

ECEWS RISING

AUGUST 2025 EDITION



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From the CEO's Desk

In this edition of our newsletter, we celebrate the resilience and determination that defines our community. We are honored to witness the unwavering spirit that drives us forward, and we are grateful for the opportunity to share the stories of change-makers who are making a meaningful impact. Every element, from impactful stories to innovative solutions showcased at the NISA 2025 Conference, highlights our shared commitment to creating a brighter future.

The NISA 2025 Conference was an incredible experience, where we showcased our efforts in driving sustainable growth through local action and innovative solutions. This edition features inspiring stories, such as Patience's Story of Overcoming Hardship: A Mother's Path to a Thriving Business, and ECEWS' collaboration with Lagos State on Sustainable HIV Care. These stories, along with others, highlight the transforming power of compassion, collaboration, and determination.

As we move forward, your partnership remains crucial to our success. Whether through volunteering, donations, or advocacy, every action counts. Thus, with heartfelt appreciation for your continued support, we look forward to a brighter future, fueled by our collective efforts and unwavering dedication to creating positive change.

Thank you

Chief Executive Officer, ECEWS



ECEWS Reaffirms Commitment to Health Sector Reforms at Stakeholders' Meeting

On August 25, 2025, the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS) joined the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Health, the Technical Assistant to the Honorable Minister for Health, Dr. Ashiru Abubakar, state health agencies, and leading partners including WHO, UNICEF, CCRN, HALG, KNCV, MSI, and the Red Cross at a high-level stakeholders' meeting convened by the State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Emmanuel John. The meeting, held at the Ministry of Health, focused on aligning development funding with the State's Annual Operational Plan (AOP) and the Federal Government's Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative (NHSRII).



In his keynote address, Dr. John emphasized the urgent need to end fragmented project implementation and called for coordinated efforts to strengthen primary health care systems. He highlighted the importance of embedding all partner activities into the State's AOP and improving transparency in drug logistics, with malaria programming singled out as a priority. He further stressed the adoption of harmonized reporting frameworks under the principle of "one plan, one budget, one report, one conversation." Dr. John commended ECEWS for its consistent contributions in support of the State Ministry of Health and encouraged partners to embrace systems, thinking for better health outcomes.



Presentations delivered by Dr. Ashiru Abubakar shed light on the NHSRII and the \$1.57 billion World Bank backed HOPE program, both of which aim to unify resources, strengthen governance, and ensure accountability to state-led priorities. For ECEWS, implementers of the United State Government funded ACE-5 project in Akwa Ibom, these reforms carry significant implications. The harmonization of partner activities under the State AOP aligns directly with ECEWS' approach to scaling HIV/AIDS interventions through stronger health systems. Emphasis on transparency, data triangulation, and facility integration reflects ECEWS' ongoing efforts to improve commodity logistics, enhance community engagement, and address human resource for health (HRH) challenges.



Speaking at the meeting, ECEWS ACE 5 project Akwa Ibom State Director Dr. Bala Gana stressed the need for stronger integration of health facilities. He also drew attention to cultural barriers affecting maternal health service uptake, citing the preference of many expectant mothers for traditional birth attendants over health facilities due to operational gaps. His remarks underscored ECEWS' unique field-level insights and reaffirmed the organization's commitment to ensuring health sector reforms translate into measurable service delivery improvements.



ECEWS welcomed the call for one unified plan for the health sector and pledged to align its operations, data systems, and resource utilization with the state-led AOP framework. The organization emphasized that these reforms present a critical opportunity to drive efficiency, reduce duplication, and accelerate progress toward epidemic control and universal health coverage in Akwa Ibom State.

Strengthening HIV Care: ECEWS, NASCP, and Data.Fi Completes Assessment in Cross River



We recently joined a blended performance assessment (BPA) visit to selected health facilities in Cross River State. The exercise, led by Data.Fi, the National AIDS and STIs Control Programme (NASCP), and the State AIDS and STIs Control Programme (SASCP), with support from the ECEWS ACE-5 team at the project HQ, assessed service delivery and government program integration across HIV-related services.

The assessment covered Dr. Lawrence Henshaw Memorial Hospital, General Hospital Calabar, and PHC Ekpo Abasi, focusing on key service areas including

advanced HIV disease (AHD), viral load monitoring, prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT), pharmaceutical services, enhanced adherence counselling (EAC), TB/HIV integration, and data management.

Several service delivery gaps were identified during the visit. These included missing GeneXpert results in patient folders, viral load samples for PMTCT clients collected outside recommended timelines, undocumented viral load results in maternal cohort registers, and knowledge gaps on AHD among government staff. Despite these

challenges, the team noted strong documentation practices and commendable staff commitment at PHC Ekpo Abasi.

To address the gaps, a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) plan was developed, focusing on root cause analysis and the implementation of change strategies. One immediate improvement introduced is the printing of multiple GeneXpert result copies to strengthen documentation. These measures are expected to enhance service quality, improve patient outcomes, and strengthen HIV program delivery across the state.



World Breastfeeding Week Commemoration

Breastfeeding is a fundamental and natural process that strengthens the bond between mother and child, ensuring optimal nutrition and laying the foundation for a healthier, brighter future. It is widely recognized that breastfeeding benefits not only the child but also the family and society at large. This year's theme, "Invest in Breastfeeding, invest in the Future," emphasizes the global call to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding. The week aimed to raise awareness on breastfeeding's lifelong benefits and to advocate for systems and environments that empower women to breastfeed effectively. The commemoration spanned from the first of August to the seventh of August 2025 and to mark the event, the ECEWS SPEED Project in Osun State facilitated by the Paediatrics and PMTCT Unit carried out sensitization and education sessions on the benefits of breastfeeding, the need for male partner involvement and the role health care systems play in improving breastfeeding. This activity was carried out across several high-volume healthcare facilities within the state at antenatal and immunization clinics to educate women and their partners on breastfeeding benefits, integrate education on breastfeeding for HIV Exposed Infants and promote exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life. The sessions involved interactions among the Government of Nigeria, Health Care Workers, pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and the ECEWS team. Government participation was strengthened, ownership and sustainability improved, knowledge on breastfeeding practices improved and certain myths associated with breastfeeding were addressed. This year's commemoration helped to deliver a hopeful future not only for children but for societies in Osun State.





Navigating a New Era: US CDC Leadership Visit Catalyzes Sustainable HIV Response in Delta State

Delta State's HIV response has taken a major step toward sustainability following a five-day visit by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in partnership with the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS). The visit, held from August 4–8, 2025, focused on service integration, health financing, and workforce absorption of three pillars essential for long-term program ownership.

In various meetings with state leaders, the CDC team emphasized the urgency of reducing dependence on donor funding. These discussions culminated in a major commitment from the Hospitals Management Board to absorb ad-hoc staff, beginning with four doctors and

twenty-one nurses currently supported by ECEWS. This pledge is part of a broader plan to recruit over 2,200 health workers into the state system.

The delegation also secured commitments to integrate HIV services into the broader health system, dismantling standalone programs to reduce stigma and improve efficiency. On financing, partners pushed for the expansion of state health insurance, building on the 2,000 people living with HIV. The week's engagements highlighted both challenges such as recent service disruptions caused by donor restrictions and solutions, with data-driven reviews sparking new strategies for retention and care quality. By the close of the visit, a clear roadmap had emerged: one that positions Delta State to build a resilient, state-led HIV response capable of withstanding future funding shifts while protecting the health of its people.

ECEWS & OHP Initiatives: Empowering Healthy Teens, Thriving Communities

To strengthen adolescent health education and equip young people with skills for a healthy lifestyle, Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme Incorporated USA (ECEWS), in partnership with Oral Health Program (OHP INITIATIVES), organized a two-day training for middle and high school students in Iowa City, Iowa, United States of

America, on September 13.

Guided by the theme "Healthy Teens, Healthy Communities, Healthy Future," the program built on a prior Training of Trainers (ToT) for facilitators and was designed to go beyond classroom instruction. Participants were empowered with practical knowledge and life skills

in areas such as adolescent health, informed decision-making, mental well-being, and oral care.

By equipping teens to make healthier choices today, the initiative is helping to shape individual futures, while also laying the groundwork for resilient families, stronger communities, and a healthier society at large.



ECEWS Advocates for PPPs and Innovation to Power Nigeria's Healthcare

The National Stakeholders' Dialogue on Power in the Health Sector, recently held in Abuja, brought together key leaders to address one of Nigeria's most critical challenges: ensuring a reliable power supply for healthcare facilities. Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS) was a key participant, sharing its vision for strengthening health systems from the ground up.

Our CEO, Dr. Andy Eyo, delivered a compelling address that moved beyond a simple list of problems to propose actionable solutions. While highlighting the immense financial and logistical challenges, he emphasized that a sustainable solution requires more than just government intervention. He called for a new era of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and innovative financing models, such as tax incentives, to unlock the resources needed to power healthcare. Dr. Eyo stressed that consistent power is not a luxury, but a necessity for core services like electronic medical records and modern diagnostic equipment.



At ECEWS, we understand that solutions must be tailored to the communities we serve. Our work goes beyond policy discussions; we are actively exploring and implementing scalable power models, such as solar energy, to ensure our community-level facilities can provide uninterrupted care. By advocating for partnerships that extend to Primary Health Centers, we are working to close the gap in access to quality healthcare for the most vulnerable populations.

This approach aligns with Dr. Eyo's call for a new, collaborative era where telecom and infrastructure companies partner with healthcare providers, creating a shared system of resilience. This dialogue was a vital step forward, reinforcing ECEWS's role as a key player in building a healthier, more sustainable future for all Nigerians.

Patience's Story of Overcoming Hardship

Patience, a 43-year-old mother of six, faced extreme hardship after her husband's illness left him unable to work. She struggled to provide for her family, and the situation became dire when three of her children had to drop out of school. Her life changed when the US CDC Funded SPEED project's Community Case Management program team identified her.





The weight of her family's survival rested squarely on Diojivre, Patience's shoulders. As a 43-year-old mother of six in Owhrode, Udu local government area, Delta state she watched helplessly as her husband's prolonged illness rendered him unable to work, plunging their family into a daily battle against immense hardship. "E no easy at all at all," Patience recalls, her voice still carrying the pain of those days. She constantly worried about where the next meal would come from and how she would afford clothes or school fees for her children. "Sometimes, I no even know where food go come from," she shared. The most devastating blow was when three of her children were forced to drop out of school. "My pikin dem no fit continue school, and my husband sickness dey worse. E pain me well well," she said, remembering the despair that had once consumed her.

A turning point arrived when the ECEWS SPEED project, a U.S. CDC-funded project, identified her through its community-based partner, the Vaccine Network for Disease Control (VNDC). A component of the SPEED project's Community Case Management program that focuses on providing sustainable income-generating activities (IGA). They recognized her fierce determination and enrolled her in the program, providing her with the training and resources she needed to start a business.

Patience began by selling iced fish. She worked tirelessly, learning to manage her small enterprise and meticulously saving every naira. Her unwavering goal was to purchase a wheelbarrow; a simple tool she knew would be a game-changer. "Dat wheelbarrow, e change everytin for me," she explained. "I no need to carry load for my head again, and I fit sell for di main market and sell for our area. Na dat time I know sey I go make am."

Patience expanded her business to include fresh vegetables, tomatoes, and okra. But the true measure of her success wasn't just in her profits it was in the profound transformation of her family's life. The very first thing she did with her new income was to send her three children back to school. "The first tin wey I do, na to send my three pikin wey don leave school go back," she said with a proud smile. "To see dem for dia uniform again, na dream wey come true."

Her success also meant she could finally afford proper medical care for her husband, providing him with the treatment he desperately needed. Patience's story is a powerful testament to how targeted support and a mother's unyielding strength can change a family's destiny. "I want make other women know sey small help plus hard work, e go better for everybody," she concludes. "Di SPEED project give me small push, now I dey stand on my own."

Strengthening Health Systems Through Strategic Mapping of Faith-Based Organizations in Akwa Ibom State

In alignment with the ECEWS ACE-5 project objective of enhancing the resilience, responsiveness, and accountability of the healthcare system, logistical support was provided to the Akwa Ibom State Agency for the Control of AIDS (AKSACA) for the implementation of the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA) NiFCOB-AIDS Initiative. This national program, operated by the Nigeria Interfaith Coalition Against HIV/AIDS, is designed to map Faith-Based Organization (FBO) health infrastructure across the country. This effort forms a crucial part of broader initiatives to strengthen FBO healthcare infrastructure and improve the quality of service delivery throughout Akwa Ibom State. The mapping of FBOs represents a foundational step toward understanding the services these facilities provide, their operational scope, workforce capacity, and existing infrastructural and resource needs. Faith-based facilities play a significant role in healthcare delivery within the state, often serving as the first point of access to care for many individuals and communities. By systematically identifying and documenting the capacities and gaps of these institutions, the exercise enables more effective planning, targeted resource allocation, and stronger partnerships for HIV response and other pressing public health emergencies. During the mapping exercise, specific attention was directed toward understanding how FBOs collect and report data, the tools they use to document services, and the skills and capacities of their staff. These insights are essential for strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems and aligning FBO reporting mechanisms with state and national frameworks. This process ensures that data generated by FBOs are accurately captured and effectively contribute to national HIV and health response indicators, thereby supporting a more integrated and evidence-based approach to public health intervention. Through these efforts, the initiative directly reinforces a healthcare system that is not only more resilient and responsive but also increasingly accountable to the communities it serves.





ECEWS Conducts Capacity-building Workshop for Frontline Workers in Osun State



In a strategic push to strengthen the quality of data and reporting within the Nigeria Medical Records System (NMRS), the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS) organized a focused, hands-on workshop session in Osun State. The workshop brought together frontline healthcare workers from high-volume facilities across the state. The training underscored the critical role accurate data plays in HIV care and achieving better health outcomes. With data serving as the backbone of effective decision-making in healthcare, ECEWS designed this session to equip participants with the skills needed to document and manage patient information with accuracy and confidence.

optimization and the use of the Advanced HIV Disease (AHD) algorithm. Participants also explored practical methods for improving the accuracy and timeliness of entries on the NMRS reporting. Participants not only gained valuable knowledge but also demonstrated significant improvements in practical skills.



More importantly, the training reignited a collective commitment among attendees to uphold data integrity and contribute to real-time, high-quality data reporting in their respective facilities. This capacity building effort represents yet another milestone in ECEWS's broader mission to strengthen health systems, bridge service delivery documentation gaps, and improve HIV treatment outcomes. Through continuous support, innovation, and collaboration, ECEWS remains at the forefront of transforming data into actionable insights, driving change from the frontlines of care.



Facilitated by a team of ECEWS technical staff, the training featured interactive technical sessions that emphasized TB/HIV service documentation, enhanced adherence counseling module

NASCP, IHVN, and ECEWS Assess MAT Services for PWID in Ebonyi State

Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), in partnership with the National AIDS and STIs Control Programme (NASCP) and the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN), conducted an assessment on Medical Assisted Treatment (MAT) for People Who Inject/Use Drugs (PWID) in Ebonyi State. The planned scale-up will provide PWID community members with access to harm reduction services against drug overdose and addiction. The MAT package includes Opioid Substitution Therapy (OST), Psychosocial Support (PSS)/Social Reintegration, Needle and Syringe Program (NSP), and integrated health services such as HIV Testing Services (HTS), PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis), and Antiretroviral Therapy.

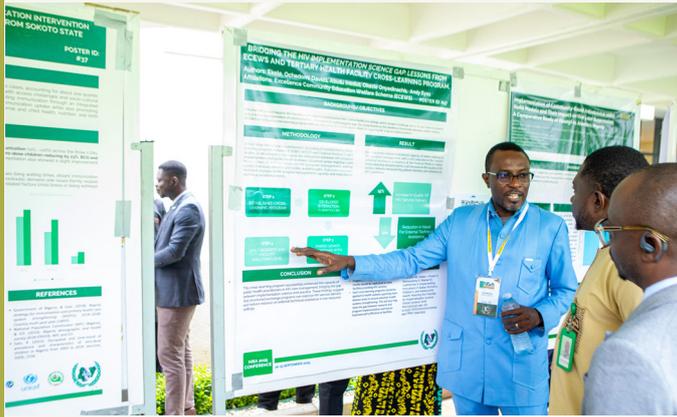


As part of the activation process, the team assessed targeted beneficiaries, friendly facilities that could serve as treatment hubs to prevent stigmatization and denial of services. Three facilities, Alex Ekwueme Federal Teaching Hospital, Abakaliki, One Stop Shop (OSS), and General Hospital Onueke, were evaluated to pilot MAT implementation.

Further visits from NASCP and IHVN teams are expected to finalize intervention standard operating procedures (SOPs) and rollout plans, ensuring improved service delivery for the targeted population under the ongoing Global Fund GC7 N-THRIP project.



ECEWS Shines at the NISA 2025 Conference!



Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS) made a significant impact at the NISA Conference 2025, demonstrating our leadership and innovation in implementation Science and healthcare service delivery. The conference was a platform for our team to share expertise, showcase successes, and connect with peers to advance a healthier Nigeria.



Our presence was felt from the very start. On Day 1, our CEO, Dr. Andy Eyo, participated as a panelist in a compelling discussion on the conference theme: "Sustainable Growth through Local Action: From Investment to Impact." He shared ECEWS's journey and community-level impact, highlighting our commitment to sustainable development. A major highlight was a special session titled "Building Resilient Systems for Impact and Long-term Sustainability," moderated by our Chief Health Officer, Dr. Okezie Onyedinachi. The session, feature distinguished subject matter experts panel discussions, explored critical topics in Nigerian healthcare, including community-driven solutions, public-private partnerships, digital technology and local funding. These discussions underscored our commitment to building sustainable and resilient healthcare systems.



Throughout the conference, our team delivered a total of twenty presentations, seven full oral presentations, twelve posters presentation and one plenary session covering a range of vital topics. We shared our findings on subjects like biometrics enhancement, improving on-time ART clinic visits, and enhancing TB screening efficiency. Our dedication and groundbreaking work were recognized with the 2nd Best Oral Presentation award, a proud achievement that reflects the quality and impact of our team's efforts.



Beyond the presentations, our conference booth was a bustling hub for connection and collaboration. Our team engaged with fellow attendees, exchanged insights on implementation science, and forged new partnerships. The conference was an inspiring experience for everyone at ECEWS, leaving us motivated to continue our mission of creating a healthier and more prosperous Nigeria.

ECEWS Inaugurates the Facility Management Team for the Akuku-Toru Community Health Insurance Scheme



The facility management team for the Akuku-Toru Community Health Insurance Scheme was officially inaugurated by ECEWS on the 13th of August, 2025 at the Model Primary Health Centre, Abonnema in preparation for service delivery following the formal launch of the scheme. This management team is comprised of the heads of all hospital units and is led by the medical officer in charge of the facility, with the records head of department serving as the secretary. The facility management team is in charge of the scheme's day-to-day operations, which include, but are not limited to, providing quality health services, ensuring proper financial management, interacting with vendors for smooth and transparent procurement processes, and ensuring client satisfaction whenever they access care at the health facility. ECEWS will provide oversight to the management team with support from the health maintenance organizations.

The facility management team is to meet monthly to examine significant issues affecting the scheme in order to better improve its operations and ensure client satisfaction. In this inaugural meeting, emphasis was placed on the need for transparency and accountability to ensure that all the management team members are involved in all scheme decisions, particularly that all operational processes adhere to the National Health Insurance Authority's operational guidelines. ECEWS remains committed to collaborating with the health facility in making sure that the residents of the Akuku-Toru Local Government Area and its surrounding areas have access to high-quality health care services.

Strengthening Viral Load Management in Osun: ECEWS Trains Laboratory Service Providers.



ECEWS, through the SPEED Project, conducted a comprehensive orientation on Viral Load Management to enhance HIV care and treatment outcomes in the state. The training brought together 39 laboratory service providers from supported health facilities across the state. The orientation focused on building technical capacity for VL sample collection, packaging, documentation, and improving turnaround time for results. Emphasis was also placed on strengthening sample integrity, data quality and promoting client-centered care through timely testing. Participants engaged in hands-on demonstrations, interactive discussions on the VL cascade and documentation tools, peer learning activities, and real-life case studies. These sessions not only improved practical skills but also fostered collaboration and shared commitment among laboratory personnel. With 24,851 persons currently on treatment in Osun, the training is expected to reduce sample rejection rates, expedite result delivery, and enhance coordination between laboratory unit and ART clinic. This orientation will ensure improved VL coverage, better client satisfaction, and more resilient systems for VL logistics and reporting. This intervention marks a significant step forward in Osun State's journey toward HIV epidemic control where every viral load test counts, because behind every sample lies a life and a future worth protecting.



Crashing Maternal and Neonatal Mortality in Akwa Ibom

From August 4–8, 2025, the Maternal and Neonatal Mortality Reduction Innovation Initiative (MAMII) State Activation Workshop was held at Four Points by Sheraton, Uyo. The 5-day co-creation workshop, themed "Accelerating Maternal & Neonatal Health through Smarter Tools & Stronger Processes", convened key stakeholders from the Akwa Ibom State Government, Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (FMoH), NPHCDA, NHIA, NEMSAS, State MDAs, and implementing partners to align strategies for reducing preventable maternal and neonatal deaths.

On August 5, participants conducted field visits to health facilities in Uruan and Uyo LGAs, engaging with frontline health workers to assess service delivery, identify gaps, and review opportunities for system strengthening. Insights from the visits enriched workshop deliberations, particularly on addressing the "five critical delays" in maternal care through data-driven, community-based,

and sustainable interventions.

A major highlight of the workshop was the activation of four health facilities to provide free caesarean sections for pregnant women under the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund. Speaking on behalf of all implementing partners, ECEWS State Director, Dr. Bala Gana, commended the prioritization of 13 high-burden LGAs and called for bold, collaborative action. He stressed that the outcomes of the workshop must serve as a blueprint for lasting change, ensuring no woman dies while giving life and no child is lost to preventable causes.

Through its participation, ECEWS reinforced its commitment under the ACE-5 project to advancing maternal and child health in Akwa Ibom State, contributing to the shared vision of safer pregnancies, healthier births, and stronger health systems.



Meeting with U.S. Department of State Health Assistance Office on Strengthening HIV and TB Programs in Lagos State

On the 4th of August, ECEWS participated in a collaborative session with the U.S. Department of State Health Assistance Office, U.S. Government partners, and key stakeholders (DataFi, CCRN, Heartland Alliance) to review HIV and TB programs in Lagos State. The event was attended by our CEO Dr. Andy Enyo, Chief of Party Dr. Adeoye Adegboye, Deputy Chief of Party Dr. Otoyoye Toyo, Senior Technical Advisor Care & Treatment for Lagos State, Dr. JohnPaul Mbah and several reputable members of our distinguished organization.

In a presentation by Dr Otoyoye and Dr Adeoye, ECEWS highlighted its work across 11 LGAs and 55 facilities, supporting nearly 50% of Lagos ART patients, with progress in case finding, differentiated service delivery, and reducing pediatric/adolescent treatment interruptions. They noted significant progress since the resumption of activities, post the temporary work stoppage. HIV case finding has improved across the supported facilities.

The team also paid a courtesy visit to the Lagos State Ministry of Health and LSACA (Lagos State Agency for Control of Aids) to announce the program's transition to the U.S. Department of State and strengthen collaboration on sustainability. Discussions emphasized local capacity-building, procurement autonomy, service integration, equitable access, and embedding HIV services into the state health system, reaffirming ECEWS's commitment to long-term, people-centered sustainability beyond donor support.





ECEWS Participates in NSHIP Onboarding Advocacy Visits in Osun State

ECEWS joined the Nigeria Sustainability HIV Impact Project (NSHIP) during its onboarding advocacy visits to Osun State. NSHIP, a federal government initiative currently operational in 12 states, aims to strengthen leadership, governance, health service delivery, strategic information systems, and human resources for health (HRH) across all levels of the health system. The ECEWS and NSHIP teams paid strategic advocacy visits to the Permanent secretary Hospitals Management Board - Dr. Abayomi Oni; Executive Secretary Osun state Primary Healthcare Development Board – Dr. Oluwole Fabiyi; Executive Secretary Osun State Health Insurance Agency (O'SHIA) – Dr. Razak Akindele and Permanent Secretary Ministry of Health – Dr. Isiaka Adekunle. Dr. Chukwudinma Okwudili, the Project coordinator who led the NSHIP delegation, commended Osun State's progress in HIV program implementation and the contribution of ECEWS, the leading Implementing Partner in the State. He emphasized that the state's involvement in the third cycle of the NSHIP onboarding was part of a strategic national rollout across CDC-supported states, not a reflection of underperformance. Dr. Okwudili officially confirmed Osun's onboarding status and called for the HMB's strong collaboration, particularly in addressing significant HRH gaps. The ECEWS State Program Manager, Oluwaseunfunmi Adefranje - reaffirmed the organization's previous engagements focused on mapping and transitioning the organization frontline health workers into the state's service structure. She further stressed the urgent need to prioritize HRH interventions. The subsequent advocacy visit to Primary Healthcare Board by the Executive secretary of the Osun State Health Insurance Agency (OSHIA), the Board Chairman assured the team of full cooperation, noting that the second phase of renovation for 120 out of 332 comprehensive Primary Health Centres (PHCs) was already underway. The Executive Secretary- OSHIA also acknowledged ECEWS's ongoing leadership and advocacy in the state and confirmed that People Living with HIV (PLHIV) would be prioritized in the next health insurance enrolment phase. Even in the event of BHCF 2.0 delays, OSHIA pledged to ensure that PLHIVs are included. Advocacy visit to the Primary Healthcare Board by the NSHIP team.

ECEWS Facilitates Malaria Commodities Transfer to State-of-the-Art Storage Facility



ECEWS played a pivotal role in transferring malaria commodities from the old medical store at Colliery Hospital to the newly constructed, superior storage facility at Parkland Hospital in Enugu State, Nigeria. This transfer took place on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of September, underscoring ECEWS' commitment to bolstering healthcare infrastructure.



The significance of this initiative cannot be overstated. Good storage conditions are paramount in maintaining the efficacy of malaria medicines, including Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs), Sulfadoxine-Pyrimethamine (SP) used for Intermittent Preventive Treatment in pregnancy, and Artemisinin-based Combination Therapies (ACTs) ensuring these vital commodities remain potent and effective for treating malaria. The state-built permanent Central Medical Store at Parkland Hospital likely offers enhanced infrastructure conducive to safeguarding these supplies, representing an upgrade from previous facilities. By facilitating this transfer, ECEWS ensured that crucial malaria commodities are protected and stored appropriately.



At the heart of ECEWS' endeavors, is the pursuit of quality healthcare delivery in Enugu State. Their actions reflect a broader objective of contributing meaningfully to malaria control efforts. Given that malaria poses a substantial health burden in Nigeria, effective management of malaria supplies from procurement to storage and distribution is instrumental in combating the disease. Through initiatives like these, ECEWS demonstrates its dedication to supporting robust healthcare systems capable of addressing pressing public health challenges like malaria.



From Silent Suffering to Empowered Sisterhood

The Agoi Ekpo Mentor Mother-Led Support Group Rewriting the Narratives Of HIV in their Community



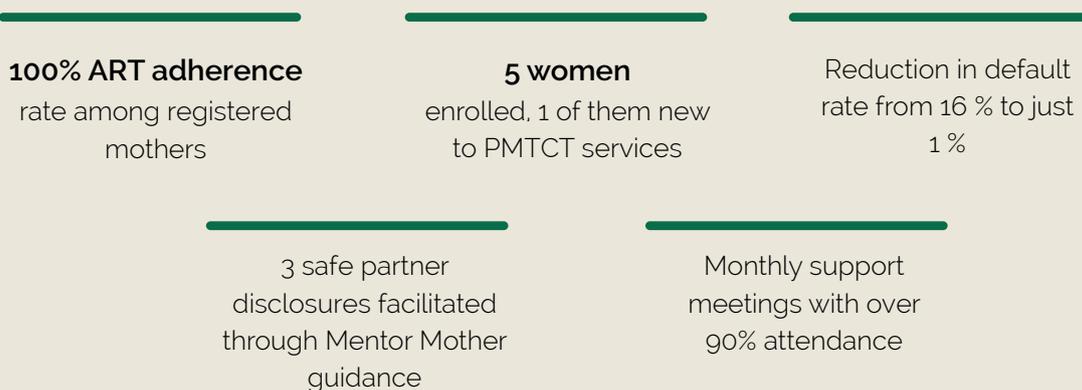
In the vibrant yet underserved community of Agoi Ekpo, Yakurr LGA, Cross River State, a transformative movement emerged in March 2025. Led by women supporting one another, it addressed a deeply personal challenge: living positively with HIV during pregnancy and breastfeeding. For many, an HIV diagnosis brought fear of stigma and misinformation, deterring them from health centers, delaying antiretroviral therapy (ART), or disrupting follow-up care. Consequently, the risk of mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) remained alarmingly high.

The ECEWS ACE 5 project collaborates with host governments and community stakeholders to scale up evidence-based interventions and cost-effective innovations. Through high-frequency reporting, progress is monitored to enhance implementation, management, and efficiency. In Yakurr LGA, the team, alongside Nigerian government staff, recognized the critical need for peer-led psychosocial support and sustained engagement for women confronting these

realities.

In March 2025, with support from the PHC Coordinator, the Agoi Ekpo Mentor Mother Support Group was formed. The group model is built around the Mentor Mother Approach, recruiting and training HIV-positive mothers who have successfully navigated PMTCT services and are now thriving, to mentor others in similar issues such as PMTCT protocols and adherence counseling, Nutrition and safe infant feeding practices, Disclosure strategies and stigma management, birth control and safe conception.

Over the past four months, the support group has profoundly impacted lives by conducting home visits, escorting women to Health Centres, facilitating support circles at health posts, and enabling safe disclosure to partners and families. These initiatives have driven measurable progress, fostering empowerment and well-being.



ECEWS and Lagos State Collaborate for Sustainable HIV Care

ECEWS CEO Dr. Andy Eyo, Chief of Party Dr. Adeoye Adegboye, Deputy Chief of Party, Dr. Otoyoye Toyo and the Lagos ACE-5 project team met with the Honourable Commissioner for Health, Prof. Emmanuel Akinola Abayomi to present ECEWS's contributions, share transition updates, and strengthen collaboration for sustainable HIV service delivery. ECEWS reaffirmed support in nine LGAs and highlighted interventions such as patient re-engagement, solar power deployment to facilities, distribution of 54 desktops for EMR, health worker recruitment, and logistics strengthening, ensuring uninterrupted HIV and maternal health services.

The commissioner welcomed ECEWS' commitment to align interventions with state health priorities, especially around ART, pharmacy, laboratory, and data integration. The CEO reiterated that ECEWS strategy centers on human resource development, infrastructure investment, and deliberate government ownership.

Discussions also focused on sustainability and system integration, with the Commissioner calling for harmonized EMR and energy solutions. ECEWS is committed to aligning with state priorities through human resource development, infrastructure investment, and government ownership.



ECEWS Deepens Ties with Enugu State Government to Accelerate Malaria Elimination

On August 7, 2025, the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS) team, who implements the Malaria Impact Project (IMPACT), paid an advocacy visit to the new Enugu State Commissioner for Health, Prof. George Ugwu. The meeting served as a working session to establish a stronger partnership in the fight against malaria throughout the state. The team shared tangible progress from their ongoing malaria interventions, including successes recorded under the Integrated Monitoring and Supervision (IMS) exercise. At the same time, they laid bare the gaps that continue to hinder full coverage. Prof. Ugwu's response was decisive: he pledged to move resources and policy attention toward closing those gaps, signaling a readiness to translate commitment into concrete action.

ECEWS followed up on this momentum by engaging directly with two key leaders at the State Ministry of Health: the Director of Public Health, Dr. Ifeyinwa

Ujwueze, and the Enugu State Malaria Elimination Program (ESMEP) Manager, Dr. Agu Chukwuma. This wasn't a routine introductory meeting; it was a platform to, align strategies, clarify roles, and ensure the seamless continuity of malaria interventions funded by the Islamic Development Bank and the Federal Government of Nigeria. Dr. Agu's remarks captured the spirit of the engagement. He emphasized that the transition would not derail progress, assuring the ECEWS team of sustained dialogue. "We hope to have this meeting again, make it continuous, and use the opportunity to ask questions where necessary," he said.

These high-level engagements have collectively sharpened government ownership of the malaria response in Enugu State. By addressing gaps identified in the field, securing stronger leadership buy-in, and reinforcing lines of communication, ECEWS and its state partners are not just exchanging commitments they are building the backbone for more resilient, results-driven malaria control in Enugu State.



ECEWS and U.S. CDC Champion State-Led Health Insurance for PLHIV

In a significant move toward securing the future of HIV care, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), working with the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), has engaged the Delta State Contributory Health Commission (DSCHC). This collaboration aims to enroll vulnerable people living with HIV (PLHIV) into the state health insurance scheme. This initiative

comes at a critical time, as the urgency for local, sustainable solutions has heightened due to constraints on donor funding.

This isn't just about providing insurance; it's a strategic shift towards state ownership and sustainable financing for HIV services. By integrating these services into the state's health system, the program ensures

continuity of care and reduces reliance on external aid. The focus of the dialogue was on creating a framework where the state takes full responsibility for its citizens' health. This forward-thinking approach will not only secure a future for HIV care but also serve as a blueprint for other states to follow, paving the way for a more resilient and self-sufficient healthcare system in Nigeria.



Cross River State and ECEWS Meet to Advance Laboratory Quality Systems



On August 5th, the ECEWS ACE-5 project team met with Cross River State's Commissioner for Health, Dr. Henry Ayuk, to discuss implementing Quality Management Systems (QMS) in 10 health facilities. The goal is to strengthen laboratory services and achieve accreditation for these labs by the end of the year. During the meeting, ECEWS highlighted key challenges to quality improvement, including non-functional incinerators, inadequate water supply, and recurring power outages at the Department of Laboratory Health Management (DLHM). These infrastructural issues are hindering

consistent and reliable lab operations. In response, Commissioner Ayuk reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening the state's laboratory systems. He called for a joint effort between the Ministry of Health and implementing partners to urgently fix these infrastructural problems, including repairing leaking roofs and improving security. This partnership highlights the government's collaborative approach to building sustainable, high-quality public health services.

Combating Malaria with Excellence: ECEWS' Comprehensive Approach

ECEWS' malaria efforts in Enugu State are making a significant impact. The malaria impact project team conducted Integrated Malaria Surveillance (IMS) in health facilities spread across 4 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Enugu State, showcasing their commitment to enhancing healthcare quality.

Their key activities during the IMS underscore a comprehensive approach to tackling malaria. They promote the use of Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) to confirm malaria before treatment, ensuring that diagnosis is test-based rather than clinical guesses. Protecting pregnant women is another crucial focus; Intermittent Preventive Treatment (IPT) with Sulfadoxine-Pyrimethamine (SP) is administered directly observed (DOT) starting from 13 weeks of pregnancy, given monthly until delivery, safeguarding both mother and child from malaria's dangers. Proper management of healthcare waste is also a priority, as it mitigates infection risks within healthcare settings. Additionally, ECEWS invests in Training Healthcare Workers, enhancing their capabilities in accurate data recording a vital component for informed decision-making and effective malaria control strategies.

These efforts matter profoundly. Actions like rigorous testing and protecting vulnerable groups like pregnant women contribute directly to reducing malaria-related illnesses and deaths. Better data collection and management empower planners and healthcare providers to allocate resources more effectively, bolstering malaria control initiatives. Moreover, meticulous healthcare waste management cultivates safer healthcare environments, minimizing risks of infections.

ECEWS remains steadfast in its pursuit of excellence, persistently ensuring good malaria diagnosis and treatment protocols are upheld, healthcare waste is managed properly, documentation is thorough, drugs are stored appropriately, and accountability is maintained. In areas witnessing low healthcare patronage, they motivate health workers to engage in community mobilization efforts, stirring demand for these health services and fostering a culture of proactive healthcare engagement.



