekiti, and Delta states, bringing together SPEED project stakeholders, including state government representatives, implementing partners, civil societies, frontline service providers, and people living with HIV. The forum aimed to strengthen program implementation through knowledge sharing and adaptive learning, providing a platform for stakeholders to reflect on recent experiences, identify successful strategies, challenges, and emerging lessons. Through interactive discussions and presentations, participants shared insights on effective program management, service delivery, and stakeholder engagement, highlighting areas for improvement and opportunities for growth.

The discussions fostered a safe environment for honest feedback on service delivery, stakeholder engagement, and program management, ultimately informing future decisions and enhancing the project's overall effectiveness. By documenting best practices and gathering insights, this knowledge management activity will contribute to a legacy of field-driven learning, supporting knowledge-informed decision-making and adaptive program management. The forum's outcomes are expected to inform future programming, enhance collaboration among stakeholders, and ultimately contribute to the project's sustainability and impact. ECEWS Knowledge Management team's efforts in facilitating this forum demonstrate its commitment to promoting a culture of learning and improvement, and its role in supporting the project's success.

DAY 1



DAY 2



# Akuku-Toru Community Embraces a New Dawn in Healthcare

The Akuku-Toru Community Health Insurance Scheme was officially launched on Friday, August 1, 2025, at the Model Primary Health Centre (MPHC) in Abonnema, marking a new chapter in accessible healthcare for the people of Akuku-Toru and surrounding LGAs.

The event, graced by dignitaries and community leaders, saw the presence of His Royal Majesty King (Dr) Disreal Gbobo Bob-Manuel (II), ESQ, JP, KSC, UN-MP, DSSRS Ekineye Gbobo, Owukori (IX), Amanayanabo and Paramount Ruler of Abonnema who was represented by High Chief Tammy Danagogo, former Secretary to the Rivers State Government, Mr. Igo Weli, General Manager, Relations & Sustainable Development, Renaissance, the Country Health Manager of Renaissance Africa Energy, Dr. Akinwumi Fajola, and other key stakeholders.

In his remarks, ECEWS CEO, Dr. Andy Eyo described the scheme as "a beacon of hope, equity, and resilience," highlighting its foundation in community ownership. The scheme is implemented by ECEWS and funded by the Renaissance Africa Energy Company, operator of the NNPC, Renaissance, TotalEnergies, and AENR

Joint Venture, and in collaboration with the Rivers State Government and with the esteemed Support of His Royal Majesty King (Dr) Disreal Gbobo Bob-Manuel (II), ESQ, JP, KSC, UN-MP, DSSRS Ekineye Gbobo, Owukori (IX), Amanayanabo and Paramount Ruler of Abonnema.

This initiative is the culmination of a year-long effort by ECEWS to engage with traditional leaders, youth groups, women's associations, religious institutions, and local government authorities. Their collaboration was crucial in shaping the scheme's design, governance, and delivery.

The scheme now delivers on its promise of affordable, quality healthcare for all, covering 141 health conditions, including malaria, hypertension, diabetes, minor surgeries, and maternity care.

The launch was complemented by a four-day outreach from July 30 to August 2, providing free health services, including free eye checks and dispensing of eyeglasses, dental care, HIV testing and counselling, laboratory screenings (Including BMI checks, Blood sugar, cholesterol, Malaria parasite, Hepatitis B & C, etc.),



DAY 3



treatment for minor and major ailments, deworming for children, distribution of long-lasting Insecticide Treated Nets (ITNs), pharmaceutical services and general medical consultations. Residents were also able to register for the insurance scheme on the spot, with over 1,200 people benefiting from the program.

To support the scheme, ECEWS upgraded the MPHC Abonnema with a 10 KVA solar system, a reverse osmosis water treatment plant, 84 essential medical equipment items, and a full stock of life-saving drugs. Strong governance structures have also been put in place, including a community health insurance board and two partner Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs), ProHealth and HealthCare International, to ensure sustainability and accountability.

With the continued partnership of Renaissance Africa Energy and support from the Rivers State Government and community leadership, the scheme is a model for sustainable, community-led health financing. This aligns with UN Sustainable Development Goal 3 for universal health coverage, ensuring that everyone, especially women, children, and the elderly, can access medical care without worrying about the cost.

ECEWS remains unwavering in its commitment to healthcare, digitalization, and underserved communities. With our partners and funders, we will continue to change lives and build a healthier future for Akuku-Toru, where no one is denied care because of cost.

DAY 4



# ECEWS Laboratory Team Supports Quality Management System Strengthening at UUTH

As part of its continued commitment to enhancing laboratory systems in Akwa Ibom State, the ECEWS ACE-5 Laboratory Team actively participated in a Quality Management System (QMS) meeting hosted at the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital (UUTH) PCR Laboratory. The meeting was a key step in aligning laboratory practices with Nigeria's national laboratory quality improvement agenda and strengthening systems that drive reliable diagnostic services.

The session convened key stakeholders to assess laboratory performance using the 12 Core Quality System Essentials (QSEs) framework. This provided a collaborative platform for performance evaluation, knowledge sharing, and strategy refinement aimed at sustaining excellence in laboratory service delivery across the state.

A major highlight of the meeting was a live demonstration by MLS Edikan Akpan, the Laboratory Technical Officer supporting the Ikot Ekpene cluster. Akpan showcased an innovative solution for retrieving viral load (VL) test



results directly from the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), addressing critical gaps where test results were not automatically syncing to facility dashboards.

This practical intervention enables timely access to previously unlinked results, improves turnaround time for test reporting, and enhances clinical decision-making and patient management. The demonstration received strong commendation and is now being considered for replication across other ACE-5-supported facilities to boost data visibility, reporting accuracy, and accountability.

Through this engagement, ECEWS continues to promote a culture of quality, innovation, and continuous improvement in laboratory services—contributing to stronger health outcomes and more resilient health systems in Akwa Ibom State.

# ECEWS Participates in Cross River State HIV/AIDS Annual Operational Plan (AOP) Development Meeting

Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS) joined key stakeholders in Cross River State during the recently held Health Sector HIV/AIDS Annual Operational Plan (AOP) Development Meeting. The week-long engagement provided a platform to review and align the state's FY24 HIV/AIDS response strategy through effective coordination and collaborative planning.

The meeting brought together representatives from critical health agencies and partners, including the State AIDS and STI Control Program (SASCP), Cross River State Agency for the Control of AIDS (CRSACA), Cross River State Primary Health Care Development Agency (CRSPHCDA), Ministry of Health (CRSMoH), Clinical Mentors, NEPWHAN, KNCV, Heartland Alliance, and AHF, among others.

A key highlight of the event was the comprehensive presentation of the 2024 HIV/AIDS AOP by Mrs. Mary Amah, the State AIDS Program Coordinator (SAPC). Her presentation outlined SASCP's 2025 strategic priorities and implementation framework, emphasizing targeted, evidence-based interventions to address thematic gaps in the HIV/AIDS response. The plan featured a range of actionable strategies aimed at accelerating measurable progress across the state.

The ECEWS team played an active role in group discussions centered on specific sector objectives, contributing insights to improve the quality and reach of HIV services. These sessions reinforced a shared commitment to structured, goal-driven collaboration in the state's public health response.

ECEWS remains committed to strengthening strategic partnerships and supporting sustainable health systems to achieve epidemic control in Cross River State.



## ECEWS Akwa Ibom State Team Hosts Capacity-Building Training for Riders and LGA Leads



Effective logistics and transportation are important for delivering essential services to remote areas. To address this, ECEWS ACE-5 team in Akwa Ibom State organized a two-day orientation and capacity-building workshop for project-assigned tricycle and motorcycle riders, along with their respective LGA Leads. The workshop, held from June 26 to 27, 2025, brought together 70 participants from across supported Local Government Areas (LGAs). The training focused on equipping participants with essential knowledge and practical skills to improve mobility operations and ensure seamless community-based service delivery. Key topics covered included user handling protocols, routine vehicle maintenance, safety and professional conduct expectations, trip authorization procedures, and compliance with audit requirements. The workshop addressed recurring operational challenges and provided hands-on guidance on asset care, documentation accuracy, and accountability in logistics management. By investing in this capacity-building initiative, ECEWS aims to strengthen operational systems and empower frontline teams to deliver timely, efficient, and accountable services across all supported LGAs.



## ECEWS' Advocacy for Sustainable HIV Care in Ekiti

The ECEWS Ekiti State leadership, spearheaded by Dr. Osilade Adewole, recently conducted an advocacy visit to the Honorable Commissioner for Health, Dr. Oyebanji Filani. The primary focus of this crucial meeting was to discuss the far-reaching implications of the U.S. Government's Policy on Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance (PLGHA) on ECEWS's PEPFAR-supported HIV implementation project in the state.

As a direct recipient of U.S. global health funding, ECEWS understands the critical need to fully comprehend and comply with the PLGHA policy. The policy explicitly excludes abortion services from funding, reflecting a stance against financial support for abortion within all supported health facilities. The advocacy visit provided a valuable platform for all stakeholders to engage in a constructive dialogue, clarify the precise policy requirements, and collectively explore strategies.

Our goal is to ensure full alignment with the PLGHA policy while simultaneously guaranteeing the continued provision of essential, life-saving health services to communities across Ekiti State. This proactive engagement is key to navigating policy changes and sustaining our vital work in HIV prevention, care, and treatment.

## ECEWS Participates in MIDC Monthly Development Partners' Meeting to Strengthen Coordination and Reporting

ECEWS ACE-5 team participated in the monthly Development Partners' Coordination Meeting convened by the Cross River State Ministry of International Donor Coordination (MIDC), held at the CUSO International office in Calabar. The meeting brought together key implementing partners to align ongoing state-level activities, foster collaboration, and highlight collective impact.

Discussions at the meeting focused on improving the timeliness and quality of partner reporting, enhancing the drawdown process, ensuring the active involvement of MIDC desk officers in partner-led activities, and the implementation of a unified tracker to streamline quarterly report collation across all development partners.

The Honourable Commissioner for MIDC, Dr. (Elder) Hippolatus Lukpata, commended partners for their continued contributions to the state's development goals. He announced the introduction of a rotational chairing system for future meetings to promote shared leadership



and ownership among partners. Dr. Lukpata also encouraged active participation and open dialogue to ensure inclusive and results-driven discussions.

As a key next step, MIDC plans to visit the ECEWS office for technical support in developing a functional reporting tracker—an initiative that underscores ECEWS' leadership in strengthening data management and performance monitoring systems.

ECEWS remains committed to fostering effective coordination and transparency across development initiatives in Cross River State, contributing to stronger partnerships and better outcomes for communities served.



## Strengthening Laboratory Accreditation Readiness at Immanuel General Hospital, Eket



ECEWS ACE-5 project State Laboratory Team recently provided targeted technical support to the laboratory unit of Immanuel General Hospital, Eket, to enhance the facility's readiness for national accreditation in alignment with ISO 15189:2022 standards. The support followed earlier site assessments that revealed several non-conformities within the laboratory's quality systems.

The ECEWS team delivered hands-on mentoring and technical assistance to strengthen both the technical and managerial components of the facility's operations, focusing on implementing a robust Quality Management System (QMS). Key areas of focus included developing and standardizing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), improving documentation control, enhancing internal audit procedures, and establishing effective incident reporting and corrective action processes.

A brief capacity-building session was also held to reinforce the culture of quality and define staff roles in QMS implementation. The engagement resulted in a stronger understanding of accreditation requirements and a renewed commitment to quality improvement. Follow-up actions, including remote mentorship and a scheduled mock audit, were agreed upon to sustain progress.

This activity reflects ECEWS' broader mission to strengthen laboratory systems and ensure the delivery of reliable, standardized, and high-quality diagnostic services.

## Leadership Engagement Drives Operational Excellence and Service Delivery in Lagos

Effective leadership engagement is essential for driving operational excellence and fostering a culture of collaboration and accountability within organizations. A pivotal visit by the ECEWS CEO to key stakeholders and facilities underscored the importance of such engagement in enhancing service delivery and staff motivation. The ECEWS CEO, accompanied by the Chief of Party and the Lagos lead team, conducted a productive visit that included a meeting with the Director General of the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) to discuss service improvement initiatives.



During the visit, the CEO also toured the NIMR lab facilities to gain firsthand insight into their operations. The CEO further engaged with pharmacists and lab scientists at the Pharmacy and Lab stakeholders' meeting, emphasizing the importance of effective drug management, minimizing stockout rates, and timely communication on commodity needs. Facilities were encouraged to proactively inform ECEWS of their requirements to ensure proper oversight and support.

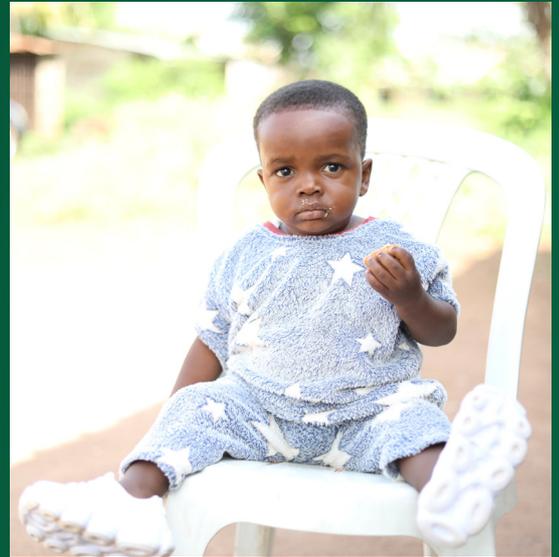


A highlight of the visit was the CEO's engagement with staff at the new Lagos State Office, which facilitated open dialogue and allowed staff to share operational challenges. These included limited pediatric support and delays related to customer relationship management (CRM) and insurance processes. The CEO encouraged staff to prioritize work-life balance, adopt innovative problem-solving approaches, and foster teamwork to enhance overall performance.

## RESTORING HOPE

**Modupe's Journey from  
Crisis to Stability  
through our Community  
Case Management  
Program**





Life had dealt Modupe a cruel hand. A widow and mother of four, she found her world crumbling when her late husband's family, citing baseless issues, wrenched three of her children from her embrace. To add to her anguish, they seized properties crucial to her small business, leaving her emotionally and financially devastated. The once-thriving noodle stand, her family's lifeline, withered, plunging them into destitution.

A concerned neighbor alerted the local health facility, where Modupe was receiving her ARV treatment, about the family's condition. During an initial home visit, it was revealed that Modupe's eight-month-old child was severely malnourished, weighing only 3.5kg. The severity of the child's condition triggered an urgent response.

Through the CDC-funded SPEED Project, Modupe and her child were enrolled in the Community Case Management Program (CCMP). A team comprising a dedicated caseworker and program officers conducted a Household Economic and Vulnerability Assessment (HEVA), which confirmed the family's critical need for intervention.

The child was referred to the Nutrition and Dietetics Department at Ekiti State Teaching Hospital, where a comprehensive health assessment and pediatric treatment plan were initiated. Emergency support, including a nutritional package worth N20,000, was provided immediately. Modupe received counseling on infant feeding and was closely monitored by the CCMP team to ensure proper follow-up.

Beyond nutritional support, the program also addressed Modupe's economic vulnerabilities. With a N25,000 business grant, she was able to revive her noodle stand, located conveniently near her home to allow continued caregiving. As her income stabilized, her child's health dramatically improved — from 3.5kg to 6kg — and moved from a red to yellow MUAC band, signaling significant recovery from severe malnutrition.

To promote long-term sustainability, Modupe was linked to a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) where she learned saving habits and was integrated into a supportive financial community.

Today, Modupe stands as a resilient mother and businesswoman, an empowered caregiver, and a symbol of how integrated community-based interventions — nutrition, health, and economic strengthening — can transform lives.

# Enugu State's Malaria Breakthrough: Last Mile Distribution Success



In a landmark effort to improve malaria control and treatment outcomes, the Enugu State Ministry of Health (SMOH), in collaboration with the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), successfully implemented the 1st and 2nd rounds of Last Mile Distribution (LMD) of malaria health products under the ISDB/ NMEP Malaria Project.

(Dec 2024 – Jan 2025)



Delivered full malaria commodity packages to

**547**

Health Facilities across **17** LGAs



## Key Products Distributed:



**402,141**

ACTs (Antimalarials)



**180,050**

mRDT kits (Rapid Tests)



**14,800**

Inj. Artesunate vials (Severe Malaria)

Round 2: Collaborative Model (June 2025)



Delivered full malaria commodity packages to

**547**

Health Facilities across **17** LGAs



## Key Products Resupplied:



**438,188**

Artemisinin-based Combination Therapies (Antimalaria)



**53,749**

Sulfadoxine-Pyrimethamine doses



**14,741**

Inj. Artesunate vials (Severe Malaria)

This LMD cycle stands as a model of best practice in malaria program implementation and offers scalable lessons for other states and public health interventions across Nigeria.

# Strengthening Resilience and Epidemic Control: Akwa Ibom State Develops Health Adaptation Plan

In a proactive move to build a climate-resilient health system, the Akwa Ibom State Government, in alignment with Nigeria's National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Framework, recently convened a three-day workshop from June 16th to 18th, 2025, to domesticate the Health National Adaptation Plan (HNAP). The workshop, supported by the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) Lafiya Programme, brought together key stakeholders, including the State Ministry of Health, World Health Organization (WHO), Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), and the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NiMet).

The workshop culminated in the development of the Akwa Ibom State Health Adaptation Plan, which outlines clear steps for integration into the state's Annual Operational Plan. The plan aims to address the impact of climate change on public health, particularly in areas prone to disease outbreaks such as cholera, malaria, and waterborne illnesses. These conditions can strain public health systems, disrupt HIV service delivery, and compromise medication storage. The domesticated HNAP prioritizes systemic resilience, including strengthening infrastructure, safeguarding cold chain systems, and improving disease surveillance and response capacity. It also emphasizes service continuity planning to protect vulnerable populations, such as people living with HIV (PLHIV), pregnant women, and children.

ECEWS, led by State Director Dr. Bala Gana, actively participated in the deliberations and was incorporated into the State Technical Working Group on Climate and Health. This solidifies ECEWS' role as a core technical partner, ensuring that HIV programming remains integrated into broader state resilience efforts.

By adopting the HNAP, Akwa Ibom State is addressing emerging climate threats while reinforcing its ownership and leadership in sustaining HIV epidemic control.





## Strengthening Emergency Response: ECEWS and AKISEMSAS Partner for Safer Communities

Effective emergency response systems are crucial in today's world, where emergencies expose glaring inadequacies in response systems that leave individuals and communities vulnerable to devastating outcomes. To bridge this gap, ECEWS recently hosted the executives of Akwa Ibom State Emergency Medical Service and Ambulance Systems (AKISEMSAS) at our Headquarters in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The AKISEMSAS delegation, led by the Acting State Coordinator, Dr. Jacob Etiemana, shared the agency's goal of expanding its reach into rural communities through strategic partnerships. Collaborating with organisations like ECEWS that work closely with primary healthcare centers, is key to this expansion. Having already carried out over 151 life-saving interventions since its

inception, between March and July 2025, AKISEMSAS partnership with ECEWS is both timely and crucial.

This proposed collaboration is multifaceted, aiming to significantly enhance emergency response in Akwa Ibom State, particularly in underserved and remote areas. The partnership will encompass capacity building for local responders, provision of essential delivery kits and referral guides, integration of robust emergency response systems into maternal health programs, and the adoption of ECEWS's proven referral system.

Dr. Andy Eyo, ECEWS Chief Executive Officer, who welcomed the guests, highlighted ECEWS's significant community infrastructure and our strong focus on first response. He

suggested that digital innovation and data-driven solutions could enhance AKISEMSAS operations, underscoring the potential for technology to revolutionize emergency response. Mr. Asukwo Etuk, ECEWS Chief Technical Officer and Administration Lead (CTO/AL), further recommended harmonizing efforts, establishing emergency hubs, and conducting community sensitization campaigns.

Looking ahead, a proposed webinar is set to kick-start public engagement and build capacity in emergency response across the state. By prioritizing emergency education in schools and continuous community sensitization, the partnership can raise awareness and preparedness, yielding significant benefits for residents of Akwa Ibom State.



## Enhancing HIV Case Finding Through Scaled-Up Distribution of Self-Test Kits in Cross River State



The ECEWS ACE-5 project team in Cross River State has significantly ramped up the distribution of HIV self-test kits. This expanded effort is a crucial step in improving HIV case finding and ultimately helping to control the HIV epidemic within the state. By intensifying the availability of these self-test kits, the team has greatly increased access to HIV testing services across 11 key facilities located in the northern cluster of Cross River State. This vital region encompasses the Local Government Areas of Ogoja, Yala, Bekwarra, Obudu, and Obanliku, reaching a broad population.

This strategic approach offers numerous benefits, making it considerably easier for individuals to access HIV testing. These self-test kits provide a way to test in safe, private, and convenient settings, which helps reduce stigma and encourages more people to learn their HIV status. If a self-test result is reactive, confirmatory testing is promptly provided by healthcare professionals. Crucially, those individuals who are confirmed positive for HIV are then immediately linked to care and initiated on life-saving treatment.

This comprehensive effort clearly demonstrates the profound effectiveness of community-focused and client-centered strategies in the fight against HIV. By prioritizing ease of access, privacy, and immediate linkage to care, the ECEWS ACE-5 project is not only enhancing HIV case finding but also significantly improving overall health outcomes for individuals and communities across Cross River State.



## Stakeholder Coordination Boosts Pharmacy and Laboratory Service Efficiency



A strategic orientation meeting was convened between the ECEWS ACE-5 project team and HUGINS HQ in Lagos State to foster alignment and synergy in pharmacy operations under the "One Team" approach. This meeting reinforced the importance of shared accountability in delivering high-quality HIV/TB services and highlighted the critical role of pharmacists in antiretroviral therapy (ART) initiation, differentiated service delivery (DSD), and adherence monitoring. Key focus areas for pharmacy leads included enhancing refill management, pharmacovigilance, and NHLMIS reporting, as well as improving pediatric and Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) services through the implementation of the Mother-Baby Pair diary system and the planned expansion of the Mentor Mother program.

In a complementary effort, a Pharmacy and Laboratory Entry Meeting was held to discuss strategic priorities, including reducing stockout rates, improving commodity needs communication, and optimizing viral load turnaround times. The meetings emphasized the importance of data accuracy and commodity accountability, with facilities assured of ongoing technical support from ECEWS.



# From Culture to Change: ECEWS at the Uyo Fashion Week 2025

The Uyo Fashion Week 2025 was more than a showcase of style—it was a celebration of identity, leadership, and bold ideas for the future.

The week kicked off with the Àsiàan Fest, a vibrant celebration of Akwa Ibom's culture, blending fashion, music, art, and food from across Nigeria. In the midst of the color and creativity, our CEO, Andy Eyo, delivered a keynote address on "Unlocking What Makes Leaders Truly Exceptional."

He spoke about leadership as more than holding a title. He challenged the audience to embrace empathy, design thinking, and innovation—tools that not only shape better leaders, but also better communities.

"Great leaders aren't just decision-makers. They're design-thinkers. They look at problems as opportunities, and communities as co-creators of change." — Andy Eyo



That message carried into Day 3, during the CEO Roundtable and Investment Summit, where Dr Andy shared the ECEWS story, how it started right in Akwa Ibom and grew into a national organization creating real impact in health and development across Nigeria.

His presence at Uyo Fashion Week was a proud reminder of our roots and the power of community-led growth. At ECEWS, we believe the same creativity and collaboration that fuels the fashion world can drive meaningful change in public health.

From the runway to rural clinics, from cultural festivals to policy roundtables—our mission remains the same: to build a healthier, more empowered future, starting from home.





## ECEWS at IAS 2025

At the International AIDS Society (IAS) Conference 2025 held in Kigali, Rwanda, the global HIV community convened to explore the evolving landscape of HIV response through the lenses of resilience, innovation, and equity.

ECEWS was privileged to participate through the IAS scholarship program, joining researchers, policymakers, implementers, and advocates from around the world in shaping the next chapter of the HIV response.

One of the most pressing topics at the conference was the impact of funding cuts on HIV service delivery. The withdrawal of major donor support, particularly the early 2025 cuts in U.S. Aid, led to significant disruptions across various countries. Nations like Mozambique and South Africa reported notable declines in ART initiation and HIV testing. The resounding call was clear: to protect hard-won gains, countries must embed HIV services within resilient, nationally owned health systems capable of withstanding financial volatility.

IAS 2025 also shone a powerful spotlight on African leadership in science and public health. The launch of the Africa Cure Consortium demonstrated the continent's growing influence in HIV research and innovation. The conference emphasized that Africa is no longer merely a beneficiary of aid—it is now a central driver of scientific and programmatic advancement.

Scientific breakthroughs in HIV prevention were also in the spotlight. Lenacapavir, now recommended by the World Health Organization, has proven to be nearly 100% effective in preventing HIV. A new access deal between Gilead and the Global Fund is set to make the drug available to 2 million people. Likewise, CAB-LA, a long-acting injectable PrEP, showed promising results in real-world use among adolescent girls in Zambia and has been confirmed safe for use during pregnancy.

The overarching message from these findings is that access to long-acting PrEP tools must urgently be expanded across Sub-Saharan Africa. Adolescent and pediatric care featured prominently as well. New data presented on broadly neutralizing antibodies (bNABs), adolescent ART strategies, and the integration of mental health services reinforced the need for youth-friendly, stigma-free approaches to HIV care. Ensuring that adolescents receive holistic care that supports both adherence and emotional well-being remains an essential priority. Another compelling theme at the conference was the growing role of technology in HIV programming. Innovations such as artificial intelligence, mobile diagnostics, and digital platforms like MARVIN are transforming how services are delivered, particularly among young people and key populations. The discussions made it clear that technology is not just a tool, it is a gateway to expanding scale, efficiency, and personalization in the HIV response. For ECEWS, participating in IAS 2025 was more than a professional engagement; it was an opportunity to reflect, learn, and recommit to our mission.

The conference reinforced our belief that innovation must go hand in hand with resilience and that sustainable progress depends on equity and community leadership. We return to Nigeria equipped with valuable insights, strengthened partnerships, and renewed determination to improve HIV service delivery across the country.

# Strengthening ART Service Delivery in Osun State

As part of our continuous commitment to strengthening HIV care and treatment across supported states, ECEWS SPEED project technical team recently conducted targeted technical assistance visits to selected healthcare facilities in Osun State and the visits were incredibly productive!

These visits were all about collaboration. Our team met with healthcare providers and staff at each facility, engaging in meaningful discussions about the challenges they face in delivering HIV services. We worked together to pinpoint specific issues, share practical solutions, and develop customized strategies. The goal was to boost the effectiveness of antiretroviral therapy (ART) implementation, streamline patient tracking systems, and ultimately improve client retention and overall treatment outcomes.

Beyond just problem-solving, these engagements also created a space for focused discussions and peer learning among the facility teams. This helped everyone gain a deeper understanding of the unique challenges and systemic barriers affecting ART service delivery in their specific contexts. Through these collaborative interactions, we were able to identify and prioritize sustainable, evidence-based, and patient-centered solutions that will make a real difference.

ECEWS remains unwavering in its mission to bridge service delivery gaps and enhance health outcomes. We achieve this by making data-driven decisions, fostering strategic collaborations, and consistently striving for continuous quality improvement. We're excited about the positive impact these efforts will have on HIV care in Osun State.



## A Brighter Future for Union Secondary School students in Akwa Ibom



Our CEO, Dr. Andy Eyo, recently paid an inspection visit to Union Secondary School, Ibiaku, to assess the progress of a major renovation project. This visit underscores ECEWS's commitment to creating a safer, better equipped, and more conducive learning environment for students. Dr. Eyo met with the school's principal, Mrs. Ubong Michael Akpan, who is also a proud alumna of the institution.

The renovation, which is now 95% complete, is being implemented by ECEWS with funding from the Bank of Industry and executed by Trans Sossa Nigeria Limited. The project focuses on three key structures:

the Fine Art Block, the Administrative Block (which now includes a clinic), and a classroom block comprising three classrooms, six lavatories, and two staff rooms.

Dr. Eyo expressed his satisfaction with the quality and pace of the work, reaffirming ECEWS's dedication to strengthening educational infrastructure. The principal, Mrs. Akpan, expressed her heartfelt gratitude for the remarkable transformation taking place at her alma mater. This project is a testament to the power of collaboration and our shared belief that investing in education is an investment in the future.

## ECEWS and IHVN Drive Nutritional Support for HIV Clients in Ebonyi

ECEWS team, with support from IHVN IN Ebonyi significantly expanded its nutritional supplement initiative to enhance the well-being of HIV beneficiaries, including pediatric and malnourished adult ART clients, to help them achieve viral suppression.

In line with this, the ECEWS Global Fund N-THRIP project team recently participated in a 4-day nutritional acceptability rate assessment led by IHVN. This assessment took place across four ECEWS-supported comprehensive care and treatment sites in Ebonyi State, focusing on measuring both the acceptability and nutritional improvement among clients receiving the Ulti-Meal supplement. The main goal of this assessment was to evaluate the practical acceptability and usability of Ulti-Meal in real-world settings.

By gathering both qualitative and quantitative feedback, the team sought to understand various factors crucial to the supplement's success. This included assessing taste, ease of preparation, perceived benefits, and any challenges encountered during preparation, consumption, or administration. This direct input is essential for informing potential product improvements, enhancing adherence strategies, and optimizing the overall effectiveness of the nutritional support initiative.

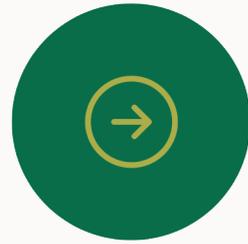
The assessment covered four carefully selected sites based on Ulti-Meal consumption: Alex Ekwueme University Teaching Hospital Abakaliki (AE-FUTHA), General Hospital Onueke, General Hospital Ezzamgbo, and St. Patrick's Hospital. A robust research

methodology was employed, featuring a sample size of 20 participants per facility. The team conducted direct physical interviews with caregivers and pediatric clients at the facilities, alongside phone call interviews to capture broader perspectives and consistent feedback.

The valuable information gathered from clients, caregivers, and pediatric patients during this assessment will enable the program unit to make informed decisions regarding commodity quantification and potentially recommend changes to the packaging and quality of Ulti-Meal. These improvements are all geared towards achieving an improved viral suppression rate within the program, further enhancing the lives of those living with HIV.



# A Second Chance at Life: The Story of Goodnews Sunday Michael





At just 12 years old, Goodnews Sunday Michael, a bright Junior Secondary School 2 student at Ikono Girls Secondary School Nung Ukim in Ikono LGA, Akwa Ibom State faced a future clouded by loss and illness. Having lost both her parents to an unknown illness at age five, she was raised by her elderly grandmother, a subsistence farmer in Ikono Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State. When Goodnews fell severely ill in March 2025, she was met with a high fever, persistent diarrhea, and drastic weight loss. Tests at the General Hospital Ikono revealed a dual diagnosis of advanced HIV and tuberculosis (TB). She weighed a critically low 20kg.

Despite beginning TB treatment, her HIV medication was delayed due to her weakened state. When antiretroviral therapy (ART) finally started, Goodnews's condition took a turn for the worse. She developed severe vomiting, confusion, and slipped into a semi-comatose state. With no money for transportation or hospital fees, her grandmother, who had also missed the window for the Akwa Ibom state's free health insurance enrollment, was left without options.

The Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS) team, through the USAID funded ACE 5 project, initiated a routine patient check-up. Upon learning of Goodnews's critical condition, the team immediately sprang into action. They rushed to her home, transported her back to the hospital, and covered her emergency costs.

Her condition continued to worsen, prompting an urgent and unprecedented



collaboration between the ECEWS ACE 5 team and the Government of Nigeria (GoN) healthcare providers. The hospital ward became a "war room" as clinicians from both teams, including GoN doctors, ECEWS's medical team (clinician, pharmacist, and lab scientist), and the hospital's leadership, gathered around her bed. Instead of just cross-referrals, they worked shoulder-to-shoulder, adjusting her medications, doubling her HIV treatment dose, and pushing for advanced tests. As Dr. Uchenna Akujobi, ECEWS ACE 5 Lead Clinician, put it, "Alone, neither team had all the answers. Together, we rewrote her fate."

After five intense days, Goodnews regained consciousness. She successfully completed her treatment, regained her strength, and was discharged with a new lease on life. She is now linked to an OVC partner, Centre for Clinical Care and Research, Nigeria (CCCRN), for continued support and care. Today, Goodnews is thriving, back in School.

Her story is a powerful testament to the impact of collaborative healthcare. As Dr. Akujobi reflects, "When government and NGOs combine strengths, patients like Goodnews don't just survive—they thrive." Goodnews's grandmother, who once feared history would repeat itself, can now see her granddaughter laugh and learn, a direct result of the relentless efforts and synergy between the ECEWS and GoN teams.



## ECEWS Partners with Osun State to Strengthen Public Health Commodity Supply

The Osun State Ministry of Health convened a stakeholders' meeting focused on improving the availability and distribution of essential medicines and public health commodities across government health facilities to secure the future of public health in Osun State. The meeting, chaired by the Director of Pharmaceutical Services, Pharm. Razaq Saliu, brought together representatives from the SMOH, Drug and Medical Supply Agency (DMA), implementing partners, and public health programs. Discussions centered on increased state-level support in public health products coordination, evaluating



current performance, addressing persistent supply chain challenges, and enhancing collaboration across public health programs. The meeting had presentations from the various public health programs, the state drug and medical agency, and implementing partners. The LMCU Coordinator, Pharm. Yetunde Ojewoye, shared progress on supply chain management and emphasized the need for stronger integration and sustainability.

The state Drug and Medical Agency launched its full operation in June 2025, including the distribution of essential medicines to state facilities. During this meeting, ECEWS presented key updates on stock availability, logistics performance, and programmatic interventions. Notably, the organization strengthened GeneXpert testing during the shortage of critical commodities such as TB LF-LAM. These efforts reflect the organization's proactive approach to program responsiveness. Challenges also addressed were the shortfalls in HIV rapid test kits (RTKs) and working with the state to address procurement needs through state-level interventions.

ECEWS continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting the state in strengthening the public health supply chain system through collaboration with stakeholders and improved accessibility to health commodities.





# Enhancing TB Case Finding in PLHIV Using CAD-PDX Technology

In line with the global End TB Strategy and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)'s goal to eliminate tuberculosis by 2030, the CDC, through the ECEWS-implemented SPEED Project, provided all the SPEED project implemented states with state-of-the-art portable digital X-ray machine (CAD-PDX). To ensure its effective use, ECEWS held a three-day training session for different pilot sites spread across Ekiti, Osun and Delta. Participants included key focal persons from selected facilities, radiographers, and the ECEWS team, who were trained in the operation and interpretation of the CAD-PDX system. These trained personnel will not only lead the activities at their facilities but will also build the capacity of other team members to ensure sustainability. This innovative equipment will improve early TB case detection among People Living with HIV (PLHIV) by providing rapid, high-quality imaging, enhanced with Artificial Intelligence (AI). With AI integration, chest X-ray results are available in under two minutes, significantly reducing diagnostic turnaround time. This represents a major step forward in closing the TB diagnosis gap among PLHIVs and underscores the vital role of technology in strengthening Nigeria's public health response. Together, we move closer to ending TB.

