



# WRaP-Up

Marching towards a HIV/AIDS free future

**W**alter  
**R**eed  
**P**rogram  
**N**igeria

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Vol. 6, Summer Edition 2017

Newsletter of U.S. Department of Defense Walter Reed Program-Nigeria (DoD WRP-N)



Research - panacea to future infectious diseases

**F**or a period of six weeks from March to April this year, program activities at the Walter Reed Program – Nigeria slowed down as a result of the closure of the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport in Abuja. It picked up with the timely reopening of the airport with a flurry of activities.

These activities included the signing of PEPFAR's interagency country operational plan for fiscal year 2018, a visit from the AFRICOM Commander, technical visits for the upcoming RV 466 study under the Joint West African Research Group (JWARG), including the Nigerian team's training on malaria diagnostics in Liberia, completion of the Presidential Malaria Initiative (PMI) technical visit for the malaria operational plan (MOP) for fiscal year 2018, closing out of our first ever Ebola vaccine trial (RV-429), initiation of another Ebola vaccine candidate trial (RV-456), expansion of the African Cohort Study (AFRICOS), a third 5-star laboratory award in our

partnership, providing screening during World Malaria Day at the Embassy, and an inaugural visit of our new U.S. Ambassador, Mr. Stuart Symington, to our Defense Reference Lab. All of these events are highlighted in this newsletter. WRP-N profoundly thanks our

technical leadership from MHRP on improving our military-to-military partnership into a relationship that is institutionalizing research, prevention, care and treatment across Nigeria and the sub-region.

- Management team



*The historic moment, when for the first time-ever, PEPFAR's Ambassador signs a country's operating plan within its country!*

**Ambassador Deborah Birx (center) signs into effect, Nigeria's PEPFAR Country Operating Plan (COP) of \$469 million for the fiscal year 2018 in the presence of the U.S Ambassador to Nigeria (left), Director General, National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA) (right) and the entire interagency community of CDC, DOD and USAID**

## People and Events

Abuja-Nigeria, the new Commander of the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM), General Thomas D. Waldhauser was in Nigeria to hold series of meetings with Nigerian military and security leaders. During his two-day visit to Abuja, he met with Nigeria's military, security chiefs and the leadership including Acting President, Professor Yemi Osinbajo.

AFRICOM, is responsible for building defense capabilities, responding to crises, deterring and defeating transnational threats, and promoting regional security and stability. Nigeria plays a critical role in Africa, and as such, is a strategic security partner in AFRICOM's mission objective.

General Waldhauser was at the United States Embassy Abuja where he met with the Deputy Chief of Mission, Mr. David Young; the Defense Attache', COL Patrick Doyle, and Office of Security Cooperation personnel. The U.S. Department of Defense Walter Reed Program-Nigeria (DOD WRP-N) presented at that meeting,

where the Country Director, Mr. Robert Nelson, intimated the AFRICOS Commander on DOD WRP-N's contribution and the military to military partnership's efforts at research, clinical care and treatment, biosurveillance, force protection and interventions in Nigeria.



**Mil to mil collaboration:**  
From left: OSC Chief, LTC Sean McClure; Defense Attache, COL Patrick Doyle; WRP-N Country Director, Mr. Robert Nelson; General Thomas Waldhauser; WRP-N's Dr. Yakubu Adamu, Sqn Ldr Aminu Suleiman (rtd) and Mr. Eddie Bloom

## Research Update

### The First Ebola Vaccine Research (RV 429) closes out. New research commences

The final close-out of Nigeria's first clinical trial on the Ebola vaccine study RV 429 took place in March 2017. Research auditors from Quintiles, Kenya, were on ground to cross-check and give approval for a successful ending. Also present, was the Nigeria's Ministry of Defence Research Ethical Committee (MODREC) chairperson, Dr. Joy Ugwuogede who witnessed the successful close-out.

### RV 456

Currently enrolling and vaccinating adult volunteers, is the Janssen's clinical trial testing two different vaccine candidate regimens in healthy adult volunteers. RV 456 will assess the safety, tolerability and immunogenicity of two prime boost regimens of an Ebola vaccine.

### RV 466

The Joint West Africa Research Group (JWARG), is developing an acute febrile illness protocol with the goal of better management of future infectious disease outbreaks. RV466 or "Severe Infectious Disease: Surveillance, Detection, Risk and Consequences in West Africa", is a research protocol that aims to determine the prevalence and incidence of infectious causes of severe acute illness. These indices will be assessed among patients who present at the medical centers across three counties in West Africa, namely Nigeria, Ghana and Liberia. Preparations for the roll out of RV466 in Nigeria is ongoing. The RV466 protocol will be conducted in four NMOD-HIP military facilities in Lagos, Abuja, Makurdi and Enugu.

On-going research studies include RV 329 and the African cohort study (AFRICOS) taking place in 5 African countries. Another is RV 368 Trust study, a protocol done in collaboration with the University of Maryland. RV 487 - the malaria slide bank development study has received reviews from the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR).

See page 4, for more on research



Close-out of RV 429 at CRC Abuja: From left: Quintiles rep. Mr. Michael Enyakoit; Unblinded study nurse, Mrs. Tope Analogbei and Study pharm. Ijeoma Ezeuko



RV 429 close-out. From left: Ag. Director, Dr. Akintunde; MODREC Chair, Dr. Ugwuogede; Quintiles rep., Mr. Enyakoit and Ijeoma Ezeuko, Study pharmacist



During the RV 466 assessment visit at 161 NAF Hospital Makurdi



In a happy mood: Research team with MHRP's Gail Smith (center)

## 2017 World TB Day

Every 24 March 2017, is World TB Day, as declared by World Health Organization (WHO). The Walter Reed Program Nigeria (WRP-N) in an inter-agency collaboration supported the event with TB public enlightenment through the media (television and radio). Several national events commemorated the day which begun with seminars, a road-show and TB sensitization outreach at Kuchingoro village in Abuja. WRP-N's Senior Program Specialist, Care and Treatment, Dr. Lawal Ismail speaking on Nigeria's Television

Authority International, "Media Chat", encouraged all, not to stigmatize or discriminate against people having TB but to enlighten them on how to maintain TB etiquette. He said, "all must unite to end TB in the country. TB is not to be left to the health sector alone but should be a concern for everybody." Equally, Dr. Stanley Meribe, the Senior Program Specialist, TB/HIV, was on 'Kiss FM' to enlighten the public on TB.

TB is one of the leading causes of death among People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), the Walter Reed Program-Nigeria focuses on intensifying TB case finding through the use of modern technology and treatment of positive cases in the military barracks and its nearby communities. It also supports infection control practices at the military health facility level.



From left: NTA Media Chat presenter, Dr. Cole, Dr. Lawal and U.S. Embassy Info. Officer, Mr. Sani Mohammed

## TB/HIV/Helminth study

The Walter Reed Program-Nigeria (USDOD WRP-N) in collaboration with the U.S Military HIV Research Program (MHRP), is embarking on a new research study on Helminth-TB-HIV co-infection. This research study will evaluate the co-infection of Helminth (parasitic worm), Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and Tuberculosis, (TB) and the morbidity patterns of these diseases. Sites for this study are three military health facilities in Kaduna, Makurdi and Abuja.

Research investigators from MHRP and Baylor University, Houston, have been in-country on an assessment visit for the study.



## 2017 World Malaria Day

2017 World Malaria Day was held on April 24, as an interagency event where PMI and implementing partners celebrated the day by sensitizing the Embassy community on malaria prevention, detection and treatment. The theme of the day was "end malaria for good" and had as special guests of honor, Alhaji Abdul'Aziz Abubakar, Zamfara State Governor and Prof. Isaac Adewole, Minister of Health. WRP-N malaria team supported the day through free malaria testing, where 75 Embassy workers were screened and 34 tested.



## Oneworld Accuracy Systems trains laboratorians

In a bid to strengthen laboratory activities and improve accuracy of laboratory results across the Nigerian Ministry of Defence and the U.S Department of Defense Program sites, the Oneworld Accuracy Systems (OASYS) Canada, was engaged to improve capacity of 14 Program laboratorians on a web-based ToT training on OASYS informatics. The aim of this training was to provide laboratorians with the expertise needed to manage this external quality assessment (EQA) program.



A participant, Mrs. Aisha Salami receiving her certificate from the Oneworld CEO, Mr. Daniel Taylor

## Interview

**D**r. Akintiran Akintunde is the Acting Director of Research at the U.S. Department of Defense Walter Reed Program-Nigeria's (USDOD WRP-N) Clinical Research Center (CRC), Abuja. USDOD WRP-N has moved on from HIV/AIDS issues and is now actively involved in research. Foremost was the Ebola Vaccine Study, RV-429, which ended recently. Another Ebola study has just commenced. Dr. Akintunde in this interview, sheds more light on the new Program research

**The Ebola vaccine study has formally ended, was it successfully carried out?**

I believe that the study was successfully executed at the CRC site, enrolling beyond the target. It was a highly competitive enrolment and successfully followed up volunteers one year post enrollment.

**Briefly tell us how you successfully completed the study and what were the processes undertaken?**

First of all, we invited key members of the public to a stakeholders meeting where we planned how best to pass across the Ebola vaccine trial message to the potential volunteers. We then designed a comprehensive briefing package which we used during our community sensitization and outreach activities to educate the populace on the need for an Ebola vaccine in order to prevent the kind of outbreak that occurred in 2014. We subsequently identified key populations within the FCT such as religious bodies, security agencies, drivers, students and hospital staff. We approached and conducted focus group discussions with them in order to sensitize and get a feedback from them. It is also worthy of note that we sought regulatory approvals from all international and local institutional bodies (IRBs) and ethical committees (ECs) including the National Health Research

Committee (NHREC) and NAFDAC before receiving the green light to conduct the study. At the onset of the study potential volunteers were invited to the clinic where they were briefed on the study and also provided informed consent in line with International acceptable Good Clinical Practices (GCP) guidelines.

**How useful is this study to Nigerians since the Ebola epidemic has ended?**

Nigeria is a country with over 170 million people, most of which are concentrated in major cities in the country. Now, imagine a scenario where there is another Ebola disease outbreak in any of these major cities and how rapidly it would spread across the country resulting in high fatalities. The benefit, if eventually found to be safe and efficacious and approved for use, is that it will prevent future infections and also stem the spread of a deadly disease, significantly decreasing morbidity and mortality.

**Who funded the research and who was the Principal Investigator (P.I)?**

Glaxo-SmithKline funded the study through the supervision of Quintiles, a West Africa research organization with technical support from the U.S Military HIV Program-Nigeria (MHRP). The P.I was Dr. Babajide Keshinro.

**What happens after the close-out?**

After study close out, data analysis continues and the outcome of data analysis will determine what happens next.

**What happens to the volunteers?**

The volunteers will continue their lives normally. Once new data is available it will be communicated to the research community and its volunteers.

**Another Ebola vaccine study is about to kick-off. What is the difference between the two?**

First of all, they are two different

types of vaccines, and the regimen is different. This means that the way it will be given to volunteers will differ. The first study used a single vaccination regimen, while the second will use a prime and boost regimen similar to how the HBV vaccine is given.

**Tell us, what this study is all about? Its objective?**

The primary objective is to determine the safety and immunogenicity of the vaccine. There are a number of other secondary objectives.

**What will this vaccine address that the other didn't?**

They are both Phase 2 studies meaning the major objective is the same for both. The other objectives and endpoints will be determined by the nature of the different vaccines.

**What population will be used for the study and who can participate?**

The study population are healthy adults including HIV positive adults.

**Which other countries have participated in the study?**

Part 1 is currently being conducted in the U.S, and part 2 will be conducted in African countries, including Nigeria, Uganda, Mozambique, Tanzania and Kenya.



# A Season of Awards for USDOD-NMOD Laboratories

## Laboratory Spectrum

This season marks a series of outstanding feats in the U.S. Department of Defense and the Nigerian Ministry of Defence Program (USDOD-NMOD) laboratories. These laboratories situated in military health facilities have painstakingly strived to position their laboratories according to ISO-15189 international laboratories standards. The USDOD-NMOD laboratories have constantly been upgraded with essential and state of the art laboratory equipment making them stand out as reputable laboratories. They also have a blend of qualified personnel of military and civilian genres who are trained and retrained on standard laboratory procedures. These laboratories are regularly mentored and supported by Subject Matter Experts and professionals from the U.S Military HIV Research Program (MHRP), Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR), international universities and laboratories. USDOD-NMOD laboratories have serially undergone evaluations and certifications to prepare them for international recognition. These laboratories must pass through different stages of certification before they can attain the optimum level - five star. Two of USDOD-NMOD laboratories have earned this status: 68 Nigerian Army Reference Hospital, Yaba, Lagos and the Defense Reference Laboratory in Abuja.

This rating brings to three the number of 5-star laboratories for the Nigerian Ministry of Defence-U.S Department of Defense Walter Reed Program-Nigeria. The first was the 561 Nigerian Air Force Hospital Ikeja, in 2014, which was the first lab ever in the country to achieve this level.

## 68 Nigerian Army Reference Hospital (NARH) Yaba, Lagos

Auditors from the African Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM) in April completed a Strengthening Laboratory Management Toward Accreditation (SLMTA) assessment of 68 Nigerian Army Reference Hospital Yaba (NARH) in Lagos, Nigeria, and awarded the lab a 5-star rating. The SLMTA process was developed by the World Health

Organization, Africa Division (WHO Afro) to check and support labs toward accreditation. 68 Yaba is a key program site and a hub for many past and present Program research.



Sample processing at 68 NARH Yaba



Record and data keeping at 68 NARH Yaba

## Editor's note

Continuing on excellence, this edition of *Wrap-Up* witnesses the Walter Reed Program-Nigeria growing stronger, forging ahead with more collaborations, recording ground-breaking feats, and striving for excellence all the way. It is establishing the foundation for more research studies and expanding on more public health frontiers.

- Esther Essien

## ASLM audits NMOD-USDOD, 44 NARH Kaduna Laboratory

In line with Strengthening Laboratory Management towards Accreditation (SLMTA) activities in Nigeria, laboratories which have proven consistent good performance are to be audited to ascertain their level of preparedness for international accreditation. One of these labs, is the 44 Nigerian Army Reference Hospital (NARH), Kaduna, which attained a 4-star rating in the SLMTA program. The African Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM) led by Edna Stephen Mponeng from South Africa, in April 2017, visited and mentored 44 NARH in preparation for accreditation. At this rate, it is hoped that 44 NARH, Kaduna is next in line for accreditation.

- Okechukwu Christian Ugwu

Coming on the heels of 68 Nigerian Army Reference Hospital's 5-star rating is the Defense Reference Laboratory (DRL). DRL, situated at the Mogadishu Barracks Abuja, has achieved an initial 5-star status from the Strengthening Laboratory Monitoring Towards Accreditation (SLMTA). This award came after an assessment from auditors led by Dr. Rosemary Okoye and Mr. Tony Okon. DRL was assessed based on a 25-item SLMTA checklist - ISO 15189 of its Quality Management System. Core factors assessed include laboratory management control and technical competence. At the conclusion of the audit, DRL tipped the scales with a total score of 268 points out of 269, earning it a 5-star rating.

DRL supports 46 Program sites located in military health facilities in viral load and EID (Early Infant Diagnosis) testing. It also provides clinical support to other external laboratories and research institutions. Aside from its excellent services in clinical and laboratory interventions, DRL is acknowledged as one of most outstanding laboratories in Nigeria with its state-of-the-art laboratory equipment such as the liquid nitrogen generating plant (LN2), multi-headed microscopes and TAQMAN analysers.

"With this achievement, DRL is now set for international accreditation," says Mr. Sunday Odeyemi, Associate Director, DRL.

## Defense Reference Laboratory Abuja



In the biorepository at DRL. WRP-N's Biomedical Engineer, Ola Olabulo explaining the liquid nitrogen (LN2) process.

## Site team and commanders meeting

46 military hospital heads of the Ministry of Defence Health Implementation Program (MOD HIP) and U.S Department of Defense Walter Reed Program-Nigeria (DOD WRP-N) sites were in Abuja in June, to discuss how to move the Program forward. Accompanied by the site team leaders, a total number of over 80 persons participated in this meeting which set to assess, strategize and steer the military to military partnership forward.



## NAMRU-3 Vector Biology team expands malaria activities in Nigeria

**A**buja, Nigeria: Four Naval Medical Research Unit Three (NAMRU-3) vector biologists traveled to Abuja and Enugu State, Nigeria in early February to expand collaborative efforts in research activities in the region as well as to survey for arbovirus transmission. NAMRU-3 staff members teamed up with fellow researchers at the National Arbovirus and Vectors Research Center (NAVRC), as well as soldiers from the 82 Division, Nigerian Army who will be included in the arbovirus risk mapping project.

The 17 NAVRC researchers were divided into two groups: Molecular Biology and Entomology. The molecular group was taught by Nermeen Fahmy, Medical Research Technologist, NAMRU-3, on viral ribonucleic acid (RNA) and deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) extraction, polymerase chain reaction (PCR), gel preparation, loading samples, running electrophoresis, data analysis, detection for dengue and chikungunya virus serotypes in *Aedes* mosquitoes, as well as molecular detection of *Plasmodium Falciparum* in *Anopheles gambiae* mosquitoes.

“Mosquitoes bite at different times of day and the type of mosquito varies depending on the location. Successful risk mapping involves setting traps in as many different locations as possible as well as

during different times [of day],” said Reham Tageldin, Medical Research Technologist, NAMRU-3.

The entomology group studied adult mosquito trapping, handling, sorting, identification and preservation as well as larval collection and identification. The NAMRU-3 and NAVRC teams traveled to different sites and used different methods of mosquito collection: CDC ultra violet light traps, Biogents-Sentinel traps and spray catch. They also collected larvae, in order to test for insecticide resistance.

Mosquito-borne diseases are common in Nigeria and the majority of NAVRC researchers had more than one family member affected. Dr. Okechukwu Chukwuekezie, Chief Medical Officer, NAVRC, has worked at the center for 10 years and has watched the research as well as the infrastructure improve over the years. “The work we do here is important and the staff here are motivated about what we do. The training this week has been a dream come true because now we are able to do more than we were before in the field of malaria vectors”, said Chukwuekezie.

This project in Enugu State also provided the NAMRU-3 team the opportunity to work closely with the army because malaria affects deployed troops no matter their country of origin. “Engaging in a mil

itary collaboration with the Nigerian military allows both sides to enhance knowledge about how to survey for and better [protect] our forces from vector borne diseases,” said LT Hanayo Arimoto, Head of Vector Biology Research Program (VBRP), NAMRU-3.

The NAMRU-3 Vector team met with several representatives during the trip to Nigeria: Presidential Malaria Initiative-USAID Nigeria, National Malaria Elimination Program, and the Director of Public Health.

This is the second project for NAMRU-3 in Nigeria. Dr. Hala Bassaly, Medical Research Scientist, NAMRU-3, led the first VBRP team in 2016 to Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria and due to the success there, the project in Enugu was born.

**USDOD WRP-N, collaborating with NAMRU-3 Cairo successfully trained 30 participants from different health facilities in Enugu state on entomology and molecular surveillance.**

**The project in Enugu State also provided the NAMRU-3 team, the opportunity to work closely with the Nigerian Army because malaria affects deployed troops no matter the country of origin.**

- Denise Alford, NAMRU-3 PAO



NAMRU-3 visit to Calabar Institute of Tropical Disease



Malaria larval catch collection

## PMI ACTIVITIES

### The NMOD/DOD malaria trainers provide technical support in Liberia

**L**iberia 2017: The Joint West Africa Research Group (JWARG) continues its mission objective of strengthening clinical and laboratory capacity in West Africa with the Clinical Course in Tropical and Emerging Diseases in Monrovia. Malaria is a tropical disease and ranks as one of the highest killer

diseases in West Africa, hence it earned a place in the curriculum outline of the training.

As a core component of the course, the NMOD/DOD malaria trainers were on hand to provide technical support in malaria diagnostics using the malaria rapid test and smear microscopy. The hands-on

training provided current information on WHO recommended standards of testing before treatment and viewed validated malaria smears containing plasmodium at various stages. It also afforded participants a practical demonstration use of malaria rapid test kit. 50 clinicians and laboratorians from Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria, participated in this training, which provided a platform for interaction between professional malaria trainers and clinicians to share knowledge and exchange best practices in accurate malaria diagnosis for better patient management. JWARG, in 2016, commenced capacity trainings in Nigeria, to prepare West Africa against future epidemics.

By Treasure Okoye,  
Esther Essien



### PMI/Malaria team visits USDOD-NMOD Program

**T**he President Malaria Initiative (PMI) and the U.S Department of Defense Walter Reed Program-Nigeria (DODWRP-N) collaboration began in 2013 with funding to provide malaria diagnostics training and quality assurance to 11 PMI focus states. In May 2017, a Monitoring Operations Plan (MOP) team from CDC and USAID, USA, visited Nigeria to access interagency PMI activities and provide operational guidance for fiscal year 2018 (FY 18). They also

had discussions with the National Malaria Elimination Programme (NMEP) and malaria partners on areas of support. A 12-man MOP team, led by PMI Nigeria's focal person, Ms. Jessica Kafuko, and made up of representatives from USAID, WHO, Global Health, National Malaria Elimination Programme (NMEP) and other implementing partners, visited and toured the NMOD/DODWRP-N laboratory training center at the

561 Nigerian Airforce Hospital (NAFH) laboratory, the venue for major trainings on malaria microscopy. Discussions centered on improving malaria diagnosis, capacity building, greater participation from NMEP, and establishing a national center for all malaria interventions and expertise in Nigeria.

DOD WRP-N has since 2003, carried out capacity building on malaria diagnosis through PEPFAR's support. The Nigerian Ministry of Defence and U.S Department of Defense (NMOD-USDOD) partnership supports two functional training centers located in Lagos and Abuja for trainings in malaria diagnostics, quality assurance and lab supervision. The NMOD-USDOD Program boasts of a core group of malaria mentors as well as WHO certified trainers who conduct malaria activities.



During the PMI MOP team visit at 561 NAFH training laboratory Lagos

## The U.S. Ambassador's visit to Defense Reference Laboratory

**A**buja, 2017: The U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, Amb. Stuart Symington, in company of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Amb. Danjuma Sheni paid a courtesy and orientation visit to the Defense Reference Laboratory (DRL) Mogadishu Cantonment, Abuja. The occasion was the handover ceremony of four decommissioned vehicles from the Walter Reed Program-Nigeria (WRP-N) to the Ministry of Defence Health Implementation Programme.

In furthering twelve years of successful military to military partnership between the Nigerian Ministry of Defence Health Implementation Programme and the U.S. Department of Defense Walter Reed Program-Nigeria, the Program is expanding to take on clinical and laboratory capacity development in research, bio-surveillance and response capabilities, as well as infectious disease countermeasures in West Africa. This donation is a gesture from WRP-N to support PEPFAR, PMI and JWARG (Joint West Africa Research Group) activities, in addition to strengthening programmatic relations carried out by the mil-mil collaboration between

Nigeria and the United States.

“There is no enemy that does more harm in any country today than disease, and if you've got national defense against other threats and not against disease, then you are without defense”, says Amb. Symington. “DRL models the benefits for both our countries of a true partnership into which we both have contributed and sustained, overtime, to make a difference”. “It is a model not only of science and medicine, but of cooperation from one country and people to another”.

After a guided tour of DRL led by DRL's Director, COL Mike Ebie, the Ambassador remarked, “as I see people in laboratories taking risks, not only to find out what is wrong with someone but to think about how to cure them effectively, and then they go the next step to think about how to eliminate this disease in Nigeria, I am reminded that I am in the midst of heroes and of greatness, and salute you all.” Symington's visit to DRL marks his first visit to a military establishment in Nigeria and the Permanent Secretary's first visit to DRL.



Sheni, appreciating the gesture from Walter Reed Program Nigeria, said “I want to assure you of the government of Nigeria's resolve and commitment to fulfil its obligation and support for this unique mil to mil partnership”. It is a partnership that we value greatly, and look forward to further enhancing it in all ramifications.”

DRL supports 46 Program sites located in military health facilities in viral load and EID (Early Infant Diagnosis testing). It also, provides clinical support to other external laboratories and research institutions.

The handover ceremony is coming a few months after the handover of two Toyota SUVs to the African Center of Excellence for Genomics of Infectious Disease (ACEGID) in support of health scientific research collaborations. ACEGID is a partner with the Joint West Africa Research Group (JWARG) project in Nigeria.



## Welcome

The Walter Reed Program-Nigeria welcomes 2 new staff to its Monitoring & Evaluation Unit:  
**Dr. Justus Uzim , Senior Program Specialist, M&E.** Justus is a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and has a Masters degree in Public Health from the University of Nigeria Nsukka. He comes with 11 years of program M&E experience cutting across TB, HIV, Malaria, and other public health diseases. Before WRP-N, Justus has worked in several places, the last, as the M&E lead for PMI funded Malaria Action Program for States.



The second M&E staff is **Esther Adebayo-Abikoye, Program Specialist, M&E.** Esther has a Masters in Public Health from the University of Cape Town. She has six years of work experience and has worked in many international organizations, the last being the Centers of Disease Control, Abuja. Esther is passionate about commitment and consistency in whatever one does, great assets which she brings into the program.



## Implementation of 90-90-90 Strategy through Supportive Supervision

**S**upportive supervision is a facilitative approach to supervision that promotes mentorship, joint problem-solving and communication between supervisors and employees. In recent years, supportive supervision has been implemented to improve routine program implementation, monitoring & evaluation and also in providing feedback on staff performance. The purpose of supportive supervision is to entrench quality and the use of data at the site level to make programmatic decisions based on collected data. This has contributed to the larger goal of health systems strengthening.

The Department Of Defense Walter Reed Program-Nigeria (US DoD WRP-N), has been committed to using supportive supervision as a promising approach to strengthen and improve implementation of new PEPFAR initiatives in all their supported sites. This effort has brought about improvement in routine data collection and programmatic outcomes. It has increased staff capacity to collect, manage, use data and improve leadership capacity of site staff in implementation of quality systems for HIV prevention, care and treatment in high-prevalence, resource-constrained settings.

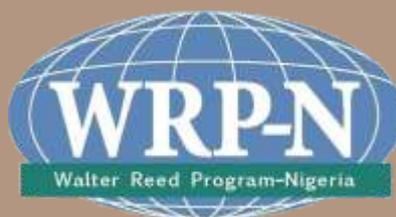
The overall design of health improvement systems has supported the implementation of the PEPFAR Site Improvement through Monitoring System (SIMS) toolkit in the context of PEPFAR's Accountability & Impact agendas in the HIV Treatment & Care programs. This approach is critical to scaling-up HIV services in resource-constrained settings. Supportive supervision processes have also ensured quality integration, linkages and triage systems are in place in all supported US DoD WRP-N/NMOD-HIP treatment and care programs.

Finally, supportive supervision as a strategy was successful in improving data quality, data collection, and quality of services offered to people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) at the USDoD WRP-N/NMOD-HIP sites. This has also supported successful implementation of the PEPFAR Site Improvement through Monitoring System (SIMS) toolkit in the context of PEPFAR's accountability & impact agendas.

- Pham. Ijeoma Ezeuko  
- Dr. Stanley Meribe



**The Department Of Defense  
Walter Reed Program-  
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**HJFMRI**

**WRP-N**

**Walter Reed Program-Nigeria - an affiliate of Walter Reed Army Institute of Research U.S.A.,  
works in partnership with the Nigeria Ministry of Defence.**

**It is a 'military to military' collaboration to combat HIV/AIDS and related diseases  
in Nigeria through research, prevention, care, treatment and training.**

**c/o US Embassy, Diplomatic drive, Central Business District, Abuja - 09-4614000**

**For more information; visit our website at [www.wrp-n.org](http://www.wrp-n.org). We welcome your contributions/comments at [essien@wrp-n.org](mailto:essien@wrp-n.org) or [wrpncommunications@gmail.com](mailto:wrpncommunications@gmail.com). Wrap-Up is a publication of the Communications Unit, Walter Reed Program-Nigeria and can be downloaded at our website.  
Editor: Esther Essien, Editorial team: Ginger Kopp and Navy Lt C Eneja**