



ECEWS RISING

OCTOBER 2025 EDITION

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From the CEO's Desk

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

Our focus story, ECEWS Board Vice Chairman Visit to ECEWS Enugu State Impact Malaria Project, highlights how through effective leadership and oversight, we have strengthened the fight against malaria through data-driven impact and community-centered service delivery.

We also feature stories of transformation and resilience from ECEWS and Nka Uforo Iban's evaluation of community empowerment grants, which reaffirmed the success of investments in women's livelihoods and social impact, to Aviclaire Farms, ECEWS & NACOLGDA's partnership for agricultural transformation, where collaboration is advancing food security and sustainable farming practices across local communities.

In our human-interest story of the month, From Despair to Renewed Hope: How ECEWS Intervention Saved Edidiong's Life, we see the heart of our mission compassion in action as timely medical and psychosocial support restored hope and health to a once-vulnerable life.

Together, these stories reflect the unshaken commitment of our teams, partners, and communities toward building systems that promote health, empowerment, and growth.

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

Andy Eyo

Chief Executive Officer, ECEWS

ECEWS Project Strengthens Laboratory Systems in Cross River

As part of ongoing efforts to improve laboratory quality management and service delivery, the ECEWS Accelerating Control of the HIV Epidemic (ACE-5) Project has provided essential laboratory resources to the Cross River State Ministry of Health. The presentation was led by Dr. Kenneth Odey, Director of Cluster Operations, alongside the State Laboratory Team, and received by Dr. Henry Ayuk, the State Commissioner for Health, and senior officials from the Medical Laboratory Services Department.

The equipment and supplies were procured in direct response to gaps identified during the May 2025 Laboratory Quality Management System (QMS) assessment conducted using the WHO AFRO SLIPTA checklist. The donated items are designed to strengthen infection prevention and control, temperature monitoring, and staff welfare—key components of quality laboratory operations. This strategic investment underscores ECEWS ACE-5's commitment to supporting the state's progress toward Medical Laboratory Science Council of Nigeria (MLSCN) accreditation and advancing the delivery of reliable, high-quality laboratory services across Cross River State.



ECEWS Participates in Lagos State PMTCT Scale-Up Meeting

On October 10, 2025, the Lagos State AIDS/STI Control Programme (SASCP) convened the State PMTCT Scale-Up and Sustainability Meeting to review progress in the Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) program and chart strategies for long-term sustainability of services across the state.

The meeting brought together key government stakeholders, implementing partners, and members of the technical working group to assess performance, share best practices, and harmonize interventions. Discussions centered on integrating PMTCT into routine maternal and child health programs, strengthening referral and data reporting systems, and ensuring consistent commodity availability.

Represented by the Technical Officer for Pediatrics/ PMTCT, ECEWS shared notable achievements recorded across supported facilities, including increased uptake of Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) among pregnant women, improved Early Infant Diagnosis (EID) coverage, and enhanced follow-up for mother-infant pairs. ECEWS also

highlighted its data-driven interventions, capacity-building initiatives, and collaboration with facility leadership as key drivers of progress. These efforts continue to strengthen service quality and contribute significantly to the state's goal of achieving elimination of mother-to-child transmission (EMTCT).

The meeting reaffirmed the shared commitment of SASCP, ECEWS, and partners to sustaining PMTCT gains and advancing maternal and child health outcomes across Lagos State.

Vice-Chairman of the ECEWS Board Visits ECEWS Enugu State Impact Malaria Project

The Vice Board Chairman of Excellence Community Education Welfare ScECEWS), Prof. Emem Bassey, visited the ECEWS office in Enugu State, on October 17, 2025. The visit highlighted his interaction with staff, visiting a support site, and meeting stakeholders. He assessed project achievements, challenges, and coursed the way forward.

Achievements include increased access to malaria services, improved case management knowledge, and enhanced coordination with state health authorities. However, challenges such as inadequate office setup, delayed integrated vector management, and funding constraints were identified. Also, he conducted a visit to New Heaven Health Center, where he observed the facility's bustling environment and the presence of a dedicated medical doctor on staff. However, he also identified several critical gaps, including inadequate human resource capacity, a significant shortage of Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) and essential malaria commodities, as well as instances of inappropriate treatment practices that require urgent attention to improve the quality of care provided.

Subsequently, the Board Vice Chairman also met with the Executive Secretary, Primary Health Care Development Agency, and several state officials including the SMEP Program Manager, Director of Public Health, and Honorable Commissioner for Health. These meetings focused on collaboration, feedback, and requests for capacity building, and adherence to national policies. However, some key recommendations from his visit included addressing suboptimal malaria treatment knowledge, lack of RDT and SP, as well as inadequate office setup and staffing, to which the State officials committed to addressing.



ECEWS supports Akwa Ibom State in Developing the 2026 Health AOP



ECEWS actively participated in a five-day intersectoral strategy and planning meeting convened by the Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health, from October 13–17, 2025, at the New Point Hotel, Uyo. The session brought together key stakeholders and implementing partners to finalize the 2026 Akwa Ibom State Health Sector Annual Operational Plan (AOP) a critical blueprint for guiding health investments and interventions across the state.

Using the web-based AOP tool, participants jointly conducted budget planning, resource mapping, activity alignment, and cost identification across priority program areas including HIV, Tuberculosis, Malaria, STIs, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and Maternal Health. The collaborative process ensured equitable resource allocation, reduced duplication, and harmonized partner-supported activities under a unified state health strategy aimed at improving overall health outcomes for the people of Akwa Ibom State.

The exercise aligns with the U.S. Department of State's priorities on cost efficiency, resource optimization, and domestic resource mobilization, promoting stronger government ownership and sustainability of health programs. For ECEWS ACE-5, this represents a key opportunity to strengthen collaboration with other implementing partners and sustain critical components of comprehensive HIV care within the evolving funding landscape. Through its active engagement, ECEWS continues to contribute to evidence-based planning and a coordinated approach to health systems strengthening in Akwa Ibom State.



ECEWS Supports Osun State's Digital Planning Leap with New Annual Planning Tool

ECEWS Supports Osun State's Digital Planning Leap with New Annual Planning Tool

The Osun State 2026 Annual Operational Planning (AOP) Development and Harmonization Workshop was held from Monday, October 6, to Friday, October 10, 2025. This pivotal 5-day event brought together representatives from all Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). ECEWS, the lead implementing partner, actively participated and was represented by Oluwaseunfunmi Adefranje (Osun State Program Manager) and Dr. Michael O. Aworeni (Technical Officer, HSS&CQIM who provided technical support and contribution throughout the event.

A major highlight of this year's AOP was the introduction of the online AOP tool, a digital innovation that transformed the entire planning process. For the first time, the MDA focal persons and program officers were assigned a unique login ID, enabling real time entry of activities planned and cost estimates directly on the portal. This upgrade allowed for a faster and more transparent process.

Osun State's HIV response, led by the Ministry of Health in partnership with Osun SACA, demonstrated exceptional coordination during the Annual Operational Plan (AOP). Under the leadership of the State AIDS Program Coordinator, Dr. Ajilo Oladipo, and with strong support from Mrs. Blessing Ayoola, SASCP M&E Officer, and Mr. Adeleke, Community Mobilization Officer from Osun SACA, the team ensured that every critical intervention from supervisory and monitoring visits to capacity-building sessions and procurement of essential commodities was comprehensively documented and accurately costed. The adoption of digital innovation transformed the AOP process, setting a new benchmark for efficiency, accountability, and data-driven planning within Osun State's health sector, with a strong emphasis on service integration. Through PEPFAR funding, ECEWS continues to provide technical assistance, driving state ownership and sustaining the integration of the significant gains achieved in the HIV response.



ECEWS pledges HIV support at Akwa Ibom State PWD workshop



On October 22, 2025, the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), through its Akwa Ibom State Director, Dr. Bala Gana, participated actively in a one-day sensitization workshop for People with Disabilities (PWDs) on HIV Prevention, Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), Gender, and Human Rights. The workshop, convened by the Akwa Ibom State Agency for the Control of AIDS (AKSACA) with support from NACA, UNFPA, and the State Ministry of Health, provided a platform for dialogue and learning aimed at advancing an inclusive and rights-based approach to HIV programming in the state.



In his goodwill message, Dr. Bala Gana reaffirmed ECEWS' commitment to inclusive health interventions, noting that achieving HIV epidemic control requires deliberate engagement with all population groups—particularly those often marginalized due to social, cultural, or physical barriers.



The workshop featured interactive sessions that enhanced participants' understanding of HIV prevention strategies, SRH rights, and the intersection between gender, disability, and human rights. A practical segment also included demonstrations on the correct use of condoms, helping participants build confidence in applying prevention knowledge in everyday life. ECEWS' participation underscores its ongoing efforts to strengthen community systems, promote equity and human rights, and expand access to quality HIV and SRH services for vulnerable and underserved populations, including PWDs.



The meeting concluded with a renewed call for collaboration among government agencies, implementing partners, and disability networks to sustain inclusive service delivery and ensure that no group is left behind in Akwa Ibom State's HIV and public health response.



To ensure that the Akuku-Toru Community Health Insurance Scheme (CHIS) continues to enjoy maximum support, ECEWS and Renaissance met with the newly elected chairman of the Akuku-Toru Local Government Chairman, Hon. Abioya-a Bob-Fubara on the 14th of October, 2025. The chairman was accompanied by the Secretary to the Akuku-Toru Local Government Area, Rivers State, Mr. Awo-Wari Augustus Amakiri; the LGA's Chief of Staff Mr. Otomba Yellow; important LGA officials and some councilors. The aim of this meeting was to brief the newly elected chairman about the Akuku-Toru CHIS, whilst seeking for his support on the scheme.

Akuku-Toru LGA Chairman pledges support for the Health Insurance Project

In a presentation made to the chairman and his entourage, details of the scheme were explained, particularly highlighting key elements such as the stakeholder engagements, premium, benefit package, infrastructural upgrade, formal launch and commencement of service delivery. Particular emphasis was made on the CHIS Management Board, which is composed of representatives of the LGA, Rivers State Primary Healthcare Management Board, the community, Renaissance and ECEWS; of which he was expected to chair. The role the chairman and the LGA could play in the scheme was also mentioned.



The meeting presented an opportunity for Renaissance to highlight significant investments that the company has made and intends to make in many riverine communities in the LGA thus improving the health system of the region. In the open forum that followed, questions and clarifications were made by ECEWS and Renaissance on the CHIS. In his response, the chairman welcomed the CHIS and promised to fully support the scheme by continuing the discussion with the ECEWS and Renaissance team to see to the success of the scheme.



ECEWS donates equipment to improve Patient Care in UCTH and UCMC

In a continued effort to strengthen health systems and improve service delivery, the ECEWS ACE-5 project donated and installed two 1.5HP Panasonic inverter split air conditioners at the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH) and formally handed over a suite of essential assets to the University of Calabar Medical Centre (UCMC) during in October 2025.

At UCTH, the air conditioners were officially received by Mrs. Jane Ebiri, Program Manager, on behalf of the Clinical Management and Advisory Committee (CMAC), while at UCMC, the donations were received by Mrs. Margaret Onen, Director, National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA)-UCMC. The items handed over to UCMC include a solar panel and inverter system with battery backup to ensure uninterrupted power supply, as well as office equipment

comprising an all-in-one desktop computer, an HP LaserJet Pro 4003dn printer, a worktable, and five office chairs. Both Mrs. Onen and Mrs. Ebiri expressed profound appreciation to ECEWS ACE-5 project for the timely and impactful support, noting that the intervention will enhance service integration, operational efficiency, and sustainability within the facilities.

This initiative reflects ECEWS ACE-5's unwavering commitment to strengthening institutional capacities and improving the overall quality of HIV and healthcare services across partner-supported facilities in Cross River State.



Strengthening Capacity for Malaria Prevention

ECEWS recently organized a sensitization and capacity-building workshop for members of the Women Support Women Community Network (WOSCONET) in Enugu State, Nigeria, aiming to strengthen the capacity of women leaders, health advocates, and community mobilizers in malaria prevention, treatment, and community health promotion.

Dr. Ayodele Alegbeleye, ECEWS Project Director, emphasized the critical role of the Enugu State Government in malaria elimination efforts, stressing the need to test before treatment and discourage self-medication. Participants were trained on practical prevention measures, including environmental sanitation, indoor residual spraying, and sleeping under Long-Lasting Insecticidal-Treated Nets (LLINs).

The workshop also equipped participants with skills to report challenges in malaria service delivery, utilizing toll-free lines, complaint boxes, and online feedback forms to promote accountability and improve service quality. Inspired by the training, participants pledged

to become community ambassadors for malaria prevention and control, with a shared goal of making Enugu State malaria-free





Reaching the Unreachable
with HIV Testing Services and linkage to treatment
through the **Congregational Approach**



ECEWS Ekiti Accelerating Progress in Pediatrics and PMTCT (AP3) Team is ensuring that no woman is denied access to HIV testing through the innovative Congregational Approach. This strategy integrates HIV testing directly into existing religious and traditional gatherings in LGAs like Emure, Otun, and Ijero, where facility testing is scarce. The team works with religious leaders and Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs), conducting advocacy visits to gain access and mobilize pregnant women. Testing occurs at central points, and anyone who tests positive is seamlessly linked to nearby health facilities for care. The team also trained four TBAs on testing and referral processes. To support participation, Mama Packs

(essential childbirth items) are distributed to expectant mothers during these outreaches.

In Financial year FY25 this collaborative model reached 465 pregnant and breastfeeding women and 60 children, leading to the identification of one new HIV-positive woman and follow-up for five women already in treatment, significantly reducing vertical transmission risk. By bringing testing into faith-based spaces, the team deepens trust and ensures that no woman is unreachable. The team will sustain this impact by providing ongoing technical support and client follow-up to promote adherence and retention in care.



Ekiti State 18 Facilities Testing Points Achieved National Certification



Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), implementing the U.S. Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-funded project Sustainable Programs for HIV Epidemic Control and Equitable Service Delivery (SPEED), in collaboration with the Ekiti State Ministry of Health, has celebrated a landmark achievement in Ekiti state on achieving Level 4 National Certification of HIV Rapid Testing Points across supported health facilities. For decades, health facility testing points across the state have fallen short of the Quality Assurance (QA) implementation of HIV rapid testing services and lack Level 4 National Certification of their testing points. This is because of poor adherence to the HIV testing algorithm, use of standard operating procedures, implementation of quality assurance and quality control (QC) measures, accurate documentation, trained personnel, and proper biosafety practices. This certification is a critical milestone for the HIV Testing Services (HTS) program because it guarantees the accuracy, reliability, and credibility of HIV test results, thereby ensuring that clients receive correct diagnoses and appropriate linkage to care. It also strengthens internal quality assurance systems, enhances staff competency and

motivation, promotes data integrity for public health reporting, and boosts partner confidence in program performance. Achieving Level 4 certification demonstrates excellence in service delivery and a strong commitment to sustaining high-quality, client-centred HIV testing as part of Nigeria's broader goal toward epidemic control.

This milestone marks a significant stride in strengthening Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) for HIV rapid testing services across the state. The achievement follows the successful rollout of the Rapid Testing Continuous Quality Improvement (RTCQI) framework and the implementation of the Quality Management System (QMS) across supported facilities. These efforts were driven by targeted laboratory-led interventions, of bi-annual WHO/CDC's Stepwise Process for Improving the Quality of HIV Rapid Testing (SPI-RT) audits, structured mentorship, on-site capacity building, provision of job aids and SOPs, and quarterly EQA review meetings. The State Ministry of Health, in collaboration with ECEWS, convened a formal certification ceremony to recognize these achievements. The event was graced by key stakeholders,

including the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health, Mrs Olusola Gbenga-Igotun; the Permanent Secretary, Hospital Management Board, Dr Alabi Olanikanmi; the SASCP Coordinator, Dr Ajayi Olusola; the Director of Laboratory Services (represented by Mr Samuel Olajide); the State Program Manager, Dr Adewole Osilade; and Laboratory Focal Persons from across the state. The ceremony highlighted the collective dedication and partnership that enabled this milestone, reflecting the unwavering commitment of ECEWS and the health workers toward ensuring accuracy, reliability, and sustainability in HIV rapid testing.

This milestone affirms Ekiti State's strong alignment with national quality assurance standards and underscores the power of continuous mentorship, supportive supervision, and laboratory leadership in driving quality improvement. It serves as a model for other unsupported facilities seeking to institutionalize RTCQI within their HIV testing programs and advances toward national certification and sustainable quality in HIV service delivery.



ECEWS welcomes NISM 2.0 team to boost sample-referral efficiency in Akwa Ibom State

From October 20–24, 2025, the ECEWS team collaborated with the National Integrated Specimen Referral Network (NISRN) Development Team for NISM 2.0 to conduct a joint technical review across five LGAs in Akwa Ibom (Uyo, Eket, Ikot Ekpene, Etim Ekpo, and Oron). The week-long engagement aimed to assess and strengthen specimen referral workflows, improve digital tracking efficiency, and enhance coordination among field logistics teams, PCR laboratories, and health facilities.

The review brought together ECEWS laboratory leads, facility focal persons, and Third-Party Logistics (3PL) providers for joint sessions focused on optimizing sample collection, transportation, testing, and result dispatch processes. Facility visits included the Uyo PCR Laboratory, Eket Immanuel General Hospital, and Oron General Hospital, where the teams conducted live system demonstrations and data synchronization checks on the NISM 2.0 platform. The exercise improved participants' understanding of digital specimen tracking, reinforced collaboration among ECEWS and key implementing partners, and identified system and operational gaps for further improvement.

This activity reflects ECEWS ACE-5's ongoing commitment to advancing digital transformation and operational excellence in laboratory systems, ensuring timely and reliable sample referral services that strengthen the HIV response across Akwa Ibom State.

ECEWS and Eno Charity Initiative Deliver Health Education and Supplies in Nsit-Atai LGA

As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen community health and social well-being, the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), through the Accelerating Control of the HIV Epidemic-Cluster 5 (ACE-5) project, partnered with the Eno Charity Initiative to organize a community health outreach at St. Pius RCM Primary School, Ikot Itie Udung, in Nsit Atai Local Government Area on October 6, 2025.

The outreach featured engaging health education sessions led by members of the ECEWS technical team, focusing on personal hygiene, nutrition, and social well-being. The interactive format encouraged pupils to participate actively, helping them build essential knowledge and habits that support long-term health.

In addition to the health talks, pupils received books, sandals, school bags, and writing materials to enhance their learning experience and overall welfare. The initiative reflects ECEWS' commitment to community engagement and preventive health education, aligning with the Accelerating Control of the HIV Epidemic in Nigeria (ACE-5) Project's goal of promoting Social and Behavioral Change Communication (SBCC). By partnering with local organizations such as the Eno Charity Initiative, ECEWS continues to extend the impact of the ACE-5 Project beyond facility-based interventions fostering goodwill, inclusivity, and stronger health outcomes within rural communities.



ECEWS supports the Delta State Ministry of Health in developing its 2026 Annual Operational Plan

In a significant collaborative effort to advance its healthcare system, the Delta State Ministry of Health successfully concluded a five-day workshop to finalize its 2026 Annual Operational Plan (AOP). The event, held from October 20th to 24th, 2025, at the Kim Royal Hotel in Asaba, brought together key program officers, development partners, and stakeholders to design a strategic roadmap for improving health outcomes across the state in the coming year.

Convened in accordance with the National Health Act of 2014, the workshop aimed to develop a data-driven, cost-efficient, prioritized, and actionable health plan aligned with the national Health Sector Strategic Blueprint and Sector-Wide Approach (HSSB/SWAp). The session was graced by high-level officials including the Permanent Secretary of the SMOH, Dr. Philomena Okeowo, and the Director of Health Planning, Research, and Statistics, Dr. Uche Okwe, who urged participants to develop a robust plan to improve the health status of residents.

Mr. Henry UDENENWU, State Program Manager for the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), emphasized the need for sustainable activities and government ownership, especially in an era of declining donor funds. Dr. Theophilus Agidotan, the AOP Focal Person, outlined the goal of creating a realistic and actionable plan, while Dr. Aghogho Oyawiri, the SWAp focal person, guided participants on using Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs) as benchmarks for planning.

The workshop followed a structured agenda to ensure a thorough and inclusive process. The initial days focused on foundational planning, with program area leads and partners, including ECEWS, supporting the State AIDS and STI Control Programme (SASCP) and State Agency for the Control of AIDS (SACA), in drafting SMART activities for HIV response and other health programs. This was followed by presentations and peer reviews across various health areas such as Malaria, Immunization, and Reproductive Health, where activities were refined for clarity and impact.

Participants then engaged in detailed financial planning, conducting ingredient-based costing and resource mapping to attach realistic cost estimates to each activity and identify potential funding sources. The costed activities and resource maps were subsequently presented, reviewed, and validated by the plenary to ensure fiscal responsibility. The final day focused on

integrating the fully developed AOP with the state's budget framework, ensuring the health plans are grounded in financial reality and have a clear path to implementation.

A key outcome of the workshop was the completion of the 2026 AOP, which has set a clear and collaborative direction for Delta State's health sector, demonstrating the commitment of the SMOH, its agencies, and partners to work together for a healthier future. The focus now shifts to advocating for adequate funding and diligently executing the plan throughout the 2026 fiscal year.





Aviclaire Farms, ECEWS, & NACOLGDA partners for Agricultural Transformation in Nigeria

The 13th Annual Conference of the National Council for Local Government Departments of Agriculture (NACOLGDA) took place in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State on September 21, 2025, with a focus on "Rethinking Agricultural Solutions in Nigeria: The need for Empowerment of Local Government Departments of Agriculture." The conference highlighted the crucial role of local government departments in driving a sustainable agricultural revolution. A keynote presentation by Aviclaire Farms CEO, Mrs. Victoria Eyo, and ECEWS CEO, Dr. Andy Eyo, showcased a successful greenhouse planting model, encouraging South-South farmers towards self-sufficiency. The partnership between Aviclaire Farms and ECEWS demonstrated a viable template for private sector innovation in agriculture. Aviclaire Farms announced plans to enter the national market and support local farmers with empowerment initiatives and training, reinforcing the conference's core message, connecting local innovation and farmer support to achieve national market growth and agricultural transformation.



State of Hopelessness

Victory's Journey to Healing and Purpose

When Victory Obiora first walked into the Federal Medical Centre (FMC), Asaba, in 2006, she was at her lowest point. Battling tuberculosis and recurring illnesses, she had just lost her husband to HIV/AIDS. At that time, she didn't know where to seek proper treatment or that a diagnosis didn't mean the end of life. "I felt like my whole world had ended," she recalls. "When I tested positive for HIV, I thought there was no more hope for me."

Victory's health deteriorated rapidly. She was confined to a wheelchair, severely anemic, and weak. "I was carried from one place to another because I had no strength," she says. "I was given three pints of blood and 36 drips just to keep me alive." Everything changed when she was enrolled for treatment at FMC Asaba through the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS). She began with TB medication before transitioning to antiretroviral therapy (ARV). Gradually, her strength returned. Through consistent adherence to treatment, proper counseling, and emotional support from

ECEWS health workers, Victory began to rebuild her hope and her life.

Today, Victory stands as a symbol of resilience and transformation. No longer a patient on the brink, she is now a Mentor Mother at FMC Asaba, using her powerful story to inspire and guide others living with HIV.

"I have used my story to inspire over a hundred patients," she says with pride. "People now call me 'Mother' because of how I follow up on them. I thank God for my life and for ECEWS, whose constant supply of medication and care continues to save lives."

Victory's journey from hopelessness to empowerment showcases the life-changing impact of ECEWS supported HIV programs; from TB and HIV treatment to cervical cancer screening and care. Victory's story reminds us that with access to the right care, hope can be restored, and lives can be transformed.



As part of ongoing efforts to promote a public health-centered approach to drug use, the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), in collaboration with the Ebonyi State Agency for the Control of AIDS (EBOSACA), embarked on an advocacy visit to the Commissioner of Police, Ebonyi State Command.

The visit focused on sensitizing the Commissioner and her team on the Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) program as an evidence-based intervention, designed to support people who use drugs through safe, supervised treatment and linkage to care to avert drugs dependency. The visit aimed to foster understanding and cooperation among law enforcement officers on the public health approach to drug use, promote rights-based service delivery, and ensure an enabling environment for clients accessing MAT services.

The Commissioner of Police, CP Adaku Uche-Anya warmly welcomed the delegation and expressed her commitment to supporting the initiative. She assured that the Command would collaborate closely with ECEWS and EBOSACA, particularly in the areas of community mobilization and client referrals, to strengthen the programme's impact and reach. Speaking during the visit, ECEWS team noted that the success of the MAT program depends greatly on the support of law enforcement. By working together, we can ensure that people who use drugs receive care with dignity and are linked to services that promote recovery, health, and

ECEWS, EBOSACA & the Nigerian Police Partner to Strengthen MAT Support



community safety. This partnership represents a vital step toward bridging public health and law enforcement collaboration, ensuring that people who use drugs receive compassionate, rights-based care while reducing stigma and promoting community well-being. ECEWS remains steadfast in its commitment to delivering uninterrupted and high-quality services to recipients of care, with support from IHVN and the Global Fund. Through these concerted efforts, the organization aims to strengthen the Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) program and contribute significantly to reducing drug dependency and its associated health and social challenges in Ebonyi State.

ECEWS Boosts Uyo & Awka PCR Labs Toward ISO 15189:2022 Accreditation

In continued efforts to strengthen molecular laboratory systems and enhance diagnostic quality, the Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS), through the U.S. Government-funded ACE-5 Project, provided technical support to the University of Uyo Teaching Hospital (UUTH) and the Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Teaching Hospital (COOUTH) PCR laboratories towards their accreditation by the Medical Laboratory Science Council of Nigeria (MLSCN). At UUTH, ECEWS supported the PCR Laboratory during the MLSCN pre-accreditation assessment held on October 6–7, 2025. The evaluation reviewed key operational areas such as molecular testing workflows, Quality Management System (QMS) implementation, biosafety infrastructure, documentation, and staff competency. The laboratory team demonstrated high engagement and compliance with national standards,

reflecting strengthened capacity and improved readiness for full accreditation. Similarly, at COOUTH, the ECEWS Laboratory Team provided pre-assessment and on-site technical assistance during the ISO 15189:2022 transition accreditation assessment conducted from October 9–10, 2025. The MLSCN team, led by Dr. Osaretin Agbonlahor and Mrs. Ijeoma Ahunanya, assessed documentation, measurement uncertainty, and QMS implementation. ECEWS conducted a mock review ahead of the visit, guiding staff on corrective measures and compliance with ISO 15189:2022 standards.

The official MLSCN outcome reports for both facilities are awaited and will inform targeted actions toward securing full ISO 15189:2022 accreditation. These efforts underscore ECEWS' ongoing commitment to strengthening laboratory systems, ensuring quality, and promoting sustainability in diagnostic services under the ACE-5 Project.

ECEWS and Nka Uforo Iban USA Inc Evaluate Success of Community Empowerment Grants

In a heart melting show of progress and accountability, ECEWS Monitoring and Evaluation team, alongside Nka Uforo Iban USA INC, embarked on a project evaluation visit across Uyo and Itu Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The visit aimed to assess the ongoing impact of community support initiatives implemented in 2024, including women's empowerment grants and \$20,000 donations to VVF Hospital and an Orphanage home.

At Itam Market, the team was warmly received by women beneficiaries of the ₦100,000 grant issued last year. Three recipients came forward to share how the support transformed their lives and businesses. Their testimonies were filled with gratitude and hope. A proof of how financial empowerment can help women grow their trades, support their families, and strengthen local economies. Their radiant smiles spoke volumes of resilience and renewed purpose.

The visit also covered two major community projects funded by Nka Uforo Iban in partnership with ECEWS. The Family Life Center Orphanage, and VVF Clinic, each of which received a \$10,000 donation. At the VVF Clinic, management showcased remarkable stewardship of the funds, which were used to purchase 20 hospital beds, 20 mattresses, and 20 bedside lockers; greatly improving patient comfort and service quality. Additional orders for facility upgrades, including requisition for new faucets, demonstrate their ongoing commitment to maternal health care.

At the orphanage, the evaluation team observed significant infrastructure improvements made possible by the donation, including the completion of the main orphanage building and the installation of an electricity system to ensure steady power. These upgrades have created a safer, more conducive environment for children.

Overall, the evaluation team and President Emeritus Enoch Umoren Bassey expressed deep satisfaction with the transparent and impactful use of the funds. The visit reaffirmed confidence that these interventions are driving real change, empowering women, improving healthcare services, and creating better living conditions for vulnerable groups across Akwa Ibom State.





From Despair to Renewed Hope

How ECEWS Intervention Saved Edidiong's Life

Six months later, Edidiong's transformation is nothing short of miraculous. The man who once begged to be left to die now walks into the clinic with his head held high and a smile that lights his eyes. His body now weighs 50kg in comparison to the time he came in on 10th of December 2024, his energy restored and his viral load suppressed. He is now undetectable and untransmissible.

Today, Mr. Edidiong is employed again, financially stable, and eager to share his story with others. He now visits the facility not as a patient, but as a living testimony, encouraging others to adhere to treatment and never give up hope.

"I was dead inside, but now I'm alive again", he said. "The ECEWS team didn't just treat me, they gave me my life back"

With holistic care and support, people living with HIV can thrive, dream, and live with dignity in normal life. Mr. Edidiong's journey is a reminder that with compassionate care, consistent follow-up, what began as a story of despair has become one with redemption, resilience, and renewed hope.

Interfaith Mediation Centre (IMC) Seeks Partnership with ECEWS to serve Vulnerable Communities



Our CEO, Dr Andy Eyo, welcomed representatives of the Interfaith Mediation Centre (IMC) to Excellence Community Education Welfare Scheme (ECEWS) Headquarters in Uyo. The visit aimed to explore a strategic partnership focused on improving health and social outcomes in vulnerable communities across Nigeria. The proposed collaboration seeks to leverage ECEWS's extensive field experience, technical expertise, and wide visibility alongside IMC's robust interfaith network to design and implement holistic interventions, particularly in hard-to-reach regions such as the North-West. The partnership will prioritize initiatives in health education, community outreach, and inclusive engagement that promote both social cohesion and well-being. Speaking during the visit, Dr. Eyo emphasized the vital link between peace and development, noting that "a lot can be achieved when there is peace." He reaffirmed ECEWS's commitment to partnerships that foster sustainable progress and strengthen community resilience.

In response, Mr. Rustum Alexander, Regional Coordinator of IMC, expressed enthusiasm about the collaboration, stating that the organization looks forward to working closely with ECEWS to enhance peacebuilding and health initiatives across communities most in need.

This collaboration between ECEWS's experience and IMC's community trust and advocacy would unify efforts across religious and technical lines, allowing both organizations to create interventions that are not only effective but also culturally sensitive and sustainable, ultimately ensuring better health and stronger social cohesion for the most underserved Nigerians.

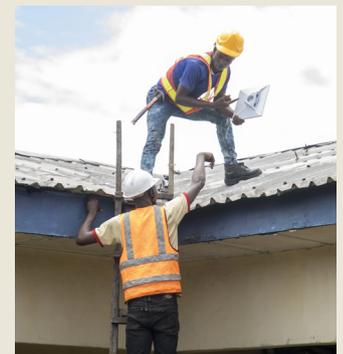


ECEWS Boosts Digital Connectivity Across 15 Health facilities in Cross River State

In line with the ECEWS Accelerating Control of the HIV Epidemic (ACE-5) Project's goal of strengthening service delivery across the 64 supported health facilities in Cross River State, the project has successfully installed Starlink broadband internet systems to enhance digital connectivity, data efficiency, and overall operational performance. The installations covered 15 health facilities, including General Hospital Calabar, University of Calabar Teaching Hospital, Dr. Lawrence Henshaw Memorial Hospital, Holy Family Catholic Hospital Ikom, General Hospital Ogoja, General Hospital Ugep, Comprehensive Health Centre (UCTH Annex) Ikot Effiong Otop, Comprehensive Health Centre Okundi, Lutheran Hospital Yala, Central Cottage Hospital Akpet, Primary Health Centre Ikang, Eja Memorial Hospital, Maternal and Child Health Clinic Obubra, Primary Health Centre Ekpo Abasi, and General Hospital Obubra.

This intervention directly addresses the long-standing challenge of unreliable internet connectivity, a critical requirement for efficient electronic medical record (EMR) management, data reporting, and health system communication. With improved broadband access, facilities are now positioned to experience reduced network downtime, real-time data synchronization, and smoother service delivery for both patients and healthcare providers.

Dr. Takim, Medical Superintendent of General Hospital Calabar, and the ART Coordinator at Dr. Lawrence Henshaw Memorial Hospital, commended ECEWS for its leadership and ongoing partnership, noting that the initiative represents a major boost to the quality and efficiency of healthcare delivery across the state.





Improving Testing Accuracy & Reliability: Competency Assessment for Counsellor Testers in Ekiti State

In HIV programming, quality of care begins at the point of a client's first encounter with the health system (testing point). Accurate test results and every word of counseling delivered shapes a client's journey through care. As WHO and CDC note, proficiency testing is a cornerstone of quality assurance in HIV testing, ensuring consistency, reliability, and accuracy at every level of the system. Extending this rigor to counsellor testers closes a long-standing gap in the quality continuum.

Proficiency Testing and competency assessment has traditionally focused on facilities and laboratories, ECEWS through the SPEED Project is redefining that standard by expanding outreach and point of care settings. With this shift, it's increasingly critical to maintain the accuracy and reliability of test results. In an innovative and novel approach, the HTS team, in close collaboration with the Laboratory Unit, piloted a competency assessment for all Counsellor Testers in the State. This was done to minimize errors in HIV testing - ranging from improper sample handling to incorrect interpretation of results which can undermine the integrity of the program.



A Novel Approach: Putting the Human Element at the Centre of Quality

Unlike conventional PTs, which test facility laboratory personnels, this exercise focused on the frontline counsellor testers who perform HIV testing daily in communities, outreach sites, and health facilities. The aim was simple yet strategic; to evaluate and strengthen the accuracy, competency, and confidence of those who form the backbone of HIV testing services in Ekiti State. By comparing their results to predetermined reference outcomes, CA offers a snapshot of how well counsellor testers perform under routine conditions.

For many years, proficiency testing within HIV programs has concentrated on laboratory staff and site-level testing points, leaving counsellor testers who form the largest proportion of HIV testing personnel largely unassessed. This first-ever Counsellor Tester competency assessment (CTCA) exercise under the ECEWS SPEED Project was aimed at closing this gap.

Why This Matters: Accuracy Starts with the Counsellor

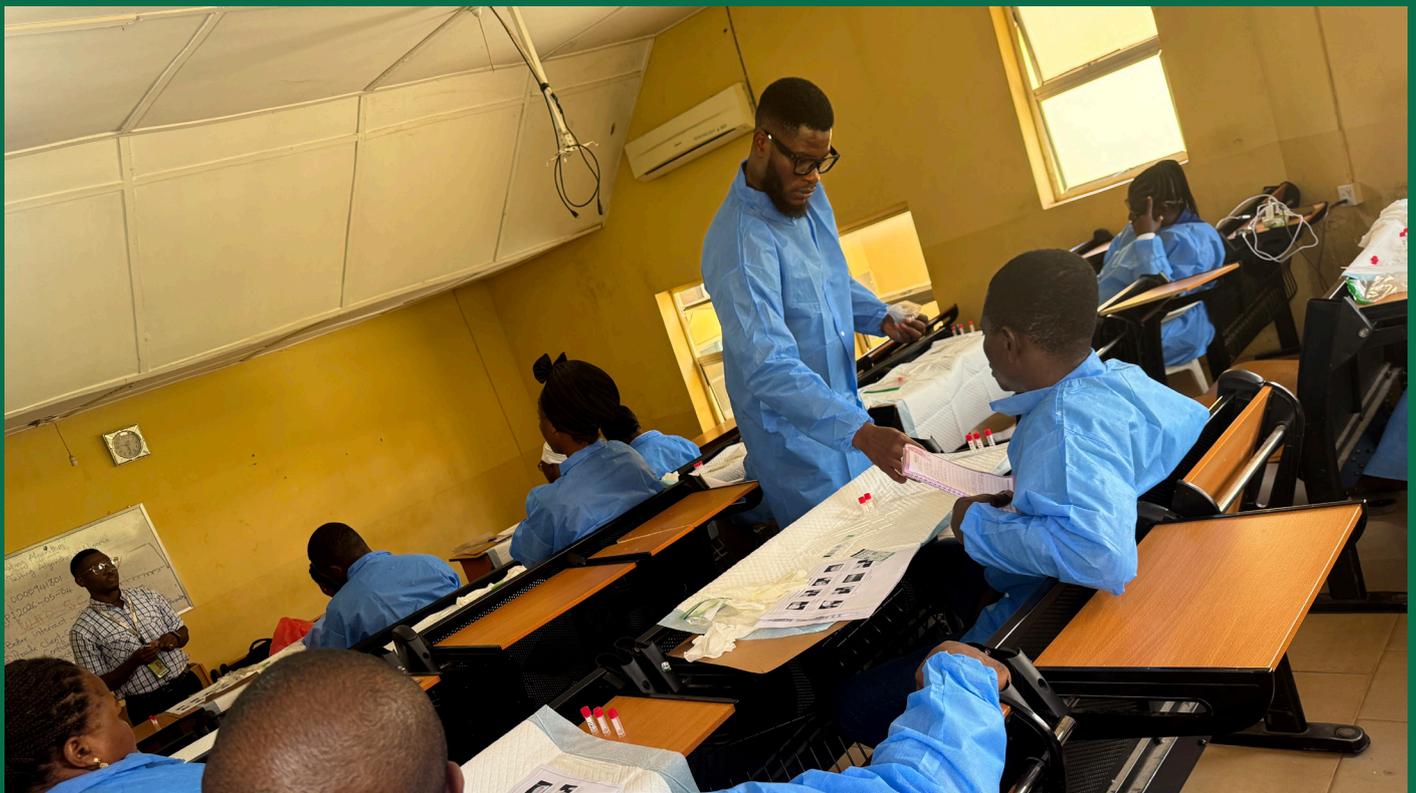
Counsellor testers are more than test operators; they are educators, motivators, and the first point of trust for clients. Their role determines not only whether a client is correctly diagnosed, but also whether that client is successfully linked to prevention or treatment services.

By periodically evaluating the accuracy of test results, CA enables early identification of performance gaps before they affect client outcomes. It helps remind testers of the importance of strict adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for sample handling, kit use, interpretation and documentation. CA ensures that clients receive correct diagnoses and are promptly linked to appropriate services. This reduces cases of false positives and false negatives. CA also helps to enhance programmatic efficiency by minimizing wastage of test kits.

Implications for Program Effectiveness and Quality

This initiative has both practical and strategic benefits the HIV program: Its benefits includes enhanced testing accuracy promoting early detection of skill gaps ensures that every client receives a reliable diagnosis, Improved Data Integrity leading to more reliable reporting on positivity rates and linkage outcomes, system efficiency which reduces the cost of re-testing, misdiagnosis, and data correction, boost confidence and morale of the Counsellor testers knowing their skills meet national and international standards and lastly, the success of this pilot positions ECEWS to replicate this model across other project states.

In conclusion, this idea marks a historic milestone for the ECEWS Ekiti SPEED Project. A demonstration that innovation in quality improvement doesn't always require new technology, but rather a new perspective on how to value and support the people behind the services. By institutionalizing this approach across the "Hills of Ekiti," we can ensure that every HIV test whether performed under a tent in a rural community or within a busy urban clinic meets the same standard of accuracy, empathy, and excellence. As we expand, our message remains clear, when counsellor testers are proficient, clients are protected, and program quality is assured.





ECEWS and the Impact Malaria Project team Conduct Data Quality Assessment in Enugu State

ECEWS Impact Malaria Project Team, in collaboration with Enugu State Malaria Elimination Programme (SMEP), recently conducted a comprehensive 4-day Data Quality Assessment (DQA) across the 17 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in supported facilities. This initiative was led by the ECEWS Impact Malaria Project Monitoring & Evaluation Unit, alongside the Enugu State Monitoring & Evaluation Unit.

The primary objective of the DQA was to verify the accuracy and reliability of data reported in the District Health Information System (DHIS) and Monthly Facility Summary (MFS). To achieve this, data from primary sources, such as registers, were meticulously compared with data in the MFS and DHIS. This exercise aimed to ensure that data elements were consistent across all platforms, thereby guaranteeing the integrity of the data.

The assessment was also a collaborative effort, with LGA Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) officers and Officers-in-Charge (OICs) working hand-in-hand to identify and rectify discrepancies. Where necessary, corrections were made to ensure that data accurately reflected the malaria situation on the ground. This process was crucial in ensuring that data was not only accurate but also reliable and useful for decision-making purposes.

The DQA was designed to achieve several critical objectives, including accurate tracking of malaria cases, effective resource allocation, monitoring treatment outcomes, identifying gaps in service delivery, informing policy decisions, evaluating programme performance, ensuring accountability, and supporting data-driven decision-making. By conducting this assessment, ECEWS Impact Malaria Project aimed to ensure that data collected from the 17 LGAs of Enugu State was of high quality, thereby contributing to improved malaria control outcomes.

Through this initiative, ECEWS and SMEP demonstrated their commitment to strengthening the health system and improving malaria control efforts. The insights gained from this assessment will undoubtedly inform strategies and interventions aimed at reducing the malaria burden in the region. Furthermore, this exercise will enhance the capacity of healthcare workers to collect, report, and utilize high-quality data, ultimately leading to better health outcomes.

The Data Quality Assessment (DQA) exercise was a testament to the power of collaboration and the importance of data quality in driving public health interventions. As ECEWS continues to support malaria control efforts, initiatives like this will remain crucial in ensuring that data is accurate, reliable, and useful for decision-making, ultimately contributing to a malaria-free society.



