

# HIFASS

Health Initiatives for Safety and Stability in Africa

Enhancing Healthier and Safer Communities

Newsletter | February 2020



# COVID-19

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## Editor's NOTE

For many of us, each New Year marks an opportunity for renewal, positive projections for the year, and 2020 is no exception for us in the public health sector. It's also that time of the year where we count our little wins and reflect on our defeats.

2020 has kicked off and the world is perturbed at the new emergence of the dreadful corona virus which is fast spreading around the world.

Below, Dr Okechukwu Josephine, Director of Public Health, Health and Human Services Secretariat, FCTA has issued a sensitization on Corona Virus infection



Corona Viruses are zoonotic (normally transmitted between animals and humans). Some Corona Viruses can be transmitted from person-to-person, usually after close contact with an infected patient i.e.; in a household or healthcare settings. The virus is called Corona due to its structure that looks like a Crown. A novel (new) corona virus (nCoV) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans. On the 7th January 2020, the World Health Organization identified a new type of Corona Virus known as 2019 novel Corona virus (COVID-19) in China. Most patients who were initially infected and investigated either visited or worked in the Huanan Seafood wholesale market, Wuhan city of China. The virus affects the sinuses, upper respiratory system, throat and nose. There are many types of Corona viruses, as at 18th February 2020, about 25 countries have been affected globally, 73,333 confirmed cases while in China, 72,528 cases confirmed 1,870 Deaths and outside China 804 confirmed cases, 3deaths. WHO declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency on the 30th January 2020.

### Transmission

- Coughing and sneezing
- Touching an infected person's face, hand or other body parts
- The virus can be spread by touching infected doorknobs/surfaces which might have been touched by infected people

### Symptoms

- Causes mild or severe respiratory symptoms like:
  - Catarrh/running nose
  - Cough
  - Sore throat
  - Fever
  - Difficulty in breathing
- Symptoms if attack is not severe, can go away within 3 to 5 days
- Severe symptoms can lead to pneumonia
- More common in people with heart problem and weak immune system

### How to Protect Yourself

- Wash your hand regularly with soap under running water OR use alcohol-based hand rub/sanitizers
- Cover your mouth and nose properly when sneezing or coughing with tissue or flexed elbow.
- Keep your hands and fingers away from your mouth, nose and eyes
- Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing (cold or Flu-like symptoms)
- Do not use their used items such like towels, soap, spoons, glass etc
- Thoroughly cook meat, chicken, fish and egg before consumption
- Use different chopping boards and knives for raw meat and vegetables
- Avoid unprotected contact with live wild or farm animals
- If you use any tissue for sneezing, immediately throw that away
- Avoid self-medication, report to the nearest health facility when you experience any of the above-mentioned symptoms (catarrh, fever, cough, difficulty in breathing).
- Observation of standard Infection prevention and control measures when attending to patients and take adequate travel history



## Treatment

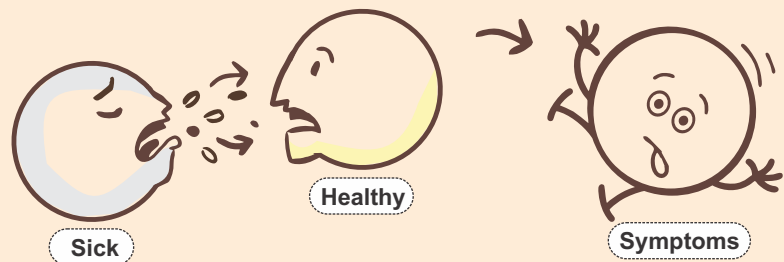
- No specific treatment. Treatment is based on the patient's clinical condition, symptomatic treatment.
- No Vaccine available for Corona virus

## Nigerian's Preparedness and Response

- The Nigerian Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) is currently coordinating a multi-sectoral technical group that is assessing and managing the risk of importation of 2019-nCoV to Nigeria.
- NCDC is in close communication with World Health Organisation (WHO) who is closely monitoring the situation globally. WHO communicates with China and other affected countries and has released technical and travel guidelines
- The Port Health Services unit of the Federal Ministry of Health in Nigeria has been placed on alert and has increased screening measures at the Point of Entry (POE). Same is being done in China for airports and ground transport stations since 14th January 2020.
- Screening includes temperature checks; combine with provision of information and masks to passengers with fever, as well as directing symptomatic passengers to health facilities for follow up.
- Travellers from Nigeria to Wuhan, China are advised to avoid contact with sick people, animals (alive or dead), and animal markets.
- Travellers from China to Nigeria may be asked questions upon arrival by the Port Health Services at point of entry (POE) about symptoms of illness and travel history, and are advised to report immediately to NCDC, if they feel ill after a trip to Wuhan.

### NOTE:

Corona virus spread the same way as other cold causing viruses



I hope that you have a good read and learn a thing or two from this edition of our newsletter.

**Linda Obi**  
Communication Officer



## 1. 2019 World TB Day: It's time to end in Nigeria

Wife of the President of Nigeria,  
Dr. Mrs. Aisha Muhammadu Buhari  
flagging off the WOW truck



As part of the week long planned activities to commemorate 2019 World TB Day, HIFASS in collaboration with partners from various health institutions conducted a community outreach and screening for TB cases in Kobi village on Wednesday, 20th March. At the event was the wife of the Nigerian President and TB Ambassador, Aisha Muhammadu Buhari and the wife of the Vice President, Mrs Dolapo Osibanjo flagged off the TB Wellness on Wheel (WOW) truck, called on Nigerians to test themselves for Tuberculosis (TB), being one of the world's most deadly diseases.

Speaking with Dr. Josephine Okechukwu, Coordinator, Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control Programme in Federal Capital Territory (FCT) said that only about 15 percent of people in Nigeria know the signs and symptoms of tuberculosis, meaning about 85 percent do not.



**Dr Josephine Okechukwu,**  
Coordinator, Tuberculosis and  
Leprosy Control Programme in  
Federal Capital Territory (FCT)

She said, to many Nigerians coughing is normal, stressing that “Every cough is suspicious because there is something going on in the respiratory tract that irritates the system to create that cough. If someone has a cough that has lasted well over a week, he should go to the hospital and get tested for TB. Testing and treatment is free, everything we do about TB is free.”

## 2. 2019 World TB Day: Road show to create awareness on Tuberculosis

Awareness walk from  
old parade ground to area one



In continuation of the week-long event, partners from various health/government institutions gathered together to embark on road show to commemorate this years' World TB Day on 23rd March 2019. The road show began from Old parade ground and ended at Area one flyover in Abuja. The

walk was aimed at creating public awareness about Tuberculosis. Participants came in different eye-catching branded T-shirts; face caps and reflective jackets distributing IEC materials to passers-by and by-standers sensitizing them about the disease.

## 3. 2019 World TB day: Aisha Buhari calls for political commitment to fight Tuberculosis(TB) in Nigeria

Dr Mrs Aisha Muhammadu Buhari  
making a speech at the event



24th March every year is a day set aside to commemorate World Tuberculosis Day worldwide. On Sunday, 24th March 2019, Dr. Mrs. Aisha Muhammadu Buhari, the wife of Nigerian President who also is the TB Ambassador, hosted key stakeholders at the State house banquet hall, Aso Rock, Abuja to celebrate TB champions and survivors in Nigeria.

At the event, she solicited the support of the private sector and media support in the fight to end tuberculosis in the country. Mrs. Aisha noted that TB is a major challenge globally and a killer disease, adding that it should be integrated in the fight against HIV/AIDS to reduce the deaths associated with the disease. According to her, tuberculosis, despite being a curable disease, is still a major health challenge globally and remains the number one infectious killer disease in the world'. In Nigeria, one of the major challenges of TB response is attributed to low cases of its discovery both in adult and children. This is

attributed partly to poor knowledge about TB that influences the health seeking behaviour of people and low treatment coverage. This is one of the reasons I personally led a team to Kobi Village in Abuja on Wednesday, to create more awareness" she said.





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She said “instead of buying treated mosquito nets to fight malaria, Nigeria should go for a permanent solution that would help to completely eradicate mosquitoes in the country. She urged them to assist stakeholders in tackling report cases of tuberculosis from every nook and cranny of Nigeria. Similarly, she urged stakeholders to make concerted efforts towards providing permanent solution to tuberculosis epidemic in Nigeria.

Devcoms Program Director, Akin Jimoh stated that all Nigerians need to be concerned about the missing cases of TB and “we must all be in the forefront to find and treat TB cases” in the country. “We did it for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and now the cases are on the downward spiral. We need to help ourselves to find and treat TB.”

Also in attendance were Members of the National Assemblies, Awardees, Ambassadors and Embassies representatives, wives of State Governors, Partners from public and private sectors, Celebrities, Religious leaders, Civil society, Community representatives, HIFASS' Program Manager, Col. Adeoye Felix (rtd) and Communication Officer, Linda Obi and many others.



*HIFASS working team at the event, Col. Adeoye Felix (Rtd) and Linda Obi*

## 4.

### 2019 World TB Day: Ministerial press briefing/launch of road map to translate UNHLM commitments on TB into action and launch of the report of the national catastrophic cost survey

Unveiling of the report of the  
National Catastrophic Cost Survey



On 25th March at Sheraton hotel, Abuja stakeholders from health institutions came together to launch road map to Translate UNHLM commitments on TB into action and launch of the report of the National catastrophic cost survey. Speaking at the event was Minister of Health; Prof. Isaac F. Adewole who was represented by his Permanent Secretary, Alhaji Abdullahi Abdulazeez Mashi said, the global health experts said Nigeria was not making progress in fighting TB, which is estimated to affect 407,000 persons yearly. To underscore the burden, Adewole said Nigeria's TB treatment coverage for 2018 was 255, adding that out of an estimated 418,000 new cases; only 106,533 cases were reported in 2018 leaving over 300,000 cases undiagnosed. “Funding gap, lack of awareness, technical capacity and poor private sector collaboration were crippling current efforts.” He said.

“Tuberculosis is a major public health problem in Nigeria, as it is ranked number one in Africa and sixth globally among countries with high burden of TB. “In addition, we are among the 30th high TB burden countries and 14th in the world on all three WHO lists of high burden countries for TB, MDR-TB and TB/HIV,” Adewole explained. He pointed out that Nigerians between 15 and 44 years old (who constitute the working age group) are most affected by TB and TB related deaths.

“Access to TB diagnostic services is a huge challenge. The current local government areas coverage of Gene Xpert, which is the first-line test for diagnosis of TB, is 41 per cent. “Another worrisome trend is funding. The catastrophic cost survey conducted in 2017 showed that 71 per cent of TB patients and their households are affected negatively by the catastrophic cost due to TB.”

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Also, the current proportion of health facilities in the country with TB services is barely 265.

Responding, Director, Star Deepwater Petroleum Limited, Rick Kennedy, who decried TB burden in Nigeria, said it was time for active collaboration to end the scourge, keep the promise on taming it, especially finding TB and treating it.

Represented by Medical Director of Chevron, Dr. Paul Arenyeka, he said the company has built, equipped and donated 28 chest clinics to health institutions across the country. He added that Chevron's social health investment programme has provided medical supplies and training for health workers and supported production of National TB guidelines, as safeguards for health workers providing TB care.

It was disclosed that over N16.6 billion was spent to fight the disease in Nigeria last year. "Since 2008, N16.6 billion

(\$2.7million) has been spent building and donating equipped chest clinics in Nigeria. Between 2015 and 2017, over 48,000 presumptive TB cases were registered in the facilities, with over 11,000 cases detected. "The chest clinics contributed to about 3 per cent of national presumptive TB cases registered and 3 per cent to national aggregate of TB cases," he stated.

Speaking on the disease, World Health Organization (WHO)'s National Professional Officer for TB, DrAyodele Awe, insisted that Nigeria has not made progress in reducing the disease in the last eight years. Also, USAID Representative, DrTemitayoOdusote, advocated development of necessary data on the disease, insisting that private partnership was necessary to end TB in Nigeria. This was the last of the week-long planned series of activities.

## 5. 2019 World AIDS Day Activities: Community outreach

Mrs Uju Nwakor demonstrating the correct use  
of female condoms to participants



December 1st would always be a day set aside to mark World AIDS Day globally. It was the first ever global health day. It is celebrated by government organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil societies, adolescents, young people and communities of people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. It is aimed at creating awareness on HIV/AIDS and issues around it (treatment, prevention, care, social, etc.) as well as memorializes those who have died from an AIDS related illnesses.

Every year, the WAD campaign is executed under specific themes. This year's theme is Communities make the difference. Communities refer to networks of people living with HIV, civil society organizations, counselors, educators and community health workers. Communities have played a significant role in the National response to HIV in the past, present and will continue to do so in the future. In this last mile of the National HIV response, communities have many roles to play thereby ensuring that AIDS remains on the political agenda; overcome barriers that prevent access to services; create an enabling environment that promotes

equal access; safeguard the rights of PLHIV and hold decision makers and implementers accountable.

This year's 2019 World AIDS Day featured a week-long series of activities which commenced on 25th November and ended on 1st December. The week featured various activities ranging from community outreaches at the Jabi park and national Stadium; one day Symposium/Literary debate competition for adolescent at Aso rock villa; Honoring heroes past and present at Sheraton hotel; awareness creation at the National mosque; novelty football match between Future Assured, Guards brigade, Institute of Human Virology of Nigeria and NACA at the National Stadium to thanksgiving service at ECWA church.

On 30th November 2019, HIFASS in collaboration with National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA) and other partners organized a community outreach at the national stadium. While the novelty football match was ongoing between NACA, Future Assured, Institute of Human Virology of Nigeria (IHVN) and Guards Brigade, HIFASS



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and SFH on the other hand, were conducting free HIV Testing Services for participants who were at the stadium for various sports activities.

Participants were counseled and shown how to use the male & female condom prior to the screening. HIFASS Programme Coordinator, Godfrey Akadonye, who was present to supervise the screening process confirmed that out of 155 (One Hundred and Fifty Five) participants screened for HIV only 1 participant was reactive and this shows that there is great improvement on awareness of the disease.

Speaking with Mr. Peter Unuigbo, Assistant Director NACA, he said the partnership with Federation of Public Service Games (FEPSGA) was aimed at reaching civil servants and young people through various platforms were achieved. He added that the day was remarkable as turnout of participant was massive and impressive.

Also, speaking with a beneficiary, Olah Ochanya, she said the event was good but she advised that more awareness is taken down to the grassroots level and as well educate community members on HIV prevention and treatment.



*Group photograph with winners (Future Assured) of the novelty football match*

## 6. Girl force: Unscripted and Unstoppable

Unveiling of the report of the  
National Catastrophic Cost Survey



The fight to uphold the rights of the girl child has become fiercer and advocates cut across gender and social status. With the need to educate young girls early, using interventions to enlighten enrollees on appropriate Gender Norms and the Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) program through which young females are empowered with relevant skills and knowledge in HIV prevention and management, self-esteem, goal setting and other areas needed to excel in life; the International Day of the Girl Child 2019 was an opportunity for the USAID-funded HIFASS-LOPIN 3 project to further enlighten 318 Adolescent Girls and Young Women in four states of implementation – Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Kano and Adamawa - on their rights, menstrual hygiene, the need for education and skill acquisition, HIV prevention, possibilities ahead of them and what to do when faced with traumatizing challenges like sexual abuse.





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Other activities for the day included quiz and spelling bee competitions, reusable sanitary pad demonstration and distribution as well as basic self-defense (taekwondo) skills for young girls in a state with high prevalence of sexual abuse. Organization and implementation of the International Day of the Girl Child was done with the support of state governments and input from other Implementing organizations like the Perpetual Ugbang Foundation, UNFPA, The Nigerian Red Cross, Basic Rights Council Initiative, Medical Women association, FIDA etc.

Danielle James Effiom, a student of Government Secondary School Big Qua and the president of one of the project's AGYW groups said she really learnt a lot about menstrual hygiene, is proud to be a girl child and proud to be an African. Abbey Divine Favor Vincent from NYSC Secondary School said she learnt that parents should not force children to get married at a very tender age.

It is expected that those present at the event will act as torch bearers for the cause of upholding the rights of the girl child.

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## 1. Global Fund (GF) - HIV New Funding Model (NFM)

From 3rd October, 2018– 30th June, 2019, HIFASS implemented the GF-HIV-NFM project alongside an FSW-led CBO, Passion and Concern for Women Welfare and Empowerment Initiative (PACOWWEI) in 3 LGAs of the Federal Capital Territory which was funded by Global fund through Society for Family Health (SFH). The MPPI target of 2440 given was reached and surpassed by 2658.

As part of the closeout activities for the GF-HIV-NFM extension project, an external stakeholder's closeout meeting was held for all implementing partners on 19th June, 2019 at Stanzel Grand Resort, Abuja. The aim of the meeting was to update stakeholders on the progress in the implementation of the change ideas models amongst HIV Vulnerable and high risk Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW), Men Sleeping with Men (MSM), Female Sex Workers (FSW) and People Who Inject Drugs (PWID); and to obtain feedback from stakeholders on GF-HIV-NFM extension phase implementation. This meeting served as the close-out ceremony for the project in the FCT.



Group photo of implementing partners

*"The intervention was very impactful as lives were touched positively especially the Adolescent and Young People (AYPs) who were left behind and the project successfully reached out to them with high quality prevention services although there is always room for improvement."*

Dr Uche Okoro, the Project Manager for FACA

## 2. Local OVC Partners in Nigeria Region 3 HIFASS-LOPIN 3 Project Close out

December 31, 2019 marked the final day of the Health Initiatives for Safety and Stability in Africa - Local OVC Partners in Nigeria Region 3 (HIFASS-LOPIN 3) project that lasted five years (2014-2019). Since 2014, HIFASS-LOPIN 3 provided more than 184,000 vulnerable children and their protection, care and support services. It provided critically needed assistance to 48,000 of these vulnerable children's caregivers. These services included discrete linkages to treatment, health care services including psychological support, protection services, household economic strengthening, job skills and seed funding for small business startups, education, nutrition counseling, and legal protection.

Working at the community level, the project mobilized 26 indigenous civil society organizations to improve their systems, programme management, and administrative capacity. It also strengthened state ministries of Women Affairs; AIDS control agencies, and other organizations to provide a better response to the epidemic and its affected populations. Through the HIFASS LOPIN 3 activities, USAID supported more than half a million children orphaned or otherwise affected by HIV and AIDS.

In August 2018, 56,818 OVCs and Caregivers were catered for by the LOPIN 3 project. They received services in health, education, birth registration, psychosocial support, HIV Testing Services and economic empowerment for vulnerable households and adolescents in the form of seed grants for business startup, skill acquisition and receipt of start-up materials for business. After attainment of the nationally approved care level, 23,972 beneficiary OVCs and their households were graduated from the project. This graduation covered implementation sites in

Ebonyi state and nine Local Government Areas in Cross River state.

With the realignment of PEPFAR activities in 2018, project activities were streamlined to five local government areas in Cross River state – Calabar South, Calabar Municipal, Akamkpa, Odukpani and Akpabuyo. Services received by the enrollees include Community Case Management, referral services, nutritional assessment as well as growth monitoring and referral of malnourished children to care, economic empowerment of highly vulnerable households, educational support, Gender Based Violence prevention and response, child and social protection services etc.

Following the release of the preliminary report National AIDS Indicator & Impact Survey (NAIIS) findings in March 2019, USAID and partners effected policy and strategic changes in the approach to HIV/AIDS Epidemic control in Nigeria. There are 7 states in the high category with prevalence of 2% or higher. The states are Abia, Taraba, Benue, Enugu, Akwalbom and Rivers States. Akwalbom States has an HIV prevalence rate of 5.5%, the highest in the country. The NAIIS report categorized states according to HIV prevalence rates and calculated unmet needs based on Spectrum Analysis of HIV prevalence in Nigeria.

To this effect, USAID introduced the surge response to HIV strategy, after review of the National AIDS Indicator and Impact Survey (NAIIS). HIFASS-LOPIN 3 was given three additional states of implementation – Akwa Ibom, Kano and Adamawa. With the same goal but with greater focus on children, the project is working hard to identify positive children, link them to treatment and ensure their caregivers are empowered with knowledge (for example – proper nutrition) and other areas including economic support, where necessary, so the children can receive appropriate care and live normal lives. Ultimately, it is expected that every child enrolled in the project



will emerge healthy, safe, stable and schooled.

The project was implemented by a consortium of Nigerian organizations with HIFASS as the lead partner, People-to-People Health Foundation, Nigeria, Calabar Arch-Diocesan Action Committee on AIDS (CAACA) and Catholic Diocese of Abakaliki, Succor and Development Services Initiative (SUCCDEV). During the project life cycle, HIFASS-LOPIN 3 implemented OVC programming in 58 LGAs across 5 States. In each state, activities were implemented through local partner organization-Community Based Organization (CBOs). The project fully integrated approach not only protected young people from the stigma of being associated with the HIV virus, but also helped eliminate the perception of young people living with HIV as anything less than vibrant, productive community members.

## Key Technical Priorities

Key technical OVC interventions and priorities implemented by the project across the states include:

- Case Management Model: Our case management model for the vulnerable households and the children. OVC services were offered based on individual, household and child needs using the care plan
- HIV Risk Assessment: Enrolled OVCs were assessed for HIV exposure. Those that were then referred for HIV testing and linkage to care, for HIV positive persons.
- Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) program focusing on women and girls between the ages of 10-24 years
- Empowerment of AGYW, older OVCs and caregivers. Helping to build household (HH) resilience to provide for the needs of the OVC and ensure that the children are stable, schooled, health and safe
- Active HIV case finding and provision of support for adherence to treatment, retention and viral load monitoring
- Promotion of positive Gender

norms, prevention and reporting of cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and provision of HIV prevention services to vulnerable children, caregivers and AGYW groups. In addition to this, is our support in Child Protection services in partnership with UNICEF

- Counselling for HIV positive OVCs and Caregivers
- Support for viral load monitoring through counselling and escorted referrals.

## Achievements

- Enrolled 2,586 male and female on Paediatric ART Saturation Strategy in Akwa Ibom State (PASS)
- All HIV positive persons in Akwa Ibom linked to treatment
- 40,004 reached across 4 States with gender norms and GBV prevention messages
- 50 cases of Child Abuse, neglected or violence report to the CPC across 4 States in 2019
- 189388 of beneficiaries served across 5 States
- Reached nearly 250,000 most vulnerable Nigerian children affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic and their caregivers.

As part of the preparations for the close out of the five years project a Work plan implementation and close-out activation process meeting was held at Top rank galaxy hotel, Abuja from 27th – 28th September, 2019. The meeting was aimed at concluding plans on the project close-out activation process.



A cross section of participants at the meeting

At the National Dissemination and Closing Ceremony held on 8th January, 2020 in Abuja, HIFASS

President and former Minister of State, Defence, Dr Roland Oritsejafor, appreciated and commended the government and people of United State of America for their proactive leadership role they play on global, human and environmental developments, promoting peace and stability worldwide.

*"The successes of international collaboration in addressing health issues worldwide cannot be underestimated especially in the face of global crisis like terrorism, economic recession, climate, food scarcity, governance, pandemics, and policy inconsistency, which continuously threatens the health of populations and the planet's survival. HIFASS is totally committed to a collaborative vision hence its motto 'passion and partnership' as it is very crucial for all nations, politicians, health professionals, researchers, to come together to confront current and ever emerging global challenges especially in the area of health, ensuring more access of the general populace without compromising best practices as well as contributing to global health diplomacy."* He said.



HIFASS President Dr Roland Oritsejafor with the USAID Mission Director, Stephen M. Haykin flanked by the USAID team



HIFASS Board of Trustees and LOPIN 3 staff flanked by the USAID Mission Director, Stephen M. Haykin

1.

## The effectiveness of a 'paradigm shift' in contrast to 'handouts' for sustainable development interventions

As popularly said, it is better to teach a man to fish than give him fish to eat when he is hungry. A lot of vulnerable members of our local communities expect a handout "fish" which will neither satisfy them nor reproduce itself for future consumption. This vulnerability or the feeling of helplessness increases the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, as young people in desperate situations can accept as low as N500 (\$1.4) cash or a meal worth N300 (\$0.8) in exchange for sex; and in most cases, unprotected sex.

In line with achieving the UNAIDS 95-95-95 goal which is aimed at ending the HIV/AIDS epidemic by year 2030, the HIFASS-LOPIN3 project funded by PEPFAR through USAID, incorporates enlightenment and informal education which are able to create paradigm shifts, in interventions to vulnerable populations for HIV prevention and management, in their focal areas which are PEPFAR listed geographical areas with high HIV/AIDS prevalence.

A perfect example is Elizabeth Emmanuel Asuquo, the second of six children, who had to live with her aunt from the age of six along with another sibling. Her parents, a security man and a petty trader, could not cope with their care. Her aunt saw her through primary and secondary school education but could not go further, so she was back to a place of helplessness, armed with insecurity and low self-esteem for a downward spiral.

She was enrolled into the Adolescent Girls and Young Women group in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, manned by Rhema care Development Initiative, the sub-granted organization working in that community and her mindset was changed with peer sessions where her

self-esteem was boosted and she learnt about HIV prevention, food hygiene, how to refuse sexual advances and other areas that have built her to face her world squarely in spite of all she has been through. Her enrolment for skills acquisition in hairdressing and receipt of hair dryers (standing and hand-held), a 4-in-one roller set and other items for business start-up have empowered Elizabeth to be self-sufficient.

A handout would have provided temporary relief for Elizabeth, but this intervention has established her permanently. She sees herself differently, has established her business and can cater for herself and contribute to bringing her entire family out of vulnerability. With proceeds from her growing business, she rented a shop in her locality where she attends to customers regularly and now has an apprentice who paid to be trained in hairdressing. In the locally acceptable term, she is now a 'Madam'. She contributes financially in her aunt's house where she lives and to fee payment for her younger ones with her parents. She also saves either 3,000 or 4,000 naira every month and is glad with her achievement.

According to her, "I had a passion for hairdressing but I was always thinking, when will that time come, where will I go? ...I was angry with myself....Now I can take good care of myself; I can mingle with people...." Concerning her aunt, she said "now I'm independent and also got my aunty relieved of too many responsibilities...."

Elizabeth has set a pace for many like her and as a current trainer, she is in a good place to teach her apprentice beyond hairdressing, but also the life's kills she has learnt so far from the AGYW program. She is an ambassador in her own sphere, pointing people in the direction of hope and showing that HIV/AIDS can truly be eradicated by 2030, first with a paradigm shift.

2.

## The positive outcome of pulling young girls from vulnerability

According to PEPFAR, "Every day, around 1,000 adolescent girls and young women are infected with HIV. Girls account for 74% of new HIV infections among adolescents in sub-Saharan Africa". This realization has increased the need to focus on protecting Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW). As poverty is a major factor that places women in vulnerable positions, thus making them susceptible to risky behavior that can lead to HIV infection, USAID-funded HIFASS-LOPIN 3 project has incorporated Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) in its current implementation of the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Program, in order to provide young girls with the opportunity for grooming in goal setting, self-esteem, HIV prevention and management, care of their bodies, self-sufficiency, making good choices and generally becoming better individuals who will ultimately live great lives.

Rachael Okon, a 20 year old resident of Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State, one of the Local Government Areas with the highest HIV prevalence in the state grew up in a challenging environment. Her mother passed on when she was about 15 years old and her father had to stop working after an accident, depending on his share of family income which is insufficient. Hailing from a large family with seven children, despite her big dreams, Rachael was unable to further her education after secondary school. She started living with and helping her older sister, who was also trying to stand on her feet by selling. She took up menial jobs in two shops successively, wondering where she would get funds to move forward and be all she dreamt she could be. This was before she came in contact with the HIFASS-LOPIN 3 project and was registered under the Adolescent Girls and Young



Women program in 2016.

She was trained extensively in tailoring and empowered with items for business start-up – a sewing machine, a weaving machine, a pair of scissors and a sewing kit. As a hardworking young girl who has learnt to be confident, Rachael went on to rent a shop for business in one of the markets in Calabar Municipal Local Government Area and is now making enough money to take care of herself and save for the future. Her designs are unique and neatly done and she is patronized by passersby who are thrilled by her displayed work as well as people referred by customers.

For someone who initially doubted the program, Rachael stands as a good ambassador. She says “it is worth every while. Before, I wasn’t really sure of what I wanted .... They gave me a chance; they gave me an opportunity to focus on something”.

Rachael has truly focused on tailoring, she is confident and her business is growing. In addition to sewing, she sells fabric. This gives her extra income and she saves funds daily with a savings group and sends specific amounts to the bank. She has also begun giving her shop a facelift from her proceeds, as the initially bare-floored space now has a rug on it and is ornamented with mannequins displaying various designs. She hopes to be a great designer someday.

This is one of over 200 AGYWs trained in skills acquisition and empowered for business start-up. This program has pulled these young women from vulnerability, from a state of hopelessness to one of great hope. They can now stand on their own and not succumb to the pressure of lack by engaging in risky acts that can lead to contraction of HIV/AIDS. For those who are positive, they can take good care of themselves so that their treatment will not be inhibited. It shows clearly the effect of helping others see that they can become what they admire, that they don’t need to do away with their dreams but hold fast to them. For Rachael, her dreams have come true.



**3.**  
**Working with HIFASS-  
Adegbola Adeola,  
Programme Admin  
Specialist speaks**

*Since 2018 HIFASS has been providing personnel management services in Nigeria to ensure continued services for HIV/AIDS care and treatment under the HJF Medical Research International LTDGte funded Programs/Projects across military clinical sites located within 17 states of Nigeria providing comprehensive HIV/AIDS service. HIFASS is currently managing 97 personnel across the 5 programme/project areas (PEPFAR, Research RV-329: AFRICOS, Research RV-466, JWARG and Research RV-515*

As a nurse by profession, I have worked in various health facilities like hospitals and clinics. I have spent the last 12 years developing my skills as a Programme Administrator with HIFASS at the Military Hospital Port Harcourt and this year makes it my 12th year in the organization. Over the years, I have been exposed to several capacity improvement training. I aspire to be a well-seasoned administrator, trainer of trainees, exposed to managing a team, expert in leadership role, and hope that I am able to gain new skills that are applicable to future career opportunities. To a large extent, I can describe HIFASS work environment as a place full of team work, support, commitments and productive atmosphere which aids one in achieving our set goals, although I am yet to attain my career goal in HIFASS.

As an employee of HIFASS, I have acquired necessary skills to some extent. I have gotten accustomed to the cooperative ways of working and building team work. I render my services with commitment and a high level of integrity, but I am open-minded towards acquiring new knowledge and skills. I draw my inspirations from my patients; I am always inspired when there is an improvement in their health condition. Every day comes with a

different challenge, I love challenges because they bring out the best in me and I am happy when a success story is recorded after each challenge. Also, I have come to realize that understanding, patience, humility, love and team work are the bed rock to handling conflicts between colleagues and it has been of immense help to me and there has been neither quarrel nor conflict. On the other hand, the Site Commanders has been accommodating and understanding (probably because they know and understand the programme too).

In HIFASS, there is this feeling of togetherness, team objectives, learning from each other, motivating each other as well as the humor, all of which have helped to boost the team spirit over my many years working with the organization. However, if I was given a mandate or power to change things, I would sufficiently motivate the workers, especially those who have been long-standing staff that are diligently carrying out their duties. Although in my capacity, I have provided human capacity building by coordinating volunteers and DES while also sharing the necessary skills that has helped some personnel become good Site Administrators.

Speaking of growth in HIFASS, I have been exposed to several capacity improvement training and as well have directly assisted in work place responsibility. I have also acquired more knowledge in modern practice related to nursing profession. I believe there is room for improvement and for HIFASS to achieve greatness in work place, I will suggest that a healthy competition, performance appreciation and better incentives commensurate to career growth, gratitude towards support, providing rewards and appreciation.

My advice to new employees is that, they should strive to be committed, genuinely interested, focused, dedicated at work, be cooperative, and respect everyone. Also, they should be punctual and appreciate the organization’s quirks and beat their best at all times.

# STAFF DEVELOPMENT

## 1. Orientation exercise for HIFASS-LOPIN 3 newly recruited staffs Akwa Ibom, Kano and Adamawa States

Having implemented the USAID-LOPIN 3 project in 2 states-Cross River and Ebonyi States, 3 additional states of implementation –Akwa Ibom, Kano and Adamawa states were given to HIFASS mid-year 2019. The new staffs were taken through series of orientation exercise between 3rd - 11th July 2019. *“It was beneficial, it taught and guided me towards the duration of the project.”* Ali Ogoh, newly recruited Desk & Front Office Assistant-Kano State



Group photograph of staff in Akwa Ibom State



HIFASS-LOPIN 3 Chief of Party, Dr Ademola Adetunji addressing participants during the exercise in Akwa Ibom State

## 2. Staff Orientation Exercise

On 24th July 2019, one day orientation training was conducted for both old and new staff. It was also a forum to welcome new staff to orientate them on the importance of basic policies, work stations, work ethics, and office conducts. It also served as refresher training for old staff.

The Board Secretary, Mrs Omatsola Lawanson during her presentation implored staff to be of good conduct, be respectful and polite to one another and to clients of the organization. *“At no time should a staff raise their voice, swear or speak in a manner that makes another person feel belittled”* she said.



Cross-section of participants at the exercise



## 1. Tuberculosis on increase in Nigeria- 2019 National Tuberculosis(TB) Conference



HIFASS Communication Officer, Linda Obi with some of the participants at the event

Stop TB Partnership Nigeria in partnership with global TB stakeholders organized a 2-Day National Conference at the International Conference Centre, Abuja on 17th & 18th July 2019 which was said to be the second of its kind after its' first in 2016. The theme of the 2019 National TB Conference was tagged "building Stronger Partnerships to End TB in Nigeria. It was aimed at enriching the public with the knowledge about TB with a heightened commitment to the fight against the TB scourge in the country.

At the event, wife of the President, Dr Mrs Aisha Buhari humbly represented by her Chief of Staff Dr Hajo Sani, decried the high rate of tuberculosis (TB) case detection and treatment in Nigeria, saying "it is unacceptable that over 170,000 people die yearly from the disease across the country. Over 600,000 people become infected with TB in Nigeria every year. It is projected that up to 60,000 of those new cases affect children. It is also not acceptable that Nigeria is having one of the lowest TB case detection rates in the world as it is currently detecting about 25 per cent of TB cases with over 170,000 Nigerians dying from a preventable and curable disease. My mandate is to deliver the Eco bank brand promise as platform of choice in Nigeria – Akinwuntan. This is not an enviable position and situation for any country and it must change." She stressed the need to accelerate efforts toward combating the disease, promised to

use her position to mobilize more resources for TB from the government. She promised to engage the wives of the 36 states governors and fellow African first ladies towards allying to position the disease in the political agenda of governments at all levels.

Also in attendance were global key stakeholders, TB Champions, development partners, donor agencies, medical professionals and HIFASS' Programme Coordinator, Godfrey Akadonye and Communication Officer, Linda Obi, among others who witnessed various exhibitions of interventions in the testing and treatment of Tuberculosis in Nigeria.

At the conference, the Communication Officer, Linda Obi commended the effort of the TB ACSM social media group which was created months ago(as reported) but advised that measures on advocacy on TB are heightened at grass-root levels in a language it is best understood.

## 2. 3-Day Tuberculosis (TB) Advocacy Communication Social Mobilization (ACSM) workshop

National Tuberculosis & Leprosy Programme (NTBCLP) and Breakthrough ACTION-Nigeria (BA-N) on 18th, 20th and 21st September 2019 organized a 3-Day workshop on Advocacy Communication Social Mobilization (ACSM) guidelines. Participants were drawn from various health institutions which had 2 HIFASS HQ staff Godfrey Akadonye, Programme Coordinator and Linda Obi, Communication Officer in attendance. The workshop took place at Barcelona hotel Abuja on Day 1 while Day 2&3 was held at Kini Country guest Inn, Akwanga, Nassarawa State. The objectives of the workshop were aimed at the following:

- To develop a simplified working framework for ASCM guidelines in line with the current National Strategic Plan for TB Control in

Nigeria 2015-2020 at all levels of implementation for TB case findings for generally adoption nationwide.

- To harmonize TB SBCC strategy, standardize creative briefs for content design teams and form the basis for development of National TB SBCC centre piece materials.
- To recommend key ACSM issues that may be considered for inclusion in the post-2020 National Strategic Plan.

The workshop was participatory as plenary presentations were held and participants were divided into 7 groups to work on the following topics/domains, namely; Diagnosis, Treatment, Gender and Human rights issues, Childhood, Stigma and Discrimination, Prevention, Private Sector (private providers).



Diagnosis group during a group work



Treatment group during a brainstorming session with Heather Hancock of Breakthrough Action-Nigeria(BA-N)

## 1. Adolescents and Young People programme and Symposium



First Lady of Nigeria, Dr Mrs Aisha Buhari flanked by HIFASS team and Partners at the symposium

On 28th November 2019, HIFASS as part of the partners on the 2019 World AIDS Day attended the Adolescents and Young Persons (AYP) programme as organised by National Agency for the Control of AIDS. The event was held at the State House Banquet Hall as part of the 2019 World AIDS Day activities.

Prior to the event, young persons were engaged in an essay competition online to share their opinion about the appropriate age which they feel young people should be allowed to run HIV tests without parental consent. The competition aimed at young persons between age 14-18 years bracket across the Federation. The grand finale gave rise to oral presentations where the First Lady, Dr Mrs Aisha M. Buhari presented prize to winner and consolation prizes to runner-ups.



Nigeria's First Wife Dr. Mrs Aisha Buhari and the DG NACA, Dr Gambo Gumel Aliyu presenting a Cheque of ₦150,000 to David Olatawura, winner of the AYP competition

At the symposium, the First Lady of Nigeria, Dr Mrs Aisha M. Buhari who is the UNAIDS HIV champion advocated for the eradication of mother to child transmission of HIV in Nigeria stated that...

***"As much as HIV is a major issue, most people living with HIV lead healthy lives when empowered with information on how to effectively manage the infection. It is also important for us to remember that no other epidemic has received as much global attention and support like HIV in the past two decades."*** She said.



HIFASS team and ED, Reshaping Lives and Rebuilding Communities Initiatives, Edward Lawanson at the Adolescents and Youth Programme/Symposium programme in Abuja

## 2.

### HIFASS President chairs the Book launch of Maj Gen (Dr) Ogonnaya's Simon Njoku's (Rtd)

On 9th October 2019, HIFASS President Dr Roland Oritsejafor and other staff of the organization attended the book launch titled "Tenacity in Providence" by Major General (Dr) Ogonnaya Simon Njoku's (Rtd) in Abuja.

The president who was the Chairman of the Occasion and writer in the book forward attributed that the Maj Gen (Dr) Ogonnaya's contributions in revamping the decaying health facilities and establishing new institutions in the armed forces medical services will remain a legacy.



HIFASS President, Dr Roland Oritsejafor at the event



Launching of the book "Tenacity in Providence"



# ADVOCACIES

During the implementation of the Global Fund (GF) -HIV New Funding Model (NFM) project, several advocacy visits were paid to National Human Rights Commission, PACA-Nigeria police force, and Federal Ministry of Justice. The aim of the visits was to formally intimate stakeholders of HIFASS' involvement on the project as a sub-recipient to Society for Family Health (SFH) Key Populations health intervention for female sex workers with 3 LGAs in the FCT and also to seek support toward achieving the success of the project.



Advocacy visit to PACA-Nigeria police force



Advocacy visit to National Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control Programme (NTBLCP)



Advocacy visit to National Human Rights Commission



Advocacy to the Chief State Counsel-Federal Ministry of Justice, Ohakwe Onyeka Eucharia



# PHOTO SPEAKS



Recruitment exercise being conducted at NMOD-HIP, Abuja



HIFASS Board Secretary, Mrs Omatsola Lawanson with the Minister of Health, Osagie Emmanuel Ehanire at the NACA red ribbon award night as part of the 2019 World AIDs Day commemoration in Abuja



HIFASS Communication Officer, Linda Obi with Senator Abike Dabiri-Erewa at the AYP programme/Symposium at the State House, Aso Rock-Abuja



HIFASS HQ staff, Godfrey Akadonye with DHQ MC staff Abuja at the celebration of their 2019 World AIDS Day outreach in Mogadishu barracks on 1st December



HIFASS-LOPIN 3 staff making a presentation to USAID Mission Director, Stephen M. Haykin at the 2019 USAID Summit at Sheraton hotel, Abuja



Staff of HIFASS at the book launch of Maj Gen (Dr) Ogonnaya Simon Njoku (Rtd) in Abuja



HIFASS President Dr Roland Oritsejafor (in the middle) with the Author, Maj Gen (Dr) Ogonnaya Simon Njoku (Rtd) at the launch of the book titled "Tenacity in providence"





Felicitations  
across various  
project offices/sites



HIFASS-LOPIN3 Akwalbom State team  
celebrates HIFASS@12



HIFASS-LOPIN3 Kano State team celebrates HIFASS@12



82 Division Hospital Enugu State team congratulates the management and entire HIFASS staff on her successful 12th year anniversary. We are happy to be part of this success story, may God be praised. We ask Him to continue to inspire us and give us the wisdom and grace to discharge our duties diligently and respectfully.  
Long live HIFASS!



CTRC 44 Nigerian Army Reference Hospital Kaduna State team felicitates with HIFASS on her 12th year anniversary. Congratulations and wishing us all greater heights.



34 Brigade Medical Centre Owerri, Imo State team congratulates the management and entire staff of HIFASS on her 12th anniversary. We pray for God's continued strength, wisdom and innovative ideas on your course towards giving hope to humanity.



Haruna Dauda Yakuni Program Admin Specialist at 33 Artillery Brigade Medical Centre Bauchi State extends his warm congratulations to HIFASS for all its achievements since its inception 12 years ago. I keenly look forward to witnessing the continuous achievements of this Organization along its mission of social commitment and its vision about Passion and Partnership. Wishing the Organization continuing success in the future endeavors and many more brilliant milestones to come.

## HIFASS@11 ANNIVERSARY CONT'D



**NNMADI**  
Ugochukwutuberem Paul,  
Program Admin Specialist  
at 063 Nigerian Airforce  
Base Abuja felicitates with  
HIFASS on 12th year  
anniversary, I am delighted

to be part of this success story in affecting humans positively and giving hope to people. It's my wish that we grow from strength to strength and may more successes be recorded. Congratulations.



An organization is as good as the people in it. We started with a few but now we are many in number, talent and creativity. Congratulations on twelve successful years of accomplishments.

*From Mrs Ugochi Amazue,  
Program Admin Specialist 2DH Ibadan*

## END OF YEAR CELEBRATION



## Hifass Babies

- The family of Senior Transport and Logistics Officer in Akwa Ibom State, Elijah Nwachukwu were blessed with a baby boy in 30th May, 2019.
- The family of the M&E Assistant in Cross River State, Blessing Etuk welcomed their baby girl on 23rd July, 2019.
- The family of Josephine Ken-Enwerem Programme Pharmacist in 563 NAFH Jos welcomed their child on 15th September, 2019.

## Weddings

- HIFASS-LOPIN3 Case Manager in Akwa Ibom State, Ezinne Eke, tied the knot with her partner on 24th August, 2019 in Ebonyi State. Congrats to her.
- HIFASS-LOPIN3 Community Case Manager in Cross River State, Victoria Edet wedded on 14th December, 2019. Congrats to her.
- HIFASS-LOPIN3 Senior Finance Assistant in Cross River State, StBukola Thompson, got married on the 14th December, 2019. Congrats to her.

## Burial Announcements

- HIFASS condoles with the Nutrition and Referral Officer in Adamawa State, Faith Oguejiofor, whose Father passed on 1st September, 2019 after a brief illness, aged 67years. May his soul rest in peace.
- HIFASS mourns with the Senior Finance Analyst & Admin Manager, Abdulkareem Usman who lost his mother on 10th January, 2020 after a battled illness, she died at 64 years.





# SUPPORT A WIDOW!!!

HIFASS would appreciate your sincere support for HIV positive widows and out-of-school children!!!

Kindly send us your donation payable by Cheque/Bank draft in favor of "HIFASS ACCOUNT 4" Zenith Bank, Wuse zone 3, Abuja.  
**Account #: 1015598708**

Online Donations: [www.hifass-hfi.org/donations](http://www.hifass-hfi.org/donations)  
Donation can be made in cash or kind.  
For further details please see the address at the back cover.

## How?

- Play a part in the hostel project for HIV positive widows who need shelter. A piece of land has been purchased but we still need your support towards the building project and this would cost about ₦5,000,000.
- Support a widow on cataract surgery annually at ₦100,000.
- Support out-of-school children on scholarships in Primary education, Secondary and Tertiary level.
  - ✓ 20 students at Primary level at ₦50,000 each for a year
  - ✓ 20 students at Secondary level at ₦70,000 each for a year
  - ✓ 15 students at Tertiary level, ₦100,000 each for a year
- Empower a widow on a skill acquisition training or give a financial support at ₦50,000

## Emergency contacts for Corona and Lassa fever cases

1. Public Health Department,  
Health and Human Services  
Secretariat

- FCT Emergency Operation Centre (EOC): 08109901599
- FCT Call NO: 08031320330
- 08037882384
- 08033156560
- 08091229912
- 08056011582
- 08035954830

2. Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC)

- NCDC Toll-Free Number: 080097000010
- SMS: 08099555577
- WhatsApp: 07087110839
- Email: [info@ncdc.gov.ng](mailto:info@ncdc.gov.ng)

**HIFASS acknowledges the role and support of the following funders/partners:**

- AIDS Care Managers (ACM)
- AIDS Healthcare Foundation
- Arty Care
- Back to School Africa
- Basic Rights Council Initiative
- Brokline Foundation (BLF)
- Calabar Arch-Diocesan Action Committee on AIDS (CAACA)
- Child Protection Network
- Children & Youth Emancipation Network (CYEN)
- Codix Pharmaceuticals
- Community Reach Initiative (CRI)
- Cross River State Agency for the Control of AIDS (CRSACA)
- Critical Case and Critical Research of Nigeria
- Cuso International
- Ebonyi State Agency for the Control of AIDS (EBSACA)
- Excellent Community Education
- Global Fund
- Global Health and Social Awareness Foundation (GHASAF)
- Goggoji Zumunchi Development Initiative (GZDI)
- Initiative for Women's Health Development and Right Protection (WRAHI)
- Initiative for Social Change in Africa (VOFCA)
- Local Agency for the Control of AIDS (LACA)
- Marie Stopes International Organization Nigeria (MSION)
- Medical Women
- Ministry of Women Affairs
- National Malaria Elimination Programme (NMEP)
- Network of People Living with HIV and AIDS in Nigeria (NEPWHAN)
- Nigeria Ministry of Defence Health Implementation Program (NMODHIP)
- National Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control Programme (NTBLCP)
- Otenlta Foundation
- People to People Health Foundation in Nigeria (PPHFN)
- Perpetual Ugbang Foundation
- Red Cross
- State Agency for the Control of AIDS
- Sight Savers
- Society for Family Health (SFH)
- Spring of Hope (SOH)
- Succour and Development Services Initiative (SUCCDEV)
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- United States Department of Defence Walter Reed Program-Nigeria (USDOD-WRP-N)
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- Vitamin Angels
- Welfare Scheme (ECEWS)
- Women United for Economic Empowerment (WUEE)

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- The Management and Board of Trustees HIFASS
- Entire staff working on all projects and sites
- Omonefe O. Erutor, Desk and Communications Officer HIFASS-LOPIN 3 Project

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Blog: <https://hifassblog.wordpress.com/>