

ECEWS RISING

SEPTEMBER 2025 EDITION



20

A Mother's Triumph:
Breaking the Cycle of HIV Transmission



10

ECEWS Empowers Girls
with Lifesaving Health
Skills at WOGEEI
Bootcamp



BEFORE REHABILITATION OF CLASS ROOMS



AFTER REHABILITATION

04

ECEWS Completes Rehabilitation of School Blocks at Union Secondary School, Ibiaku, Ibiono Ibom Local Government Area (LGA), Akwa Ibom State

08

Inemesit's Journey:
Sewing Hope One
Stitch at a Time

22

Progress of
ECEWS-NMEP
in Enugu State

27

ECEWS ACE-5 Project Supplies
NIMR with Essential Tools to
Enhance HIV Program Delivery



From the CEO's Desk

In this edition, we celebrate the spirit of consistency and collaboration that drives our mission forward. Across communities, we are witnessing the impact of partnerships that translate compassion into action and innovation into lasting change.

Our spotlight story, Driving SDG 3 in Akuku-Toru through the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS)/Renaissance Community Health Insurance Scheme (CHIS), showcases how collective commitment is expanding access to quality healthcare. With support from Renaissance Africa Energy Company and active community participation, over 250 residents have been enrolled, setting a strong foundation for sustainable, community owned healthcare.

We also celebrate several key highlights, including the exemplary leadership of our Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who was honored with the ANPA Fellowship for outstanding contributions to Public Health Administration in Akwa Ibom State. Additionally, we highlight the progress of ECEWS-National Malaria Elimination Program (NMEP) in Enugu State and the successful commissioning of the rehabilitated Union Secondary School in Ibiaku Ibiono Ibom Local Government Area (LGA), Akwa Ibom State, funded by the Bank of Industry. This project transformed six classrooms, a fine art block, and an administrative block into renewed spaces, empowering students with the knowledge to thrive and lead within their communities.

As we look ahead, your continued support, through advocacy, collaboration, and shared purpose remains vital. Together, we are building healthier communities and creating a future where everyone has the opportunity to live, learn, and lead well. Have fun reading.

Chief Executive Officer, ECEWS

ECEWS Hosts AHNi Board Leadership on Strategic Engagement Visit

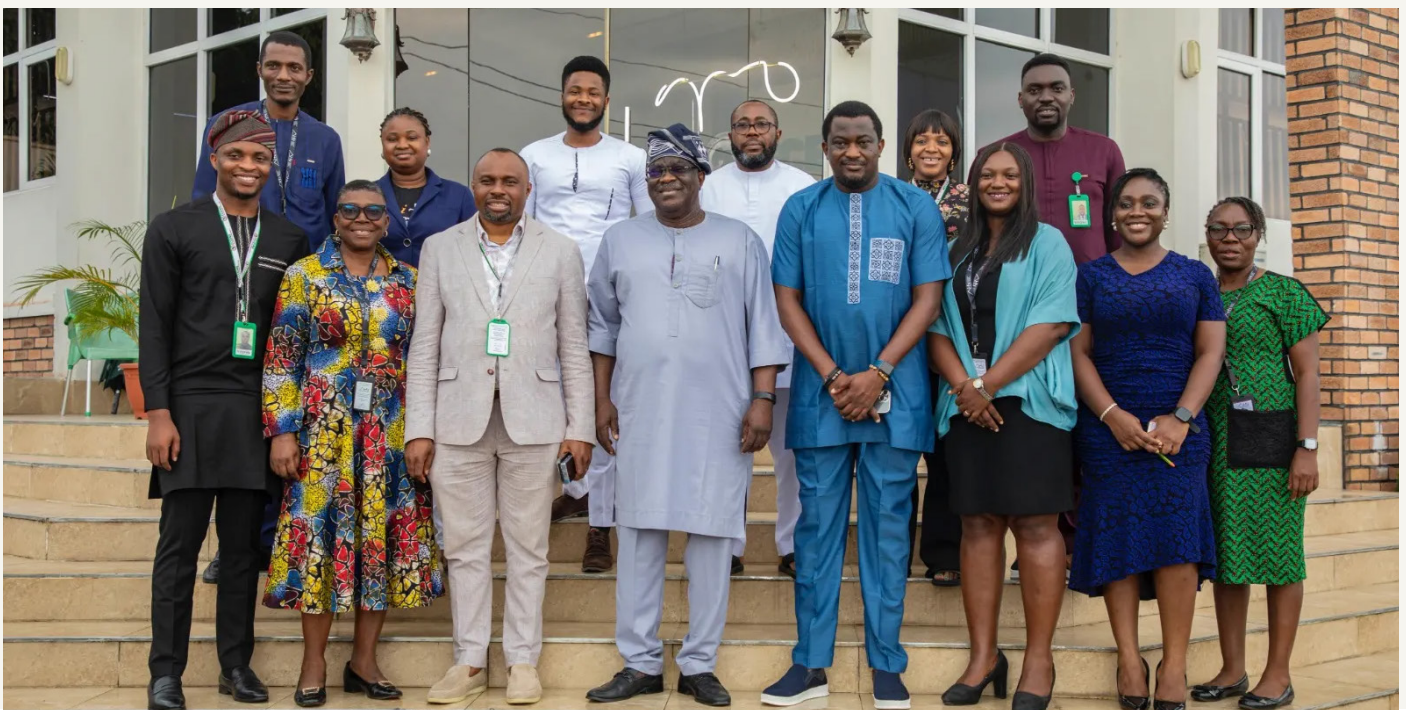
On September 2, 2025, ECEWS State Team welcomed the Board Chairman of Achieving Health Nigeria Initiative (AHNi), Prof. Obafemi Ajibola, alongside members of the ACE-5 senior management team on a strategic engagement visit in Akwa Ibom State. The delegation included Mrs. Kufre Ukpung (Deputy Director, Technical), Mr. Saade Gustav (Associate Director, Program Management), Mr. Emmanuel Ekanem (Associate Director, Strategic Information), Mrs. Cynthia Allotey (Senior Program Officer), and Mrs. Margaret Olawuyi (Senior Finance Officer).

The visit commenced at St. Luke's Hospital, Anua, where Prof. Ajibola and the AHNi leadership team conducted ward rounds to observe frontline implementation. They engaged with the ART Coordinator and facility staff, gaining firsthand insights into service delivery experiences that will inform program priorities and planning for the next fiscal year.

Following the field visit, the delegation proceeded to ECEWS Headquarters, where they were received by Dr. Andy Eyo (Chief Executive Officer), together with Dr. Adeoye (Chief of Party), Dr. Otoyoy Toyo (Deputy Chief of Party), and other senior officials, including the Directors of Finance & Programs and Operations. Discussions focused on grant modalities in the post-SWO era, human resources for health welfare, and strategies to sustain program impact.

In his remarks, Prof. Ajibola commended the partnership's excellence in capacity building and system strengthening, describing ECEWS as "a true partner in transforming lives and health systems." In response, Dr. Eyo reaffirmed the centrality of trust, shared vision, and teamwork in driving the AHNi-ECEWS collaboration.

The visit reinforced a shared commitment to leadership, partnership, and accountability in strengthening health systems and advancing the ACE-5 project across Akwa Ibom State.





ECEWS Completes Rehabilitation of School Blocks at Union Secondary School, Ibiaku, Ibiono Ibom Local Government Area (LGA), Akwa Ibom State

ECEWS is proud to announce the successful completion and commissioning of a project at Union Secondary School, Ibiaku Ibiono, Akwa Ibom State. The project, funded by the Bank of Industry (BOI), included the rehabilitation of six classroom blocks, a fine art block, and an administrative block.



The commissioning ceremony led by the Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State, His Excellency, Pastor Umo Bassey Eno, PhD, represented by the Commissioner for Education, Prof. Ubong Essien Umoh underscores the state's commitment to enhancing the learning environment and providing quality education for its youth. Speaking, he buttressed on the project aligning with the state's Arise Agenda, which prioritizes education as a key driver of development and growth. The state government commended the BOI for funding the project, highlighting the impact of collaboration and partnership, and appreciated ECEWS' efforts in complementing the Arise Agenda and improving educational infrastructure.



The ceremony was attended by notable figures, including Lady Rose Bassey, Permanent Secretary of the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Education, Rt. (Hon.) Ekaette Ebong Okon (PhD), Chairman of the Akwa Ibom State Secondary School Board (AKSSSB), Directors of AKSSSB, Paramount rulers, Chairman of Ibiono Local Government Area represented by Hon. Mercy Ubon, Vice Chairman of Ibiono Ibom Local Government Area, ECEWS board members and staff, the school principal, staff members, and representatives of the Union Secondary School Old Girls Association, amongst others.



ECEWS remains committed to enhancing the learning environment and promoting educational development in Akwa Ibom State and we look forward to continued collaboration and partnership to drive positive change in our communities.

CDC Visit Strengthens HIV Program Delivery in Osun State



From September 1st to 5th, 2025, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Nigeria team visited Osun State. The CDC visit to Osun State focused on assessing community prevention and treatment program implementation following the stop-work order and subsequent limited waiver. The visit aimed to review service delivery at facility and community levels, identify gaps, document lessons learned, and agree on actionable next steps for strengthening HIV prevention, treatment, care, post-violence care, and other support services.

Discussions also emphasized sustainability, quality of data, and integration of services. The five-member CDC delegation, in collaboration with Government of Nigeria officials, the State AIDS/STI Control Program (SASCP) Coordinator, and the Network

of People Living with HIV and AIDS in Nigeria (NEPHWAN) State Coordinator, visited selected ECEWS-supported health facilities (State Specialist Hospital Asubiaro, State Hospital Ilesha, Community Services Coordination Center) and Community-Based Organizations, including COSWOHI, HFDI, and HUFFPED. These visits provided opportunities to assess ongoing interventions, share feedback, and highlight areas of progress and improvement.

Acknowledging the efforts of ECEWS as the state's lead implementing partner of the Sustainable Programs for HIV Epidemic Control and Equitable Service Delivery (SPEED) Project, the CDC team led by Dr. Anuri Emeh, CDC Team Lead, commended the organization's strategic role in driving quality service delivery. At the State Specialist Hospital, Asubiaro,

Dr. Olufemi Oke, CDC Program Specialist, praised the passion, ownership, and commitment of the teams working tirelessly to achieve viral load suppression. He further emphasized their dedication to ensuring high-quality HIV services.

The CDC visit provided valuable insights into Osun State's community HIV program performance, highlighting both commendable achievements and gaps. Across facilities and CBOs, teams demonstrated resilience, innovation, and commitment to client-centred care despite operational constraints. The visit also served to reinforce collaboration among stakeholders, encouraging the integration of feedback into ongoing activities and sustaining momentum toward improved health outcomes.



ECEWS Strengthens Partnership with Cross River State Ministry of Health



In preparation for the Honourable Commissioner for Health's 2nd Anniversary, ECEWS Accelerating Control of the HIV Epidemic in Nigeria (ACE-5) Project Cross River State Director, Joseph Umana, met with Dr. Henry Egbe Ayuk to reaffirm ECEWS's commitment to strengthening health systems in the state. The engagement underscored ECEWS's role as a lead partner in epidemic control, data quality improvement, and service delivery.

Dr. Ayuk commended ECEWS for its strategic support in advancing HIV programming, maternal and child health, and workforce capacity. Discussions focused on sustaining collaboration, scaling impactful interventions, and aligning with state health priorities.

As part of the anniversary celebrations held at the State Library, ECEWS State Management Team joined other stakeholders to reflect on sector-wide progress. The event highlighted achievements in epidemic control, service delivery, and access to care. In recognition of its outstanding contributions, ECEWS was honored with an Award of Excellence for leadership and innovation in strengthening HIV programming, community engagement, and overall health sector revitalization.

The celebration and engagement reaffirmed a shared commitment between ECEWS and the Ministry of Health to deepen partnerships and sustain transformative health outcomes for the people of Cross River State.

Strengthening Laboratory Quality and Safety ECEWS ACE 5 and FHI 360 Lead the Way



Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), through the ACE-5 project and in collaboration with FHI 360, recently held a Biosafety and Bio risk Management Training for molecular laboratory personnel. The five-day workshop, held from September 7–13, 2025, at Four Points by Sheraton, Ikot Ekpene, was designed to build capacity and prepare laboratories for the new ISO 15189:2022 accreditation standards mandated by the Medical Laboratory Science Council of Nigeria (MLSCN).

During the flag off of the training, Dr. Bala Gana, State Director, in his goodwill message, commended the progress of laboratories moving from one- to two-star ratings and urged sustained commitment toward achieving full accreditation.

The training focused on strengthening laboratory quality systems, enhancing safety, and securing biological materials. With risk management now

central to ISO 15189:2022, the sessions equipped participants with the skills to meet international standards through practical exercises on biosafety, biosecurity, waste disposal, emergency preparedness, and performance monitoring.

By the end of the training, participants recorded an 18% increase in knowledge, demonstrating significant skill gains. They also developed tailored strategies for risk identification, mitigation, and continuous improvement within their facilities.

This initiative reflects ECEWS and FHI 360's dedication to building resilient health systems, protecting staff and communities, and improving diagnostic services nationwide. As laboratories transition to ISO 15189:2022, ECEWS and FHI 360 will continue to provide technical support to improve infrastructure, boost personnel competency, and institutionalize best practices while driving excellence and innovation in laboratory quality and safety.



Delta State Achieves Major Milestone with 54 HIV Testing Sites Receiving National Certification



In what marks a defining moment for public health advancement in Nigeria, Delta State has attained a new level of excellence in HIV testing quality. A total of 54 HIV testing sites across the state have received national certification for meeting the highest standards of diagnostic accuracy and quality management. The recognition, which was celebrated at separate review meetings in Asaba and Warri in September 2025, represents the culmination of years of structured mentorship, system strengthening, and unrelenting pursuit of excellence under the CDC-funded SPEED Project implemented by the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS).

This achievement is the direct result of the Rapid Testing Continuous Quality Improvement (RTCQI) program, a technical framework designed to strengthen the integrity of HIV testing across the country. Through the SPEED Project, ECEWS, in collaboration with the Delta State Ministry of Health (SMoH) and the Hospitals Management Board (HMB), has methodically supported all 61 HIV testing points in the state using the Stepwise Process for Improving the Quality of HIV Rapid Testing (SPI-RT) checklist, a national benchmark for assessing the competence of testing sites.

The progress has been nothing short of transformational. In 2023, only five sites had achieved the Level 4 standard required for certification, scoring above 90 percent on all key performance indicators. By early 2025, that number had grown to 30. The

latest audit, conducted in September 2025, confirmed that 54 facilities; 23 in the Asaba cluster and 31 in the Warri cluster, had reached Level 4 status. For the state's healthcare system, this leap forward is more than a statistic; it is proof of what deliberate investments in training, supervision, and data-driven accountability can accomplish.

Speaking with Uche Okudo, Senior Technical Officer for Laboratory Services at ECEWS, who presented the state's performance analysis during the meetings he said "said "The journey has been rigorous, but the results speak for themselves

"We've moved from a system that once struggled with consistency to one where excellence is becoming the norm."

The review meetings, which doubled as certification ceremonies, brought together senior officials from the Ministry of Health and the Hospitals Management Board. In Asaba, Dr. Linda Peter-Enyi, the State AIDS Program Coordinator (SAPC), presented certificates to the 23 awardees, while in Warri, Mrs. Gloria Ezeaku, Director of Laboratory Services at the HMB, presided over the event. Their presence underscored government commitment to sustaining progress and strengthening local ownership of health programs.

In her remarks, Mrs. Patricia Biboyo-Brisibe, Director of Laboratory Services at the SMoH, described the certification as more than a procedural milestone. *"These certificates symbolize a promise to every individual who seeks an HIV test in Delta State a promise of accuracy, reliability, and care rooted in quality,"*

she said.

The review sessions were also used to confront persistent challenges affecting service delivery, including periodic shortages of HIV test kits and delays in proficiency test reporting. In response, Mrs. Ezeaku encouraged laboratory leads to work closely with their Medical Directors to locally procure Determine test kits when national supplies are delayed, a pragmatic shift toward state-led problem-solving and reduced dependence on donor-driven interventions.

The certification of 54 testing sites stands as a tangible example of what can be achieved through coordination, accountability, and consistent quality oversight. It demonstrates that epidemic control is not merely about expanding coverage but about ensuring that every test conducted meets the highest standard of accuracy. For Delta State, this accomplishment signals a turning point, a move toward self-reliant, data-informed, and performance-driven health systems.

As the SPEED Project continues to strengthen HIV service delivery across Nigeria, Delta's progress offers a replicable model for other states. The state's journey from uneven performance to national recognition models what is possible when dedicated health workers, government institutions, and implementing partners align around a shared vision of quality. In every sense, Delta State's achievement is not just a success story; it is a blueprint for sustainable epidemic control through strengthened local systems.



Inemesit's Journey: Sewing Hope, One Stitch at a Time

We're inspired and grateful for women like Inemesit, whose resilience turns challenges into hope for their families and communities.

After losing her husband in 2022, her world changed overnight. Suddenly, she had to raise three children alone, balancing school fees, feeding, and daily expenses, all while trying to keep her business alive.

But as a talented tailor and accessories entrepreneur, Inemesit refused to give up on her dreams. Power outages and limited resources made it tough to keep her business running, until she connected with ECEWS.

Through our support initiative, Inemesit received a generator, helping her power her sewing machines and rebuild her business. Today, she's back to creating beautiful designs and providing for her family.



ECEWS Baby Shower Initiative: Driving Maternal and Child Health in Delta and Osun States



ECEWS, through its Accelerating Progress in Pediatrics and PMTCT (AP3) unit, is employing innovative "Baby Shower" outreach initiatives across Delta and Osun States. These initiatives significantly strengthen Maternal and Child Health (MCH) and bolster the fight against the mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT), successfully taking vital healthcare services beyond clinic walls and integrating them with community celebration and empowerment.

In Delta State, ECEWS hosted the "Mother's Love Party" on September 18, 2025, at the Ovu Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC) in Ethiope East. This event successfully engaged 170 pregnant and breastfeeding women, offering a comprehensive package that included Health Education and Empowerment Talks, HIV and Syphilis Testing,

clinical reviews, and specialized counselling. A highly encouraging outcome was that no new HIV-positive cases were identified among the women screened, indicating tangible progress in prevention efforts. Similarly, in Osun State, the AP3 unit held its monthly Baby Shower health outreach at the As-Sallam Mosque in Olorunda LGA. This modified congregational event engaged over 50 pregnant women and key community stakeholders, providing extensive services such as HIV Testing, screening for Hypertension and Hepatitis B & C, health education, and medical consultations.

To promote safe delivery, encourage facility-based births, and support optimal nutrition, ECEWS teams in both states distributed Mama Packs containing essential delivery and early post-partum items. In Osun, multivitamins, folic acid, and vitamin C were also dispensed. By combining critical health services with empowerment and celebration,

Driving SDG 3 in Akuku-Toru through ECEWS/Renaissance Community Health Insurance Scheme (CHIS)



The Akuku-Toru Community Health Insurance Scheme (CHIS) aims to deliver quality healthcare services to the people of Akuku-Toru Local Government Area and its environs. It is in line with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 3) and is a social health investment project of the Renaissance Africa Energy Company, with the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS) as the implementing partner. With sustainability in mind, advocacy has been at the forefront of all CHIS project activities where the state, local government, and community are involved in all stages of project planning and implementation.

The Akuku-Toru CHIS project is operating in a predominantly rural area, hence sustained advocacy to Government, traditional institutions, prominent individuals and social groups were required if the project was to get the buy-in, ownership and required support of the people. With Renaissance providing initial support for

the payment of the premium for some community members; other prominent individuals, community leaders and social clubs have joined Renaissance in carrying the responsibility of supporting community members on the scheme. Since the launch, over 250 individuals have been enrolled with the contributions received from community institutions and members, with many more pledges to be fulfilled soon. This represents a strong commitment by the community to ensure ownership and sustainability of the scheme.

ECEWS remains committed to collaborating with all stakeholders in ensuring quality service delivery whilst also involving community/LGA leaders in the management of the scheme via the CHIS Board that is to be inaugurated soon. The Akuku Toru CHIS represents a project that can work and be sustained through a transparent public-private-people partnership that holds each other accountable.

ECEWS Empowers Girls with Lifesaving Health Skills at WOGEEI Bootcamp

ECEWS served as a lead facilitator at the Women and Girls' Education and Empowerment Initiative (WOGEEI) Girl Child Academy Bootcamp in Uyo (August 11–16, 2025). The one-week program focused on empowering girls aged 8–15 with life skills and confidence.

ECEWS, represented by Dr. Enwongo Awak and Mercy Ukponirefe, drove critical, interactive sessions on health, well-being, and nutrition. The team covered hands-on hygiene and personal care, clarified puberty and menstrual hygiene myths, and hosted open Q&A sessions on sensitive topics like reproductive health and emotional well-being.

Participants left with improved knowledge on personal hygiene, clarified myths about puberty and menstruation, and greater confidence to discuss sensitive health issues.

Through its participation, ECEWS is actively equipping the next generation of girls with the knowledge, confidence, and healthy habits needed to thrive and lead in their communities.



ECEWS Supports Delta State Government's Drive for HIV Program Ownership

ECEWS joined over 30 key health stakeholders including officials from the State Government, National AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Infections Control and Hepatitis Programme (NASCP), and partners like World Health Organisation (WHO) at the Joint Annual HIV Programme Planning Meeting (September 9–11 in Asaba) to address the urgent need to transition from donor dependence. This critical three-day meeting

was spurred by a review showing that only 8% of the state's 2025 HIV plan was executed due to a lack of domestic funding. ECEWS engaged in the strategic process, contributing to a SWOT analysis across seven thematic areas and adopting Nigeria's "New Business Model 2.0" to emphasize domestic resource mobilization. The team helped develop and cost detailed action plans to create

a viable roadmap.

The meeting concluded that the survival of the state's HIV response hinges on increased domestic investment. ECEWS remains committed to supporting key next steps, including high-level advocacy for increased budgetary allocation and the constitution of a Domestic Resource Mobilization (DRM) Committee. This effort ensures that the successes of the SPEED project are integrated into the permanent public health system.



ECEWS Amplifies TB Case Detection and Integration Across Three States with PDX-CAD Technology



The strategic deployment of Portable Digital X-ray with Computer Assisted Diagnosis (PDX-CAD) technology is significantly boosting Tuberculosis (TB) case finding and service integration across Cross River, Ekiti, and Delta States. This innovative approach, championed by the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS) through projects like ACE-5 and US CDC's SPEED, is dramatically improving the speed and accuracy of diagnosis and strengthening the comprehensive fight against TB and HIV nationwide.

In Cross River State, the CAD4 PDX machine was utilized to ensure statewide coverage and equitable access. ECEWS deployed the machine across health facilities and communities in the northern, central, and southern regions,

where trained radiographers conducted screening sessions. This effort successfully identified multiple presumptive TB cases for timely linkage to care, a crucial step in reducing transmission. Similarly, in Delta State, the optimization of the PDX-CAD4TB machine at multiple health facilities proved highly effective in clinical settings. In one week alone, the machine screened 54 clients and identified 21 presumptive TB cases, achieving an impressive 39% yield and enabling prompt treatment to reduce co-morbidity.

Ekiti State saw a major leap in TB/HIV care with the deployment of PDX-CAD machines at five key ECEWS-supported facilities, including Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital and Federal Medical Center, Ikole. Following a three-day training session led by ECEWS for health personnel, the initiative yielded remarkable results: the TB screening yield among people living with HIV (PLHIV) surged from 1.6% to 5%, leading to significant improvements in case detection and subsequent treatment outcomes.

Across all three states, this advanced diagnostic technology is helping to close gaps between the TB and HIV programs by fostering integrated service delivery and enhancing the continuum of care. The success reflects ECEWS commitment to patient-centered, data-driven healthcare, establishing a powerful model for reducing the TB burden and supporting Nigeria's progress toward epidemic control.

Strengthening Pharmaceutical Services Through a Strategic Review Meeting in Osun State

ECEWS SPEED project in Osun State convened facility pharmacy staff who play a critical role in public health programs for a strategic review meeting aimed at strengthening pharmaceutical care & logistic services across the state. The meeting opened with a welcome remark from Pharm. Saliu, Director of Pharmaceutical Services at the Osun State Ministry of Health, who praised ECEWS for its resilience in supporting the state and noted the state government's ongoing plans to take ownership of key healthcare programs.

The meeting had sessions on pharmaceutical care in HIV/AIDS management, logistics management information system (LMIS) reporting or NHLMIS (national health logistics management information system), emphasizing accurate data collection for forecasting, and the critical role of facility staff in maintaining a functional logistics system.

Dr. Isaac Kolawole, Head of NAFDAC (National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control) Osun, delivered a lecture on Pharmacovigilance, stressing that all healthcare workers and clients have a duty to report Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs). He introduced various reporting tools, including the MedSafety App, Yellow Form, and NAFDAC's short code 20543.

The Logistics Management Coordination Unit (LMCU) coordinator, Pharm. Oyewole, charged the facility staff to ensure good LMIS reporting and data accuracy. She also applauded the team for consistently achieving 100% reporting rates and highlighted common reporting errors and engaged participants in practical sessions to resolve flagged reports.

Dr Olu Lawal, DPS-HMB, encouraged all to be actively involved in the program. Subjects discussed included coordinating logistic activities and providing pharmaceutical care in HIV/AIDS management, using case studies to explore challenges in ART adherence, therapy effectiveness, and patient-centered care.

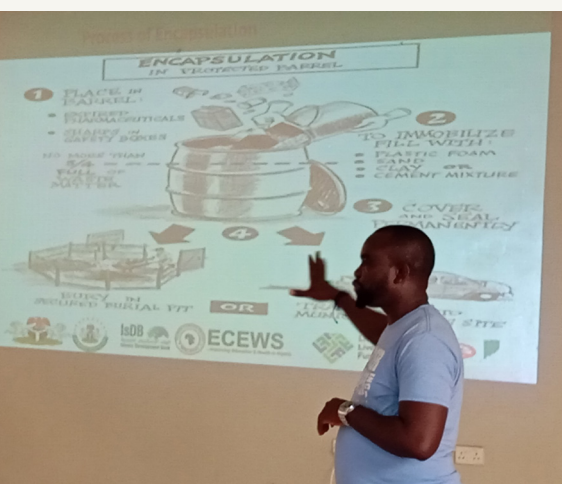


ECEWS collaborates with Stakeholders for Training on Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) in Enugu State

ECEWS recently partnered with the Enugu State Malaria Elimination Program (SMEP) and the Enugu State Primary Health Care Development Agency (SPHCDA) to host a two-day Training of Trainers (ToT) on the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) in Enugu State. This crucial initiative aims to promote transparency and improve quality across health service delivery.

The training convened 54 participants, including key staff from the Ministry of Health and NMEP, including Malaria Focal Persons and Cold Chain Officers from all 17 LGAs. Its core objective was to strengthen community feedback systems and enhance accountability in malaria service provision. ECEWS Malaria Project Director, Dr. Ayodele Alegbeleye, noted that the GRM framework provides a safe, structured avenue for communities to voice feedback, thereby building trust and improving services.

Sessions covered GRM principles, effective complaint handling, and ethical responses to sensitive issues like GBV. The training successfully empowered 54 individuals, including 17 Malaria Focal Persons who will now cascade the knowledge to facility heads across the state's 260 wards. The event concluded with plans finalized for deploying complaint boxes, toll-free lines, and distributing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). This effort empowers communities to speak up, making Enugu's healthcare system more responsive and people-centered.



Mrs. Ezinne's Journey of Resilience





"With support through ECEWS SPEED project and other donations, I've moved from purchasing groundnuts in custard pails to buying half bags of groundnuts, and I've even launched my popcorn business, through which I can take care of my family," beams Mrs. Ezinne Sunday. Her words mark the triumphant end of a difficult chapter that began when she fled domestic violence, seeking refuge in Agbor with her five children after leaving their home in Warri.

Ezinne's journey from vulnerability began the moment she was identified by a case manager through the Rural Linkage Network (RULIN) in Ika South LGA, Delta State and enrolled into ECEWS SPEED Community Case Management program (CCMP). ECEWS SPEED Project aims to identify sustainable means of supporting vulnerable beneficiaries through strategic community collaboration.

The received need-based post-violence care and economic empowerment which served to address their immediate need for food and clothing to ease their hardship. The turning point in her path to self-reliance came when a compassionate local philanthropist contributed a lump sum to enable

her to start a small business. Following this crucial opportunity, Mrs. Ezinne received vital financial literacy training covering record keeping, savings, and value chain management and was linked to the nearest Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) to cultivate a culture of saving and access to loan to support business expansion.

Empowered by these integrated interventions, Mrs. Ezinne has not only achieved economic stability but true independence. "My before and after picture shows we are looking better, and I am very grateful to ECEWS, RULIN, and PEPFAR for making my life sweet," she adds.

Today, she proudly provides her family's basic needs, ensures her children are in school, and successfully manages her business. Moreover, the support facilitated reconciliation and peace within her family.

Ezinne now stands as a powerful, shining example of what holistic empowerment, a journey from vulnerability to sustainable prosperity can truly achieve.

ECEWS Hosted CDC Nigeria team for PIMS Onboarding in Osun State



A team from the Centre for Disease Control (CDC) Nigeria recently completed a focused technical visit to Osun State from September 22nd to 26th, 2025 aimed at strengthening the state's digital health infrastructure. The primary activities of the four-member delegation included official onboarding of the Patient Information Management System (PIMS) and a crucial assessment of the existing Nigerian Medical Record System (NMRS).

The visit began with an in-brief meeting at ECEWS State Office before moving on to four selected health facilities to access the efficiency of PIMS. The visit brought together key stakeholders across Osun State, including the Executive Secretary of the Osun State Agency for the Control of AIDS, NEPHWAN executives, and representatives from SASCP. This high-level technical engagement centered on strengthening the state's health data system and advancing the rollout of the Patient Information Management System (PIMS) to improve program efficiency.

Furthermore, the team strongly encouraged continuous service integration and collaboration between ECEWS and Government of Nigeria staff across facilities. The emphasis on collaboration and sustainability reflects ongoing efforts to enhance digital health systems and foster evidence-based decision-making for better HIV program outcomes in Osun State.

ECEWS Hosts FHI 360 team on Peer to Peer TQLA Technical Assistance visit in Delta

ECEWS Delta State team recently hosted a successful peer-to-peer learning and knowledge-sharing TQLA technical assistance visit from the FHI 360 team, led by Mr. Sunday Elesi, Technical Advisor, Health Informatics. This collaborative visit reinforced the strong partnership between ECEWS and FHI 360, a key consortium partner under ECEWS SPEED project. The initiative provided an essential dimension to the technical support and learnings of ECEWS's quarterly activities.

The focused engagement included on-site interactions at four ECEWS SPEED-supported health facilities, including General Hospital Ashaka. The FHI 360 team engaged directly with ECEWS staff to thoroughly understand their

implementation processes and locally driven innovations. They reviewed operational tools and delivered constructive feedback, helping ECEWS optimize its workflows for even greater impact and continuous process improvement within the SPEED project framework.

Dr. Saviour Wilson, ECEWS State Technical Lead highlighted the exchange value: "The exchange of ideas with the FHI 360 team was incredibly valuable. It allowed us to showcase our on-the-ground innovations and also gain fresh perspectives on optimizing our workflows for even greater impact." This fruitful interaction not only showcased ECEWS Delta State as a learning site for best practices but also underscored the robust, collaborative spirit necessary to drive the global HIV response within the consortium partnership.



ECEWS Supports NEPWHAN-Led Data Quality Assessment (DQA) Exercise to Strengthen PMTCT and Mentor Mother Programming

From September 23rd to 26th, 2025, ECEWS, through the ACE-5 project, partnered with NEPWHAN, AKSACA, and other GC7 stakeholders to conduct the Semester 4 State Data Quality Assessment (DQA) for Community-Based Caregivers (CBCs) and Mentor Mothers in Akwa Ibom State. The exercise was designed to strengthen Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) processes, validate Mentor Mothers, and improve coordination between community and facility structures.

At the entry meeting, stakeholders commended ECEWS for its strong technical support. A key resolution from the exercise was the extension of Mentor Mothers' responsibilities to cover full client follow-up from enrollment through to 18 months, ensuring stronger continuity of care. The validation of Mentor Mothers across clusters was also prioritized to enhance accountability and service delivery.

Field visits were carried out at Eket General Hospital, Polyclinic, Uyo Base, and Ikot Ekpene, culminating in the validation of Mentor Mothers in the Uyo cluster. During the exit meeting, NEPWHAN acknowledged ECEWS's leadership, while difficult client cases from

Eket were reviewed with the SACA PM, who praised the collaborative follow-up efforts. Importantly, Mentor Mothers' Unique IDs were successfully validated and shared across clusters.

The exercise also generated practical recommendations, including increased government investment in HIV sensitization and CBC training, as well as a directive that CBCs should not conduct deliveries or HIV testing until they are adequately trained. Mentor Mothers under the GC7 grant were advised to formally report to LGA LACAs and PMTCT focal persons, while working closely with facility-based teams for mentorship and seamless program integration.

Follow-up actions agreed upon include the submission of a detailed validation report and updated GC7 scope of work by NEPWHAN, alongside ongoing facility visits and EMR updates supported by ECEWS and partners. These steps are expected to strengthen data quality systems, improve client outcomes, and enhance sustainability of PMTCT interventions in Akwa Ibom State.

Osun State Health Workers Trained on NMRS-Commodity Module to Boost HIV Commodities Tracking



A two-day training session was held for healthcare personnel in Osun State to enhance the use of the Nigeria Medical Record System (NMRS) for effective tracking and management of HIV-related health commodities. The training aimed at a deep understanding of the NMRS Commodity Module in line with the Federal Government's drive for sustainability and integration of healthcare data systems.

The NMRS, described as a role-based electronic medical record platform that ensures structured



data entry, tracking, and uploading to the National Data Repository (NDR).

Participants were introduced to the NMRS Commodity Module, which tracks receipts, issues, transfers, returns, and disposals of health commodities. Practical sessions guided attendees on logging transactions using tablets connected to facility servers through static IP addresses and MTN routers provided by ECEWS, with real-time synchronization built into the system.



Mobile NMRS devices were assigned to all Pharmacy & LAB personnel during the training to support commodity reporting at the facilities. Hands-on sessions were carried out to provide the participants with practical experience on device setup, data entry for different commodity operations, and system synchronization.

The training concluded with a renewed commitment to ensure accurate commodity reporting, improved data quality, and better integration of HIV commodity tracking across health facilities in Osun State.



ECEWS Participates in National Childhood TB Testing Week in Akwa Ibom State

On Monday, 22nd September 2025, ECEWS joined the Director of Public Health, the State Tuberculosis (TB) Program, and other critical stakeholders at the official flag-off ceremony of the National Childhood TB Testing Week. The event, held at Community Secondary School, Mbak Etoi, marked the launch of a nationwide initiative aimed at tackling one of the most pressing public health challenges in childhood TB.

The campaign focuses on early detection of TB among children through intensified case finding, targeted testing, and improved linkage to care. Throughout the week, activities included community engagement, awareness creation, and sensitization sessions to educate caregivers, parents, and teachers on the signs and symptoms of TB and the importance of seeking timely diagnosis and treatment.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Etop Atia, Director of Public Health, underscored the need to prioritize children in TB interventions, noting that early diagnosis is critical to breaking the chain of transmission and reducing TB-related morbidity and mortality. The State TB Program Lead further reaffirmed the state's commitment to provide technical support and logistics to ensure effective implementation during the campaign.

ECEWS reaffirmed its role as a strategic partner in the TB response by providing technical expertise, strengthening facility-community linkages, and ensuring quality data reporting for childhood TB interventions. Its contributions are vital to bridging service delivery gaps, mobilizing communities, and linking children identified during screening to treatment and follow-up care.

The event concluded with a symbolic TB screening exercise for selected students, serving both as a demonstration and a call to action for parents, caregivers, and community leaders to actively support ongoing efforts. The initiative is expected to significantly improve childhood TB case identification in the state, while strengthening the broader response to end TB.

ECEWS Strengthens ART Services with Essential tools at Ikorodu General Hospital, Lagos State

The Chief Executive Officer of ECEWS, Dr. Andy Eyo, recently visited Ikorodu General Hospital to deliver essential tools in support of lifesaving Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) services under the ACE-5 Project. The donated items including metallic shelves, printers, desktop computers, weighing scales, thermometers, sphygmomanometers, waiting chairs, alarm clocks, and refrigerators are vital resources aimed at enhancing service delivery, improving efficiency, and ensuring better quality of care for patients.

During the visit, Dr. Eyo reaffirmed ECEWS's commitment to supporting government-led healthcare initiatives in Lagos State and commended Ikorodu General Hospital for its remarkable role in the fight against HIV. The facility currently provides treatment to over 5,000 patients, making it one of the leading service providers in the state.

Dr. Eyo was accompanied by Dr. Adeoye Adegboye (Chief of Party), Dr. Otoy Toyoy (Deputy Chief of Party), Dr. Johnpaul Mbah (Acting State Director for Lagos and Senior Technical Advisor for Care and Treatment), and members of the Lagos State ACE-5 Project team reinforcing the collective commitment to improving health outcomes.

Receiving the items, Dr. Nurudeen Onaolapo, Deputy Chief Medical Director of Ikorodu General Hospital, expressed deep appreciation to ECEWS ACE-5 and gave assurance of the hospital's dedication to maintaining high standards of care. His gratitude was echoed by Mr. R.O. Ogunbanwo (Head of Administration and Human Resources) and Dr. O.O. Oduleye (ART Coordinator), who highlighted the positive impact the donation would have on patient services and hospital operations.

This donation reflects ACE-5's broader goal of improving healthcare in Nigeria. With nearly two million people living with HIV nationwide (UNAIDS, 2024), partnerships like this underscore the critical role of collaboration between NGOs and government institutions in scaling up HIV care and reducing the burden of the epidemic.



GENERAL HOSPITAL IKORODU



A Mother's Triumph:

Breaking the Cycle
of HIV Transmission





Ndidi (not real name), a mother of four children and living in Delta State, Nigeria, was worried that her family's future might be overshadowed by HIV. The thought of her children facing the virus was a constant source of anxiety, one that mirrored her own HIV-positive diagnosis. Yet, her story is not one of fear, but of profound triumph, a victory secured through the dedicated hands of ECEWS SPEED Project funded by US Centers for Disease Control through PEPFAR.

"Since ECEWS helped my husband and me, they've supported us a lot. Now, all our four children are HIV-negative. I'm very grateful to PEPFAR and ECEWS for their support and care," shares Ndidi her face radiant with a hard-won sense of peace. This life-changing outcome four beautiful, healthy children was made possible by the comprehensive care of the PEPFAR-supported Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) program. For Ndidi and her husband, the program became a pillar of hope.

From the moment Ndidi entered the program, she was enveloped in meticulous, holistic care. The SPEED project team provided crucial medical attention, unwavering emotional support, and empowerment through knowledge about treatment and living well. This comprehensive approach was paramount in ensuring that the virus was not passed from mother to child during pregnancy or birth.

Ndidi's journey showcases the profound impact of dedicated, continuous support. Her children's clean bill of health is the ultimate testament to the effectiveness of the PMTCT strategy and ECEWS team's commitment. As she looks toward the future, she is filled with determination, knowing she is not just a mother, but a powerful symbol of resilience, hope, and courage a living example of the life-saving potential of quality healthcare.



Progress of ECEWS-NMEP in Enugu State

ECEWS Chief Health Officer (CHO), Dr. Okezie Onyedinachi recently concluded an incredibly productive and insightful visit to Enugu State, the heart of Coal City. The purpose of the visit was to engage directly with dedicated teams and key stakeholders, ensuring we solidify the impact of our ongoing public health efforts across the region.

Our focus in Enugu remains sharp on guaranteeing access to qualitative healthcare, particularly through ECEWS-NMEP (National Malaria Elimination Program) Project, which is actively working in all 17 Local Government Areas (LGAs). The commitment of our staff and the tangible positive ripple effect of our work in the communities is profoundly motivating.

During the visit, ECEWS team engaged in strategic discussions centered on improving program integration, enhancing data-driven decision-making, and strengthening our vital partnerships with the state government to achieve truly sustainable health outcomes. The passion for service demonstrated by our Enugu team is palpable. This firsthand experience powerfully reaffirms ECEWS's unwavering commitment to building healthier, more resilient communities across the Southeast and the entirety of Nigeria

ECEWS Enrolls 465 Ancillary Staff into Cross River State Health Insurance Scheme

ECEWS ACE-5 State Management Team in Cross River State has successfully facilitated the enrollment of 465 ancillary staff into the State Health Insurance Scheme. This milestone followed a strategic engagement with the Director General of the State Health Insurance Agency (SHIA), which resolved earlier challenges that limited-service coverage to Primary Health Centers. With SHIA's expansion of coverage to include secondary health facilities where many ancillary staff provide support, ECEWS and SHIA reached an agreement on the insurance premium, enabling the enrollment process to move forward. This achievement marks a significant step toward improving staff welfare and expanding access to quality healthcare.

In addition, the team engaged the State Agency for the Control of AIDS (SACA) to review plans for the enrollment of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) into the state scheme, underscoring ECEWS's commitment to inclusive and equitable health coverage.

As part of wider stakeholder engagement, the team also visited the State Primary Health Care Development Agency (SPHCDA) to advocate for sensitizing Primary Health Care Directors on service integration at PHCs. The SPHCDA welcomed the initiative and invited ECEWS to present at its upcoming meeting with PHC Directors, providing a platform to further strengthen service delivery integration across the state.

ECEWS and Osun State Celebrate 36 HIV Testing Sites Achieving National Level 4 Quality

ECEWS and the Osun State Government jointly celebrated a major public health milestone: 36 HIV testing sites across Osun State achieved the highest possible standard of quality. Through ECEWS SPEED project, we collaborated closely with the State to drive continuous quality improvement, which resulted in the successful attainment of Level 4 status in the national Rapid Testing Continuous Quality Improvement (RTCQI) audit. This coveted Level 4 certification signified adherence to the most rigorous standards for diagnostic accuracy and quality management, offering the people of Osun State a crucial guarantee of reliability every time they accessed an HIV test.

This significant accomplishment was officially marked at the Quarterly External Quality Assessment (EQA) and CQI Review Meeting held on September 12, 2025. The event showcased powerful government ownership, as high-level dignitaries, including the Permanent Secretary, Hospitals Management Board, Dr. Abayomi Oni, and Permanent Secretary, Osun State Ministry of Health, Isiaka Adekunle, actively participated. They commended ECEWS for the remarkable progress achieved since our intervention began and underscored the state's shared commitment to laboratory excellence.

The formal presentation of certificates to the 36 facilities confirmed that ECEWS technical collaboration was a vital force in strengthening government leadership and successfully implementing sustainable, world-class Quality Management Systems for HIV service delivery in Osun State.



ECEWS Participation in the Inaugural Akwa Ibom State Humanitarian Stakeholders Roundtable



ECEWS ACE-5 project team participated in the inaugural Akwa Ibom State Humanitarian Stakeholders Roundtable, convened by the State Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs on Thursday, 21st August 2025. This landmark event served as a critical platform for strengthening coordinated humanitarian response across the state, with a strong emphasis on harmonizing efforts, mobilizing resources, and ensuring transparency in planning. The roundtable represented a significant call to action for deeper collaboration among diverse stakeholders to address the vast and pressing humanitarian needs within the citizenry. The event, held at the IBOM Learning, Entrepreneurship and Development Centre under the theme *"Strengthening Global Solidarity and Empowering Local Communities,"* convened key actors from government ministries, civil society organizations, the private sector, and development partners, including ECEWS represented by Mr. Asukwo Etuk (Chief Technical Officer/ Administrative Lead) and Dr. Bala Gana (Akwa Ibom State Director).

In her opening remarks, the Honorable Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs, Hon. Princess Emem Ibanga, commended the compassionate leadership of the State Governor in establishing the Ministry as an institutional platform to support vulnerable and distressed populations. She highlighted state-led interventions such as the ARISE Care and Share Initiative and the Bulk Purchase Agency, which has provided food support to over 477,000 households, with a third phase currently in progress. While acknowledging these significant efforts, the Commissioner stressed that humanitarian needs in Akwa Ibom remain vast and complex.

She called for stronger collaboration and collective action from development partners, financial institutions, NGOs, faith-based organizations, security agencies, and international partners to build a more resilient

and hopeful state. The roundtable featured insightful contributions from various leaders, including a keynote address by Mr. Richard Effiong of UNHCR, goodwill messages from partners, and an analytical presentation by Prof. Aniekan Brown of the University of Uyo, on the current state of the humanitarian and development sector.

Throughout the discussions, the focus remained on practical strategies for harmonizing interventions, improving resource mobilization, and enhancing transparency in humanitarian planning. On behalf of ECEWS, Dr. Bala Gana, Akwa Ibom State Director, delivered a thoughtful goodwill message in which he commended the Ministry for facilitating this essential dialogue and reaffirmed ECEWS' commitment to saving lives, restoring dignity, and building resilience. He highlighted ECEWS' proven contributions across health, education, and economic strengthening and emphasized the importance of synergy with government and partners.

During the breakout session, Dr. Gana further demonstrated ECEWS' leadership by proposing targeted actionable measures for scenarios such as flooding and insurgency-induced displacement. His recommendations, which included rapid needs assessments, strategic use of existing data, coordinated stakeholder engagement, and proactive communication, reinforced the critical importance of preparedness, collaboration, and community ownership in effective humanitarian response. The team's participation ensured that the emerging humanitarian agenda for the state is grounded in evidence-based planning, collaboration, and accountability principles that are central to our mission. This engagement did not only allow us to showcase our technical expertise and on-the-ground experience but also opened avenues for future collaboration that aligns with the state's priorities.

From Fear to Hope

Priscilla felt her world crumble. She was overwhelmed, terrified, and could barely process what she had just heard. *"The thought of being on medication for life was too much to handle. I felt like everything I had worked for was falling apart,"* said Priscilla. Confused and clueless about the next steps, the immediate support she received changed her life.



ECEWS support ART team took immediate action and stood by her every step of the way. She was linked to a case manager and an adherence counsellor who took the time to explain her treatment, help her accept her diagnosis, and make her understand HIV does not have to be a death sentence. Priscilla explained that their words, patience, and kindness helped her regain hope; they helped her to understand that there is still so much more to be achieved and so much kindness in the world. When she found out that she was pregnant, she was filled with joy, but fear lingered, fear of the unknown, especially with her high viral load. The team proceeded to enroll her in the Mentor Mother Support Program under ECEWS ACE-5 Lagos project, where she met people like her, people who shared the same fears with her for their unborn children. But her Mentor Mother was incredible, having been a survivor, herself. She made the whole process easy. She would check up on her daily reminders for her medication and offer emotional support when her spirit was low.

The ART team also intensified her care, provided more counseling, closer clinical follow-ups, and a strong plan for safe delivery. The genuine concern shown to her made her feel more renewed and not alone. *"One thing that stood out to me was how coordinated everything was, the delivery process; making sure my baby got prophylaxis immediately for 12 weeks. She was tested at birth, six weeks, and at 18 months, which all came out negative. My baby is HIV-free today; I am virally suppressed and fully engaged in my treatment. It feels like I have been given a second chance in life. My hope has been renewed through every process, I felt seen and cared for, not from a place of duty alone, but genuine human compassion,"* said Priscilla.

Priscilla's story shows that with early testing, proper medical care, and community support, people living with HIV can lead long, healthy, and meaningful lives. They can also have children who are not born with HIV. Thanks to the collaboration of local health workers, support groups, and assistance from donors, people like Priscilla are not just surviving; they are rediscovering hope.



ECEWS CEO Honored with ANPA Fellowship for Exemplary Leadership in Akwa Ibom Public Health Administration

On Monday, 8th September 2025, the Chief Executive Officer of the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), Dr. Andy Eyo, was conferred with the prestigious Fellowship of the Association of Nigerian Public Administrators (ANPA) in recognition of his exemplary leadership and the organizational model he has championed in strengthening Akwa Ibom State's public health sector.

The honor was presented during the 5th Annual International Conference of ANPA, hosted by the Department of Public Administration, Akwa Ibom State University, Uyo. Themed "Public Administration and Sustainable Development: Building Resilient Institutions in Nigeria," the conference convened senior policymakers, academics, and development practitioners from across the country. The award was received on Dr. Eyo's behalf by the Akwa Ibom State Director, Dr. Bala Gana.

Dr. Eyo's recognition underscores not only his personal leadership but also the broader impact of ECEWS as a catalyst for governance innovation, sustainable development, and strengthened health systems. It highlights the organization's continued role as a trusted partner in building resilient institutions and transforming public health outcomes in Nigeria.

ECEWS ACE-5 Project Supplies NIMR with Essential Tools to Enhance HIV Program Delivery

On September 16, 2025, the Chief Executive Officer of ECEWS, Dr. Andy Eyo, accompanied by the Chief of Party, Dr. Adeoye, Deputy Chief of Party, Dr. Otoyoye, and the Lagos State ACE-5 Project Team, paid an official visit to the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research (NIMR). The purpose of the visit was to formally hand over essential medical and laboratory equipment supplied under the ACE-5 HIV program.

This initiative reflects ACE-5's continued commitment to strengthening NIMR's capacity as a leading medical research and treatment facility, while ensuring smooth and effective delivery of Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) services across Lagos State. The items were formally received by the Director General of NIMR, Professor John Obafunwa, along with members of the institute's leadership and technical team. Equipment supplied included a digital thermometer ambient, 1.5Hp Panasonic split air conditioner, BP apparatus, manual sphygmomanometer, Littmann stethoscope, pediatric weighing scale, Dell Latitude 7340 laptop, Dell 24" All-in-One desktop, HP LaserJet Pro M4003DN printer, Mercury Elite 1500VA (2KVA) UPS, and a display screen. Each item was presented, and its usage explained to NIMR staff to ensure effective operation and maximum impact. The air conditioners were particularly highlighted as critical for preserving sensitive medical equipment.

In his remarks, Dr. Eyo commended NIMR for its accountability and leadership, expressing confidence that the equipment would be appropriately utilized in the designated areas. He emphasized that the donation, made on behalf of the Department of State Program and ECEWS team, was intended to strengthen operations, enhance service delivery, and reinforce ECEWS's partnership with NIMR in advancing HIV care and treatment.

In response, Professor Obafunwa expressed his appreciation to ECEWS, assuring that the items would be used judiciously to strengthen NIMR's operations. He thanked ECEWS for its continuous support under the ACE-5 Project, which has enabled the institute to remain fully operational and responsive in HIV research and service delivery.





ECEWS Supports AKSACA–CBO Engagement to Strengthen Community HIV Response

On Tuesday, 16th September 2025, the Akwa Ibom State Agency for the Control of AIDS (AKSACA), in collaboration with the State Ministry of Health and the MAP-IT project, hosted a Technical Workshop on a Sustainable Agenda for Community-Based Primary HIV Prevention at the Ministry of Health Conference Room, Idongesit Nkanga Secretariat, Uyo.

The workshop convened a wide range of stakeholders, including implementing partners (IPs), community and faith-based leaders, youth and education groups, the Ministry of Information, and associations such as Association of Women Living With HIV/AIDS in Nigeria (ASWHAN) and NEPWHAN, alongside senior government officials led by the Director of Public Health.

In his goodwill message, Dr. Bala Gana, ACE-5 Project State Director, commended AKSACA for its innovation and leadership in advancing the HIV response. He emphasized the importance of aligning interventions with sustainable and community-driven approaches

that prioritize ownership and long-term impact.

Breakout sessions explored critical areas of HIV prevention. Dr. Gana contributed to discussions on Condom Programming, underscoring strategies to optimize uptake and utilization, while Dr. Awak facilitated a session on PMTCT, highlighting opportunities to leverage Community Birth Centers to strengthen maternal and child health outcomes.

This engagement is strategic to the ACE-5 project, as it reinforces community-centered HIV prevention models, enhances multi-sectoral collaboration, and promotes the integration of HIV services with broader health priorities such as maternal health and non-communicable diseases. By involving diverse stakeholders, the workshop broadened advocacy, fostered community ownership, and strengthened the foundations for a sustainable HIV response in Akwa Ibom State.



