

A monthly Publication of Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

ON @CALL

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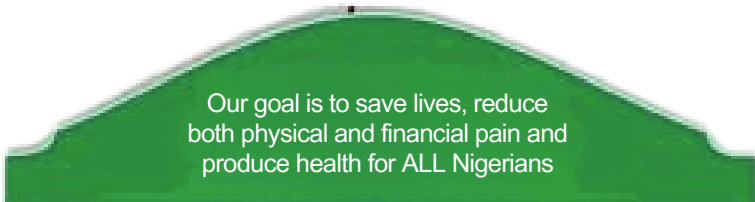
HEALTH & SOCIAL WELFARE UPDATE



READY

NIGERIA IS BUILDING THE SYSTEMS THAT PROTECT LIVES

HEALTH SECTOR STRATEGIC BLUEPRINT 2023-2027




Outcomes we want to achieve include improvement in mortality and morbidity rates, drop in out-of-pocket expenditure by patients and reduction in difference in health outcomes between different income quartiles



Effective governance

- Strengthen oversight and effective implementation of the National Health Act
- Increase accountability to and participation of relevant stakeholders and Nigerian citizens
- Strengthen regulatory capacity to foster the highest standards of service provision
- Improve cross-functional coordination & effective partnerships to drive delivery



Efficient, equitable and quality health system

- Drive health promotion in a multi-sectoral way (incl. intersectionality with education, environment, WASH and Nutrition)
- Strengthen prevention through primary health care and community health care
- Improve quality of care and service delivery across public (secondary, tertiary and quaternary) and private health care providers
- Improve equity and affordability of quality care for patients, expand insurance.
- Revitalize the end-to-end (production to retention) healthcare workers pipeline



unlocking value chains

- Promote clinical research and development
- Stimulate local promotion of health products
- Shape markets to ensure sustainable local demand
- Strengthen supply chain



Health Security

- Improve the ability the ability to detect, prevent and respond to public health threats (eg. Cholera, Lassa)
- Build climate resiliency for the health system in collaboration with all other sectors

Data & Digitization: Digitize the health system & have data backed decision making

Financing: Increase effectiveness of spend and alignment of spend with strategic priorities

Culture & Talent within MDAs: Strengthen skills, capabilities & values and drive a performance-based culture within the FMOH

CONTENTS

- 04** EDITOR'S NOTE
READY Building the Systems That Protect Lives
- 05** FROM THE COORDINATING MINISTER
READY: Building the Systems That Protect Lives
- 06** FROM THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE
READY: Building the Systems That Protect Lives
- 06** FROM THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE
READY: Building the Systems That Protect Lives
- 07** COVER
READY: Nigeria Is Building the Systems That Protect Lives
- 12** RETHINKING MALARIA
How Science, Data, and Local Innovation Are Driving Progress
- 16** STRONGER INSTITUTIONS, SAFER NIGERIA
EUSPIN Strengthens Nigeria's Public Health Shield
- 20** READY BEFORE THE CRISIS
Nigeria Strengthens Ebola Preparedness and Regional Security
- 23** WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PREPAREDNESS PROTOCOL IS ACTIVATED?
- 26** UCTH: READY FOR WHAT COMES NEXT
How the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital Is Expanding Specialist Care, Advancing Research, and Delivering Hope Across Borders



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29
UCTH: READY FOR WHAT COMES NEXT



HEALTH CHALLENGE



EDITOR'S NOTE

Daju Kachollom S. mni
Permanent Secretary

READY

Building the Systems That Protect Lives

In public health, success is often measured by what does not happen: the outbreak that is contained before it spreads, the disease that is prevented before it takes hold, the complication that is detected early, and the life saved because the right systems, people, and resources were already in place.

Readiness is not built in a moment of crisis. It is built through deliberate investments in people, institutions, partnerships, and policies that strengthen our capacity to respond to today's challenges while preparing for those of tomorrow.

Across the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and its agencies, this commitment continues to guide our work and our mandate: to save lives, reduce both physical and financial pain, and produce health for all Nigerians.

This edition of ON CALL highlights how that mandate is being translated into action across three critical fronts:

Investing in Care: From the operationalisation of the National Malaria Strategic Plan 2026–2030 and the expansion of cervical cancer screening services to the launch of the Midwifery Workforce Expansion Plan, we continue to prioritise prevention, early intervention, and access to quality care.

Advancing Readiness: We spotlight efforts to strengthen medicine security through local pharmaceutical production, regulatory

strengthening, and innovation, all aimed at building a resilient and self-reliant healthcare system capable of meeting the needs of Nigerians.

Strengthening Partnerships: Through engagements with the European Union, the World Health Organization, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Africa CDC, Nigeria continues to enhance institutional capacity, improve preparedness, and strengthen collective action against emerging health threats.

In our Frontline Focus, we feature the Director of Public Health, whose leadership reflects the importance of prevention, surveillance, and preparedness in protecting population health. We also spotlight the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital, whose contributions to healthcare delivery, training, and innovation demonstrate the growing strength of our health institutions.

As the health landscape continues to evolve, so too must our systems and strategies. Readiness requires sustained commitment, continuous improvement, and a shared determination to build a healthier future for all. The stories featured in this edition demonstrate that readiness is not merely about responding to challenges when they arise. It is about anticipating them, preparing for them, and building the systems that protect lives, strengthen communities, and improve health outcomes for every Nigerian. Happy reading.

FROM THE COORDINATING MINISTER OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE

READY: *Building the Systems That Protect Lives*

Readiness is one of the most important measures of a health system's strength. A ready health system can anticipate risks, respond effectively to emerging challenges, maintain essential services during periods of uncertainty, and continue improving outcomes for the people it serves. Building such a system requires deliberate choices, sustained investment, and strong institutions.

Across Nigeria's health sector, we are making those investments. Under the leadership of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, the Nigeria Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative has provided a framework for accelerating reforms and strengthening the foundations of healthcare delivery. Through the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp), governments, development partners, the private sector, academia, civil society, and health professionals are increasingly working from a shared vision and a common set of priorities. More importantly, SWAp is strengthening coordination across the health sector, helping to align investments, expertise, and accountability around measurable outcomes for Nigerians.

This collective effort is vital because health challenges are becoming more complex, interconnected, and dynamic. No single institution can address them alone. The progress we seek depends on a matrix of robust solutions:

- Stronger primary healthcare systems and a well-trained, motivated workforce.
- Improved access to quality services and greater domestic capacity for manufacturing health commodities.
- Advanced disease surveillance systems and the effective use of data

to guide real-time decision-making.

Ultimately, our success depends not only on building partnerships, but on coordinating them effectively, ensuring that resources, expertise, and accountability are aligned around measurable results and national priorities. Encouragingly, we are beginning to see evidence that these efforts are yielding results. Across several priority areas, improvements in service delivery, disease control, workforce development, and health sector coordination are demonstrating what is possible when reforms are pursued consistently and collaboratively.

Yet, we recognise that much work remains. The journey toward Universal Health Coverage requires persistence, innovation, and an unwavering commitment to the people we serve. It requires us to remain focused not only on

today's priorities but also on the systems that will determine our ability to meet tomorrow's challenges. That is the essence of readiness.

As you read this edition of ON CALL, I encourage you to reflect on the many individuals, institutions, and partners whose efforts are helping to strengthen Nigeria's health system every day. Their work reminds us that protecting lives is not the responsibility of one organisation or one profession; it is a shared endeavour that depends on collective action, effective coordination, and a common purpose.

Together, we will continue building a health system that is stronger, more resilient, and better prepared to deliver health and hope for all Nigerians.

Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, CON
Coordinating Minister of Health
and Social Welfare
Federal Republic of Nigeria

FROM THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE



READY: *Building the Systems That Protect Lives*

A truly ready health system is one that brings quality healthcare closer to the people, regardless of where they live, their circumstances, or their ability to pay. Readiness is not only about responding to emergencies; it is about ensuring that every Nigerian can access quality healthcare in facilities that are equipped, staffed, and supported to deliver the services they deserve.

Across the country, significant investments are being made to strengthen access to care and improve health outcomes. From expanding health insurance coverage and strengthening primary healthcare services to improving specialist care, cancer services, and critical health infrastructure, these efforts are helping to ensure that more Nigerians can access

quality healthcare without suffering undue financial hardship. They are also bringing us closer to our goal of achieving Universal Health Coverage and leaving no one behind.

Equity remains at the heart of this work. A health system is only as strong as its ability to reach those who need it most, including vulnerable and underserved populations. Through collaboration with healthcare workers, communities, development partners, and humanitarian organisations, we continue to expand access to essential services and improve the quality of care available to Nigerians.

The progress we seek is not measured only by the facilities we build or the programmes we launch, but by the lives

we improve and the hope we restore. Every woman who receives timely care, every child protected from disease, every cancer detected early, and every family spared the burden of preventable illness brings us closer to the healthier Nigeria we envision.

As you explore this edition of ON CALL, I invite you to reflect on the collective efforts underway to build a health system that is more accessible, equitable, resilient, and responsive to the needs of all Nigerians.

And so, with peace and plenty, Nigeria may be blessed.


Dr. Iziq Adekunle Salako
Minister of State for Health and Social Welfare
Federal Republic of Nigeria

READY: Nigeria Is Building the Systems That Protect Lives



Across Nigeria, a new generation of health investments is taking shape. Tricycle ambulances are reaching communities where conventional emergency vehicles often struggle to operate. Boat ambulances are extending emergency care across riverine areas. New specialist facilities are expanding access to critical services, while Emergency Operations Centres are strengthening preparedness and response capabilities.

Taken individually, these developments may appear to be separate interventions. Together, they tell a larger story. They are part of a national effort to build a health system that is ready. Ready to prevent disease before it occurs. Ready to respond when emergencies arise. Ready to deliver quality care closer to the people. And ready to protect lives through stronger institutions, a skilled workforce, secure supply chains, and strategic partnerships. Across the


The strongest health systems recognise that prevention remains the first line of defence

country, these foundations are being strengthened through the Nigeria Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative (NHSRII), creating a health system that is becoming more resilient, responsive, and prepared for the future.

Ready to Prevent

The strongest health systems recognise that prevention remains the first line of defence. This principle continues to guide national efforts against some of the country's most

pressing health challenges. A renewed push against malaria through the National Malaria Strategic Plan 2026–2030 is helping to align efforts around prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and surveillance. At the same time, expanded cervical cancer screening and HPV vaccination initiatives are increasing opportunities for early detection and protection. These efforts share a common objective: reducing illness before it becomes a crisis and ensuring that more Nigerians can live healthier lives.

Ready to Deliver

No health system can be stronger than the people who power it. Across Nigeria, healthcare workers remain at the heart of service delivery. Strengthening the workforce therefore remains central to improving health outcomes and expanding access to care. The Midwifery Workforce Expansion Plan reflects this commitment, helping to increase the availability of skilled birth

READY: Nigeria Is Building the Systems That Protect Lives



attendants and strengthen maternal and newborn health services across the country. Readiness is ultimately about people. Every trained health worker strengthens the system's ability to deliver quality care when and where it is needed.

Ready to Respond

When emergencies occur, speed saves lives. Whether responding to disease outbreaks, maternal emergencies, accidents, or other life-threatening situations, a ready health system must be able to move quickly and effectively. To strengthen emergency medical response, the Federal Government recently deployed critical assets through the National Emergency Medical Service and Ambulance System (NEMSAS), including

145 tricycle ambulances, six boat ambulances, emergency communication systems, and dispatch equipment. These assets are helping to improve pre-hospital care and strengthen referral pathways between healthcare facilities, ensuring that patients can access appropriate care more quickly.

They are particularly important for emergency obstetric and newborn care, where timely intervention often determines outcomes.

Additional investments in Emergency Operations Centres in Kano, Sokoto, and Katsina States are further strengthening coordination and preparedness for public health emergencies. Together, these developments

are helping to build a more responsive emergency care system and a stronger culture of readiness.

Ready for the Future

Readiness requires more than emergency response. It requires institutions, infrastructure, medicines, and partnerships that can sustain progress over time. Across the country, investments in health infrastructure are expanding access to specialised care and strengthening service delivery. New facilities dedicated to trauma care, mental health, fertility services, laboratory medicine, and advanced clinical care are helping to improve the capacity of the health system to meet diverse healthcare needs.



READY: Nigeria Is Building the Systems That Protect Lives

At the same time, efforts to strengthen medicine security through local pharmaceutical production, innovation, and regulatory advancement are laying the foundation for a more self-reliant healthcare system. In an increasingly interconnected world, ensuring reliable access to medicines and health commodities has

become an essential part of national preparedness.

Partnerships remain equally important. Through the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp), governments, development partners, academia, civil society organisations, and the private sector are working with greater alignment

around shared priorities and measurable outcomes. Recent collaborations with the European Union, the World Health Organisation, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Africa CDC demonstrate the power of coordinated action in advancing health security and strengthening health systems.

Building What Comes Next

Readiness is not a destination. It is a continuous process of strengthening institutions, expanding access, investing in people, improving infrastructure, securing essential medicines, and building partnerships that deliver results. The challenges facing health systems continue to evolve, but so too does Nigeria's response.

From prevention and preparedness to emergency response and specialised care, the investments being made today are helping to create a health system that is better equipped to meet the needs of tomorrow. Nigeria is not waiting for the next health challenge to arrive before taking action. It is building the systems that protect lives.



REFORM SPOTLIGHT

MEDICINE SECURITY AND BREAKTHROUGH THERAPIES

Preparing for the Next Frontier of Healthcare



For thousands of Nigerian families living with sickle cell disease, the search for effective treatment is a lifelong journey. While advances in medicine continue to transform outcomes around the world, many of the most promising therapies remain beyond the reach of those who need them most.

Nigeria is determined to change that. As part of a broader effort to strengthen medicine security and position the country for the future of healthcare, the Federal Government is exploring pathways to expand access to breakthrough therapies while building the research, manufacturing, and innovation systems needed to support them.

That ambition was reinforced during a high-level engagement between the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, global

“...Federal Government is exploring pathways to expand access to breakthrough therapies while building the research, manufacturing, and innovation systems needed to support them

non-profit organisation Caring Cross, and key research and industry stakeholders in Abuja. At the centre of discussions was Chimeric Antigen Receptor (CAR) T-cell therapy, a revolutionary approach that reprogrammes a patient's own immune cells to fight disease. The technology is showing promise in the treatment of conditions such as sickle cell disease and certain blood cancers, offering new hope for patients facing illnesses that

have traditionally been difficult and costly to manage.

While such therapies are becoming increasingly available in parts of Europe, North America, and Asia, access remains extremely limited across much of Africa. For Nigeria, expanding access is about more than introducing a new treatment. It is about ensuring that scientific breakthroughs can be translated into real-world solutions for Nigerian patients.

Speaking at the engagement, the Honourable Minister of State for Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Iziaq Adekunle Salako, underscored the government's commitment to bridging the gap between innovation and access. “Our goal is clear, to ensure that breakthroughs in science are not distant concepts, but accessible solutions for Nigerians,” he said.

The discussions also highlighted

MEDICINE SECURITY AND BREAKTHROUGH THERAPIES

Preparing for the Next Frontier of Healthcare

the important role of the Presidential Initiative on Vaccine and Biologicals Production (PVAC), which is helping to strengthen local manufacturing capacity, expand biological production, and build a stronger innovation ecosystem. While initially focused on vaccines and biologicals, the initiative is laying foundations that could support future advances in areas such as gene therapy, regenerative medicine, and other next-generation treatments.

In many ways, this is what readiness looks like in modern healthcare. It is not only about having medicines available today; it is about building the scientific, regulatory, and manufacturing capacity required to deliver the medicines of tomorrow.

Reinforcing this vision, Permanent Secretary Daju Kachollom S. mni described the engagement as an important meeting point between science, policy, and opportunity. She noted that emerging fields such as gene therapy and regenerative medicine present an opportunity for Nigeria to leapfrog traditional barriers to healthcare access while strengthening long-term health system resilience.

The conversation also highlighted Nigeria's growing profile in pharmaceutical research and development. Recent investments in research



“As the country continues to strengthen medicine security, one message is becoming increasingly clear: readiness in the 21st century will depend not only on access to medicines, but on the capacity to shape the future of medicine itself

infrastructure, international collaboration, and local production capacity are helping position the country as an emerging hub for health

innovation on the continent.

While widespread access to advanced therapies remains a long-term goal, the significance of this engagement lies in the direction it signals. Nigeria is moving beyond a future in which it simply consumes medical innovation developed elsewhere. Instead, it is laying the foundations to participate in the discovery, adaptation, production, and delivery of the next generation of therapies.

As the country continues to strengthen medicine security, one message is becoming increasingly clear: readiness in the 21st century will depend not only on access to medicines, but on the capacity to shape the future of medicine itself.

RETHINKING MALARIA

How Science, Data, and Local Innovation Are Driving Progress



From nearly 42 per cent in 2011 to about 15 per cent today. That is the story Nigeria's malaria data are beginning to tell. For a disease that has long remained one of the country's most persistent public health challenges, the decline represents more than a statistic. It is evidence that sustained investment, stronger health systems, scientific innovation, and coordinated action can deliver measurable results.

Yet for health leaders, researchers, and policymakers, the progress achieved so far is not the destination. It is proof that a different approach is working. That message resonated throughout the Science of Defeating Malaria leadership programme hosted in Abuja by the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare through the National Malaria Elimination Programme (NMEP), and partners. The week-long programme brought together more than 65 participants from 39 countries, creating a platform for global learning, collaboration,



Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate

Nigeria is making progress against malaria, not through opinion, but through evidence. The data show that when science, innovation, and coordinated action come together, lives can be saved

and reflection on the future of malaria elimination.

Addressing participants, the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, noted that Nigeria's progress against malaria is increasingly being driven by evidence rather than assumptions. The country's evolving strategy recognises that malaria is not experienced uniformly across Nigeria. The realities in Bayelsa differ from those in Kano, Zamfara, or Lagos. As a result, interventions are increasingly being tailored to local conditions, disease patterns,

climate realities, and community needs. This shift toward data-driven decision-making is helping to ensure that resources are deployed where they can have the greatest impact.

The programme also highlighted another important dimension of Nigeria's malaria response: local innovation. Among the activities was a visit to the NASENITROMENT manufacturing facility in Abuja, where participants, including a delegation from Harvard University and other international experts, witnessed the production of Africa's first fully localised rapid diagnostic test kits. The facility represents a growing commitment to strengthening domestic manufacturing capacity and reducing reliance on imported health commodities. The significance extends beyond malaria.

Local production of diagnostics, medicines, and health technologies is increasingly recognised as an essential



RETHINKING MALARIA

How Science, Data, and Local Innovation Are Driving Progress

component of health security, ensuring that countries can respond more effectively to public health challenges while strengthening economic resilience. This vision is echoed in broader investments under the Nigeria Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative (NHSRII), including efforts to strengthen primary healthcare, expand health insurance coverage, develop the health workforce, improve infrastructure, and support local manufacturing.

The same spirit of innovation and evidence-based action underpins the newly launched National Malaria Strategic Plan 2026–2030, unveiled during activities commemorating World

Malaria Day. Speaking at the event, the Honourable Minister of State for Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Iziq Adekunle Salako, reaffirmed the Federal Government's commitment to reducing malaria prevalence and deaths by 50 per cent by 2030. He described malaria elimination as a national priority requiring sustained investment, strategic partnerships, and community engagement.

The new strategy provides a framework for strengthening prevention, diagnosis, treatment, surveillance, and accountability while ensuring that solutions remain responsive to the realities of different communities.

The lesson emerging from Nigeria's experience is clear: defeating malaria requires more than a single intervention. It requires science and policy. Innovation and implementation. Global partnerships and local solutions.

The challenge remains significant, but the evidence is increasingly difficult to ignore.

By rethinking old approaches and embracing data, innovation, and locally driven solutions, Nigeria is demonstrating that malaria elimination is not simply an aspiration. It is a goal being pursued with growing confidence, measurable progress, and a clear sense of direction.



STOPPING CANCER BEFORE IT STARTS

Nigeria Expands Cervical Cancer Screening and HPV Vaccination

Every year, thousands of Nigerian women face a disease that is largely preventable. Unlike many other cancers, cervical cancer can often be stopped before it starts through vaccination, routine screening, and early treatment. That reality is driving a growing national effort to eliminate the disease as a public health threat.

In Owerri, Imo State, the Federal Government, in partnership with the Partnership for Cervical Cancer Elimination in Nigeria (PECCIN) and the Imo State Government, officially flagged off a new phase of cervical cancer screening services, marking another important step in Nigeria's cancer prevention journey. Yet the story extends far beyond a single event.

Since introducing the single-dose Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine into the national routine immunisation programme in 2023, Nigeria has vaccinated more than 15 million girls, becoming the first country in Africa to achieve such a large-scale rollout within such a short period. The achievement has more than tripled the number of girls protected against cervical cancer across the continent



“ – Dr. Iziaq Adekunle Salako

Prevention remains the most effective and cost-efficient approach to controlling diseases of public health significance, including cancers

and stands as one of the most significant public health milestones in Nigeria's recent history.

Speaking at the flag-off ceremony, the Honourable Minister of State for Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Iziaq Adekunle Salako, reaffirmed Nigeria's commitment to achieving the World Health Organisation's cervical cancer elimination targets by 2030. These targets aim to ensure that 90 per cent of girls are vaccinated against HPV by age 15, 70 per cent of women are screened using high-performance tests, and 90 per cent of women identified with cervical disease receive timely treatment. “The broader cancer control agenda of the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare reflects the strategic emphasis of the Federal Government on prevention as the most effective and cost-efficient approach to controlling diseases of public health significance, including cancers.” – Dr.

Iziaq Adekunle Salako

The screening programme launched in Imo State is designed to bring that vision closer to reality. Beyond providing immediate screening services, it is strengthening local capacity, improving referral pathways, enhancing data systems, and laying the foundation for sustainable cervical cancer prevention services. The initiative forms part of the National Strategic Cancer Control Plan (2026–2030), which outlines Nigeria's roadmap for reducing the burden of cancer through prevention, early detection, treatment, research, and improved access to care.

It also builds on earlier milestones, including the establishment of the National Institute for Cancer Research and Treatment (NICRAT) and the National Taskforce on Cervical Cancer Elimination, both created to accelerate progress toward a future where fewer women develop advanced disease. The first phase of the programme will screen thousands of women across six pilot states, serving as a foundation for wider expansion across the country. For health leaders, the objective is clear: make early detection and prevention routine rather than exceptional.

The message behind the programme is equally clear. Cervical cancer should no longer be a disease that claims lives because it was detected too late. Through vaccination, screening, strong partnerships, and sustained investment, Nigeria is building a future where more women are protected, more cancers are detected early, and more lives are saved.



ONE MILLION MORE MIDWIVES

Investing in the Workforce That Saves Lives



When a woman goes into labour, the difference between life and death can sometimes come down to one person. A skilled midwife. Across Nigeria, midwives remain at the heart of maternal and newborn healthcare, providing care during pregnancy, childbirth, and the critical days that follow. In many communities, particularly in rural and underserved areas, they are often the first and most important line of support for mothers and newborns.

Recognising their vital role, the Federal Government has unveiled a new national strategy to expand Nigeria's midwifery workforce and strengthen maternal and newborn healthcare services. Announced during activities commemorating the International Day of the Midwife, the initiative forms part of broader efforts to

reduce maternal mortality and ensure that more women and children have access to quality care when they need it most. Speaking at a ministerial press briefing in Abuja, the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, described midwives as the backbone of maternal and newborn healthcare delivery, noting that no country can significantly reduce maternal and child deaths without investing in the health workers who provide care on the frontlines.

The new strategy seeks to expand training opportunities, increase workforce capacity, modernise education standards, strengthen leadership, and support the deployment of skilled midwives to communities where they are needed most. It also complements broader

national efforts to strengthen emergency obstetric and newborn care, improve maternal health outcomes, and accelerate interventions in high-burden communities across the country.

This year's International Day of the Midwife theme, "One Million More Midwives," is a global call for countries to invest in the workforce required to safeguard the health of women and children. For Nigeria, it is also a reminder that achieving better health outcomes depends not only on facilities and equipment, but on the people who deliver care every day.

"We are committed to ensuring that no woman dies while giving birth and that every child has a healthy start to life." — Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, CON Behind the ambition to train

ONE MILLION MORE MIDWIVES



more midwives lies an equally important goal: ensuring they are supported to succeed. Permanent Secretary Daju Kachollom, mni, reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to strengthening training, improving working conditions, and fostering the partnerships needed to advance maternal and child health outcomes nationwide. Beyond expanding the workforce, the Federal Government is also working with partners to improve the welfare, motivation, retention, and support systems that enable midwives to provide quality care in safe and enabling environments.

The challenge of maternal mortality remains significant, but so too is Nigeria's determination to confront it. Because behind every statistic is a mother waiting to welcome a child into the world. A newborn taking a first breath. A family hoping for a safe delivery and a healthy future. And often, standing beside them at that defining moment, is a midwife. Investing in more midwives is ultimately an investment in more mothers surviving childbirth, more newborns reaching their first birthdays, and more families given the chance to thrive.



PARTNERSHIPS & GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

STRONGER INSTITUTIONS, SAFER NIGERIA EUSPIN Strengthens Nigeria's Public Health Shield

The strongest defence against a disease outbreak is often the one the public never sees. It is the laboratory that identifies a threat early. The surveillance system that detects unusual patterns. The data platform that connects information across states. The emergency coordination mechanism that enables a rapid response before a local outbreak becomes a national crisis. Together, these systems form a shield of public health intelligence, helping countries stay one step ahead of emerging threats.

Strengthening that shield is the goal of the European Union Support to Public Health Institutes in Nigeria (EUSPIN) initiative, a new €4.2 million partnership launched by the Federal Government in collaboration with the European Union and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The four-year programme is designed to strengthen Nigeria's capacity to detect, report, and respond to disease outbreaks and other public health threats while enhancing the institutions that underpin national preparedness. Speaking at the launch in Abuja, the Honourable Minister of State for Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Iziq Adekunle Salako, described EUSPIN as a strategic investment in the systems that enable effective public health action.

"Health infrastructure alone cannot deliver effective healthcare outcomes without strong surveillance systems, coordinated emergency response mechanisms, reliable data, and resilient public health institutions." — Dr. Iziq Adekunle Salako

The initiative aligns with the Nigeria Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative (NHSRII) and reflects the collaborative spirit of the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp), which brings together government institutions, development partners, and technical agencies around shared national priorities. Rather



STRONGER INSTITUTIONS, SAFER NIGERIA EUSPIN Strengthens Nigeria's Public Health Shield



than creating parallel structures, EUSPIN is designed to strengthen Nigerian institutions and support a nationally led vision for public health preparedness. Over the next four years, the programme will help modernise laboratory networks, strengthen digital and data systems, enhance coordination across public health institutions, and equip health professionals with the leadership and technical skills required for an increasingly complex public health landscape.

These investments come at a time when countries must

contend not only with recurring outbreaks such as cholera and Lassa fever, but also with emerging health threats shaped by urbanisation, population mobility, climate change, and shifting disease patterns. For Nigeria, preparedness is increasingly about building institutions that can anticipate risks as effectively as they respond to them. The launch also underscores the importance of international cooperation in advancing health security. The European Union and the World Health Organisation reaffirmed their commitment to supporting

“ — Dr. Iziq Adekunle Salako

Health infrastructure alone cannot deliver effective healthcare outcomes without strong surveillance systems, coordinated emergency response mechanisms, reliable data, and resilient public health institutions.

Nigeria's efforts to strengthen public health systems while advancing a reform agenda that is nationally owned and locally driven.

As health threats become more interconnected, strong institutions remain one of the country's most valuable assets. Through EUSPIN, Nigeria is investing in the intelligence, coordination, and capacity required to detect threats earlier, respond faster, and protect communities more effectively. Because readiness begins long before an emergency arrives. It begins with institutions strong enough to see it coming.



FROM PLANS TO RESULTS

Nigeria and WHO Align Around Delivery, Accountability, and Impact



Strong partnerships are not defined by the number of meetings held or documents produced. They are measured by the results they deliver. That shared commitment to impact was reinforced in May as the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and the World Health Organisation (WHO) advanced a new Programme Budget Workplan for 2026–2027, establishing a framework for collaboration across some of Nigeria's most important health priorities.

The workplan was presented to the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, by a WHO delegation led by Country Representative Dr. Pavel Ursu, a global public health leader whose previous role at WHO Headquarters focused on driving delivery and measurable impact across health programmes worldwide. Aligned with both Nigeria's national health priorities and WHO's global strategic framework, the workplan provides a results-driven roadmap focused on strengthening primary healthcare, advancing Universal Health Coverage, improving routine immunisation, enhancing health security, expanding digital health systems, and improving the quality and equity of healthcare services.



— Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, CON
Coordinating Minister of Health and
Social Welfare

The approach gives the Ministry full visibility, ownership, and accountability over WHO-supported interventions within the health sector

What distinguishes the framework is its emphasis on accountability.

For decades, health partnerships have often been measured by activities completed. The emerging focus is different: success is increasingly defined by measurable outcomes, stronger institutions, improved services, and better health indicators. The framework includes regular implementation reviews, outcome reporting, and performance tracking mechanisms designed to ensure that investments translate into

tangible improvements for Nigerians. Prof. Pate welcomed the approach, noting that it strengthens transparency while giving the Ministry greater ownership and oversight of WHO-supported interventions across the health sector.

The engagement also provided an opportunity to discuss preparations for the 79th World Health Assembly, collaboration on antimicrobial resistance, and WHO's evolving approach to supporting stronger subnational health delivery. Beyond the workplan itself, the meeting reflected the broader principles underpinning the Nigeria Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative (NHSRII) and the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp): alignment, coordination, and strategic discipline. Under this model, development partners are increasingly aligning resources, technical expertise, and implementation support behind nationally defined priorities, strengthening Nigeria's capacity to lead its own health transformation agenda.

For Nigeria and WHO, the objective is clear. Move beyond plans that sit on shelves. Focus on interventions that deliver measurable impact. Strengthen accountability at every level. And ensure that every partnership contributes directly to better health outcomes for the people it is intended to serve. Because ultimately, the true measure of any plan is not what it promises, but what it delivers.



REACHING THE MOST VULNERABLE



— Dr. Iziq Adekunle Salako,
Honourable Minister of State for
Health and Social Welfare

Government cannot address all challenges alone and relies on credible humanitarian partners such as the ICRC, which are trusted by displaced populations because of their neutrality

In some parts of Nigeria, delivering healthcare means reaching communities affected by conflict, displacement, and humanitarian crises. It means supporting families far from major hospitals, restoring services in fragile settings, and ensuring that essential care reaches people whose lives have been disrupted by insecurity. In these environments, strong partnerships are often as important as strong infrastructure.

That shared commitment was reaffirmed during a high-level engagement between the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), where both parties discussed ongoing collaboration to support vulnerable populations and strengthen humanitarian health interventions across the country. The ICRC delegation, led by Head of Delegation Doris El Doueihy, highlighted the organisation's work in conflict-affected communities, where it partners with state governments and local stakeholders to provide healthcare, improve access to clean water, and support essential services for displaced and vulnerable populations. The discussions reflected a common understanding that reaching those most in need requires coordinated action, sustained commitment, and trusted partnerships. The Honourable Minister of State for

Health and Social Welfare, Dr. Iziq Adekunle Salako, commended the ICRC's longstanding humanitarian contributions in Nigeria and globally, noting that effective responses to humanitarian challenges depend on collaboration among governments, communities, and development partners.

The engagement also explored issues related to medicine access, local pharmaceutical production, and regulatory strengthening. While these discussions may appear separate from humanitarian response, they are increasingly connected.

As Nigeria expands local manufacturing capacity and strengthens regulatory systems, humanitarian organisations operating in difficult environments can benefit from faster access to quality-assured medicines and health commodities sourced closer to the point of need. In emergencies, that can mean shorter supply chains, quicker response times, and more reliable access to life-saving interventions. The Minister also highlighted Nigeria's continued progress in strengthening regulatory oversight, noting the growing international recognition of the country's quality assurance systems and the advances made by national institutions such as NAFDAC.

Beyond the policy discussions, the meeting reflected a broader

principle at the heart of health sector reform: resilient health systems are built not only on infrastructure, technology, and financing, but also on trust. Trust enables communities to seek care. Trust enables humanitarian organisations to operate in challenging environments. And trust enables partnerships that bring together government, development partners, and local actors in service of a common goal.

As Nigeria continues to strengthen its health system, collaboration with organisations such as the ICRC remains essential to ensuring that healthcare reaches those living in some of the country's most difficult circumstances. Because readiness is not only about preparing for emergencies. It is also about ensuring that even in the most fragile settings, people can access care, protection, and hope when they need it most.



READY BEFORE THE CRISIS

Nigeria Strengthens Ebola Preparedness and Regional Security



The strongest public health responses often begin long before a crisis arrives. They begin quietly. In surveillance centres monitoring disease patterns. In laboratories testing samples. In emergency operations rooms reviewing risk assessments. At airports, seaports, and land borders where health officials remain alert to potential threats. Together, these systems form a silent fortress of preparedness, working constantly to protect lives.

In May, the Federal Government intensified preparedness measures following reports

through vigilance, coordination, and early action. While there is currently no confirmed case of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in Nigeria, health authorities moved swiftly to strengthen readiness across the country, reflecting a simple principle: preparedness is most effective when it begins before a threat arrives.

Through the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC), Port Health Services, and other relevant agencies, enhanced measures were activated nationwide. At Nigeria's busy

“ — Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, CON
Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare

Preparedness is most effective when it begins before a threat arrives

risk of cross-border disease transmission. Surveillance systems were heightened, laboratory preparedness reinforced, and coordination mechanisms strengthened to support rapid detection and response should the need arise. Across the health sector, healthcare workers were advised to maintain a high index of suspicion, strengthen triage systems, adhere strictly to infection prevention and control protocols, and report suspected cases through established public health channels.

Speaking on the situation, the Coordinating Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate, reaffirmed the Federal Government's commitment to protecting the health and wellbeing of Nigerians through proactive preparedness measures.

“While Nigeria currently has no confirmed case of Ebola Virus Disease, the Federal Government is taking all necessary proactive measures to strengthen national preparedness, surveillance, and coordination mechanisms to protect the health and wellbeing of all Nigerians.” — Prof.

of Ebola outbreaks in parts of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), reaffirming Nigeria's commitment to safeguarding public health

international airports, seaports, and land borders, screening and health declaration procedures were strengthened as part of broader efforts to reduce the



READY BEFORE THE CRISIS Nigeria Strengthens Ebola Preparedness and Regional Security

Muhammad Ali Pate, CON Nigeria's response has also extended beyond its borders. In a demonstration of regional solidarity and collective responsibility, Prof. Pate engaged with Africa CDC leadership to express Nigeria's support for countries currently responding to the outbreak and reaffirm the country's readiness to contribute to continental response efforts where necessary. The conversation reflected an important reality of modern public health: diseases may emerge within national borders, but health security increasingly depends on regional cooperation, information sharing, and collective action.

From surveillance officers tracking alerts in communities, to laboratory scientists strengthening diagnostic readiness, to health officials coordinating response plans across agencies and borders, preparedness is a continuous effort that rarely makes headlines but remains essential to national security. It is the work that happens before an emergency. The planning before the response. The vigilance before the crisis. For Nigerians, the message remains clear. There is no confirmed case of Ebola in the country. But there is a health system working every day to ensure it stays that way. And that is what readiness looks like.

ON THE FRONTLINE



KEEPING NIGERIA READY

How Dr. Charles E. I. Nzelu Is Strengthening the Invisible Systems That Protect Millions

When a disease outbreak is contained before it spreads, when a health threat is detected early, or when communities are protected through prevention and preparedness measures, the success often goes unnoticed. That is the paradox of public health. Its greatest achievements are often measured not by what happens, but by what does not happen. For Dr. Charles E. I. Nzelu, Director of Public Health at the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, this is precisely what readiness means.

The theme of this edition of ON CALL — READY: Building the Systems That Protect Lives — reflects the very essence of public health. It is about creating resilient systems that can anticipate risks, withstand challenges, and respond effectively before threats escalate into crises. For Dr. Nzelu, readiness extends across every layer of the health system, from policy and infrastructure to surveillance, workforce development, emergency preparedness, and community engagement.

A public health physician, epidemiologist, and health

systems expert with more than two decades of experience, Dr. Nzelu has built a distinguished career at the intersection of science, policy, and public service. His professional journey has spanned disease surveillance, HIV/AIDS programming, health information systems, monitoring and evaluation, emergency preparedness and response, humanitarian health interventions, and health systems strengthening. Among his many contributions to Nigeria's public health landscape, he played a leading role in the implementation of the Nigeria HIV/AIDS Indicator and Impact Survey (NAIIS), one of the largest HIV population-based surveys ever conducted globally. He also contributed significantly to strengthening the National Data Repository and advancing digital health and health information systems that continue to support evidence-based decision-making across the health sector.

Today, his portfolio as Director of Public Health encompasses communicable and non-communicable diseases, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, neglected tropical diseases, environmental and occupational health, mental



health, climate change and health, eye health, and port health services. These responsibilities place him at the centre of some of the most important public health priorities shaping Nigeria's health agenda.

Public Health Priorities in Focus

According to Dr. Nzelu, current efforts are focused on:

- Strengthening integrated service delivery across HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, and non-communicable disease programmes.
- Enhancing health security, disease surveillance, and emergency preparedness systems.
- Improving maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health outcomes.
- Addressing the growing health impacts of climate change and environmental risks.
- Strengthening health systems through better data, workforce capacity, and supply chain efficiency.
- Expanding domestic resource mobilisation and private sector engagement to support long-term sustainability.

Together, these priorities are helping to build a stronger, more resilient public health system

capable of protecting communities before, during, and after health emergencies.

This commitment to readiness was recently reinforced through the Presidential Task Force on Ebola Preparedness, established to strengthen national coordination and preparedness measures in response to regional Ebola outbreaks. As a member of the Task Force, Dr. Nzelu contributes to efforts aimed at ensuring Nigeria remains vigilant, prepared, and capable of mounting a rapid and effective response to emerging public health threats.

Recent achievements within the Department of Public Health reflect this philosophy. From advancing integrated service delivery frameworks and strengthening coordination across federal and state levels to improving data harmonisation and expanding integrated monitoring visits, the Department continues to drive reforms that make public health programmes more efficient, responsive, and impactful. Yet for all the technical complexity of public health, Dr. Nzelu remains motivated by a simple goal: improving lives.



— Dr. Charles E. I. Nzelu Director of Public Health

“Effective public health leadership is not measured by how well we respond to crises, but by how well we prevent them. My vision is to build resilient, people-centered health systems that are prepared, equitable, and capable of protecting every Nigerian, especially the most vulnerable, before, during, and after public health challenges.”

“What motivates me most is the opportunity to contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of millions of Nigerians,” he says. “Public health is about impact at scale, saving lives, preventing illness, and creating systems that serve even the most vulnerable populations.”

His message to health professionals and Nigerians alike is equally straightforward. Public health, he believes, is a shared responsibility.

While government provides leadership and systems, the success of public health interventions depends on collective action. Communities, healthcare workers, institutions, development partners, and citizens all have a role to play in building a healthier and more resilient nation.

Because ultimately, readiness is not only about responding when challenges arise. It is about building the systems that protect lives long before those challenges appear.



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A PREPAREDNESS PROTOCOL IS ACTIVATED?

EXPLAINED
HOW NIGERIA GETS READY

Before an outbreak becomes an emergency
Across the country, a network of agencies works together—24/7—to detect risks early, respond fast and protect lives.

SEE IT EARLY. ACT FAST. PROTECT LIVES.

1 ALERT
Intelligence from:
• WHO
• Africa CDC
• Regional surveillance systems
Risk is assessed. Preparedness mode is activated nationwide.

2 SCREENING
Guarding our gates.
• Temperature checks
• Health declaration
• Travel history review
• Secondary screening (if needed)
Port Health Services, Immigration, Customs, Aviation Authorities and other agencies work together—24/7.

3 SURVEILLANCE
Watching the horizon.
• Event-based surveillance
• Laboratory networks on standby
• Real-time reporting
• Data informs decisions
From communities to laboratories—unusual events are detected and verified quickly.

4 RESPONSE
Activating the nervous system of response.
• Isolation & referral systems ready
• PPE and supplies stocked
• Surge capacity reviewed
• Health facilities prepared
NCDC, State Ministries of Health, RRTs and partners coordinate a fast, effective response.

5 PROTECTION
Protecting lives. Strengthening communities.
• Prevent transmission
• Save lives
• Build trust
• Stronger systems for a healthier Nigeria
Strong systems. Informed communities. Healthy futures.

READY BEFORE THE THREAT. READY BEFORE THE HEADLINES.

- Many agencies. One mission.
- 24/7 vigilance. Always on.
- Stronger together. Safer together.
- For every Nigerian. Every day.

We don't just respond to emergencies. We prepare to prevent them.

Understanding Public Health Advisories and Preparedness Protocols

On 26 May 2026, the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare activated enhanced Ebolapreparedness measures following reports of outbreaks in parts of East and Central Africa. The announcement was accompanied by a series of official advisories, preparedness protocols, and technical guidance documents designed to strengthen Nigeria's readiness against any potential public health threat.

For many Nigerians, such

announcements can sound highly technical. Yet behind every preparedness advisory lies a carefully coordinated system designed to detect risks early, respond rapidly, and protect lives. Importantly, preparedness protocols are not emergency reactions. They are structured actions activated before a threat reaches the country. They provide a framework for coordination, vigilance, and response under established national and international public health obligations, including the Quarantine Act

and the International Health Regulations (2005). In practical terms, what happens when a preparedness protocol is activated? A great deal.

1. The Early Warning Signal
Preparedness begins with intelligence. Public health authorities continuously monitor disease outbreaks, unusual health events, and epidemiological trends across the world. Information from the World Health Organisation (WHO), Africa CDC, neighbouring countries,

“ **Preparedness does not mean a crisis is occurring. It means systems are working exactly as they should.** ”

and regional surveillance networks is analysed to determine potential risks to Nigeria. When a threat is identified, risk assessments guide the next level of preparedness activities.

2. Guarding the Gates

Nigeria's airports, seaports, and land borders become the country's first line of defence. Enhanced screening measures are activated at designated Points of Entry. These include temperature checks, health declaration procedures, travel history assessments, secondary screening where necessary, and strengthened coordination among Port Health Services, Immigration, Customs, Aviation Authorities, and other border agencies. The goal is straightforward: identify potential risks early and prevent the importation of disease.

3. Watching the Horizon

Preparedness also means increasing vigilance across the country. Disease surveillance systems move into heightened alert mode. Public health authorities intensify monitoring activities, verify rumours and alerts, strengthen community-based surveillance, and conduct continuous epidemiological assessments.

Understanding Public Health Advisories and Preparedness Protocols

Laboratory networks are placed on standby, specimen transportation systems are reviewed, and public health experts monitor developments around the clock. In public health, early detection often determines whether a threat is quickly contained or allowed to spread.

4. Activating the Nervous System of Response

Behind every effective response is a network of institutions working in synchrony. Public Health Emergency Operations Centres coordinate preparedness activities. Rapid Response Teams maintain deployment readiness. Healthcare facilities review isolation procedures, strengthen infection prevention and control measures, and reinforce triage systems.

Healthcare workers, surveillance officers, laboratory personnel, and emergency responders receive updated guidance and preparedness training. It is a nationwide exercise in readiness designed to ensure that if a threat emerges, response systems can move immediately.

5. Protecting Lives

Ultimately, every preparedness protocol has a single objective: protecting people. Preparedness measures reduce the risk of disease transmission, strengthen public confidence, and help ensure that communities remain safe. They also

provide clear information to the public, helping to counter misinformation and encourage appropriate health-seeking behaviour. This is why public health advisories often urge calm. Preparedness does not mean a crisis is occurring. It means systems are working exactly as they should.

Why It Matters

The most effective outbreak response is often the one the public never sees. It is the surveillance officer verifying an alert. The laboratory scientist preparing diagnostic capacity. The Port Health officer screening travellers. The emergency operations team reviewing contingency plans. The healthcare worker refreshing infection prevention protocols. Together, they form a silent shield of protection around the country.

The activation of Nigeria's Ebola preparedness measures in May 2026 demonstrated this principle in action: a coordinated, multi-agency effort involving the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, NCDC, Port Health Services, Immigration, Customs, Aviation Authorities, State Ministries of Health, and international partners working around the clock to safeguard public health. Because preparedness is not about waiting for a crisis. It is about building the systems, partnerships, and capabilities that make crises less likely in the first place. And that is what readiness looks like.

BY THE NUMBERS

READINESS IN DATA

From stronger institutions to healthier communities, these numbers reflect Nigeria's commitment to building a resilient, people-centred health system.

€4.2 MILLION EUSPIN INVESTMENT

4-year initiative (2026–2030) to strengthen disease surveillance, emergency preparedness and institutional response systems.

- Stronger laboratories
- Better data & digital systems
- Stronger collaboration
- Stronger leadership

1 EMERGENCY RESPONSE STRENGTHENED

145

TRICYCLE AMBULANCES DEPLOYED



Strengthening pre-hospital care and the referral system across the nation.

6

BOAT AMBULANCES DELIVERED



Improving access to emergency care in riverine and hard-to-reach communities.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION & DISPATCH EQUIPMENT
Activated nationwide to improve response coordination and save more lives.

2 DISEASE PREVENTION



MALARIA

42%

Malaria prevalence (2021)

↓ 15%

Malaria prevalence (Target by 2030)

50%

Reduction target for malaria prevalence and deaths by 2030

65

Participants

39

Countries represented

at the Science of Defeating Malaria programme



CERVICAL CANCER

15 MILLION+

Girls vaccinated against HPV since 2023

90-70-90

WHO Cervical Cancer Elimination Targets

90%
Vaccinated

70%
Screened

90%
Treated

Nigeria is on the path to cervical cancer elimination.

3 BUILDING HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE



3 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRES

Kano, Sokoto & Katsina States



1 LAGOS VACCINE HUB

Strengthening vaccine security and distribution capacity.



MULTIPLE FEDERAL TEACHING HOSPITAL & FMC PROJECTS

Advancing specialised care and health system capacity.

KEY PROJECTS UNDERWAY



...and several others across the country

4 PUBLIC HEALTH SECURITY & PREPAREDNESS



36

STATES + FCT

Implementing preparedness activities



100%

POINTS OF ENTRY (Air, Land & Sea)

Enhanced screening, health declaration & surveillance



STRENGTHENED LABORATORY READINESS

With biosafety & biosecurity protocols



PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRES (PHEOCs)

Activated and coordinated

KEY ACTIONS

- ✓ Continuous risk assessment & epidemiological monitoring
- ✓ Deployment readiness of Rapid Response Teams
- ✓ Reinforcement of Infection Prevention & Control (IPC)
- ✓ Ongoing training & sensitization for frontline workers

Nigeria remains vigilant.
There is currently **NO CONFIRMED CASE OF EBOLA** in Nigeria.
But we are **READY**.
Every day.

5 INVESTING IN PEOPLE



ONE MILLION MORE MIDWIVES

Global call to action embraced by Nigeria.

EXPANDED TRAINING CAPACITY

IMPROVED DEPLOYMENT

ENHANCED WORKFORCE SUPPORT

10,000 ADDITIONAL MIDWIVES

to be recruited and deployed nationwide.

75%

of public health personnel to be trained in leadership and digital competencies through EUSPIN.

1 MILLION+

Nigerian health workers trained on eLMIS within 9 months—strengthening health information systems nationwide.

6 STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS. STRONGER HEALTH SYSTEM.



WHO 2026–2027 WORKPLAN PRIORITIES

- Primary Health Care & UHC
- Immunization & Polio Transition
- Health Security & IHR (7-1-7)
- Quality, Equity & Digital Health



AFRICA CDC

Nigeria stands in solidarity with affected countries and is ready to support regional response efforts.



ICRC

Strengthening humanitarian health partnerships to reach vulnerable and conflict-affected populations.



EU & WHO EUSPIN PARTNERSHIP

Building resilient systems through investment, capacity strengthening and innovation.

NIGERIA'S HEALTH SECTOR AT A GLANCE



>200 MILLION
Population served



36
States + FCT



774
LGAs



17
Development partners aligned under SWAp



1 GOAL
A healthier, more productive Nigeria



READY TODAY. HEALTHY TOMORROW.

Stronger systems. Better data. Healthier lives.

As of May 2026

Data sources: Federal Ministry of Health & Social Welfare, NCDC, WHO, EUSPIN Programme Documents, 2026

INSTITUTION IN FOCUS

UCTH: READY FOR WHAT COMES NEXT

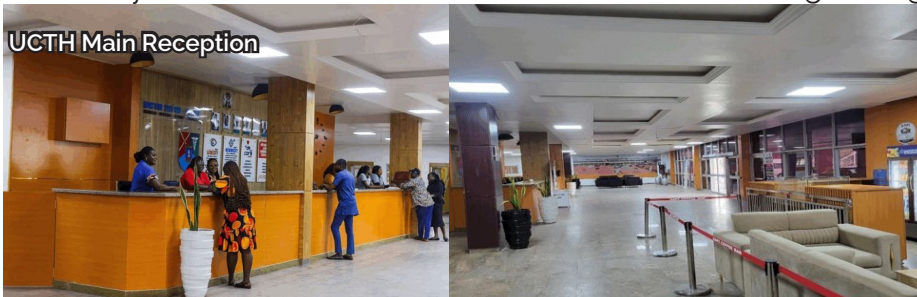
How the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital Is Expanding Specialist Care, Advancing Research, and Delivering Hope Across Borders

Across Nigeria, readiness is taking many forms. Sometimes it is an ambulance reaching a patient in time. Sometimes it is a laboratory detecting a disease outbreak before it spreads. And sometimes it is a teaching hospital quietly strengthening its infrastructure, workforce, technology, and specialist services so that more people can access quality care when they need it most.

states, and communities across the borders of Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea. Its mandate spans clinical care, medical education, research, and public health service, making it one of the region's most important health institutions. Beyond treating patients, the hospital plays a vital role in training future generations of healthcare professionals, advancing research, and strengthening

Rebuild. Restore. Reboot. Rebrand. The results are visible across the institution. New specialist services have expanded treatment options for patients, including minimal access surgery, arthroscopy and sports medicine, interventional radiology, joint replacement surgery, dedicated stroke management services, neurosurgery, advanced endoscopy, fertility and assisted reproduction services, and molecular laboratory diagnostics.

Significant investments in technology have also strengthened diagnostic capacity. Patients now have access to advanced radiological services supported by a 1.5 Tesla MRI scanner, CT scanning, digital mammography, digital X-ray systems, and advanced ultrasonography. Fully automated laboratory services and expanded molecular testing capabilities are helping clinicians make faster, more accurate decisions while improving patient



At the University of Calabar Teaching Hospital (UCTH), readiness is being built every day. Established in 1979 and now operating from its permanent site in Calabar, UCTH serves as a major referral centre for Cross River State, neighbouring

the systems that support better health outcomes across the South-South region and beyond. Expanding Capacity for Modern Healthcare In recent years, UCTH has undertaken an ambitious programme of transformation guided by a simple philosophy:

outcomes.

Infrastructure improvements have been equally significant. A dedicated Neurosurgical and Stroke Centre, a 33-bed Infectious Disease Isolation and Treatment Centre with intensive care support, a 13-bed Level 3 Intensive Care Unit, a modern Urology Clinic, upgraded theatre facilities, and improved patient care environments have expanded the hospital's ability to deliver specialised services. Behind the scenes, investments in a 7MW captive solar power facility, a modern water treatment and reticulation system, and digital health platforms are helping ensure that critical services remain reliable, efficient, and sustainable.

Aligning with National Health Reforms

UCTH's transformation reflects the broader reforms reshaping Nigeria's health sector. The hospital's investments in infrastructure, specialised care, digital health, workforce development, and research directly support the objectives of the Nigeria Health Sector Renewal Investment Initiative (NHSRII), the Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp), and the country's commitment to Universal Health Coverage. Its adoption of electronic medical records and strengthened health information systems is helping modernise service delivery while supporting data-driven decision-



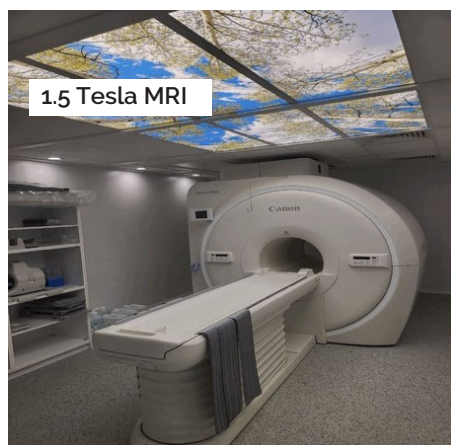
Digital Mmmography Machine



Intensive Care Unit

making. At the same time, its role as a major teaching institution continues to contribute to the development of a skilled health workforce capable of meeting Nigeria's growing healthcare needs. Research remains another area of strategic importance. Through the revitalisation of the Calabar

Institute of Tropical Diseases Research and Prevention and participation in international collaborations such as CHAMPS, HEROES-1, MADCAP, and GELA, UCTH is helping generate evidence that informs policy, strengthens public health practice, and improves patient care.



1.5 Tesla MRI



CT SCAN



Chemotherapy Daycare Bay



7MW Captive solar power farm



Urology Clinic



Main Theatre Suite



Dental Clinic



Ophthalmology Clinic



Capacity Building Activities



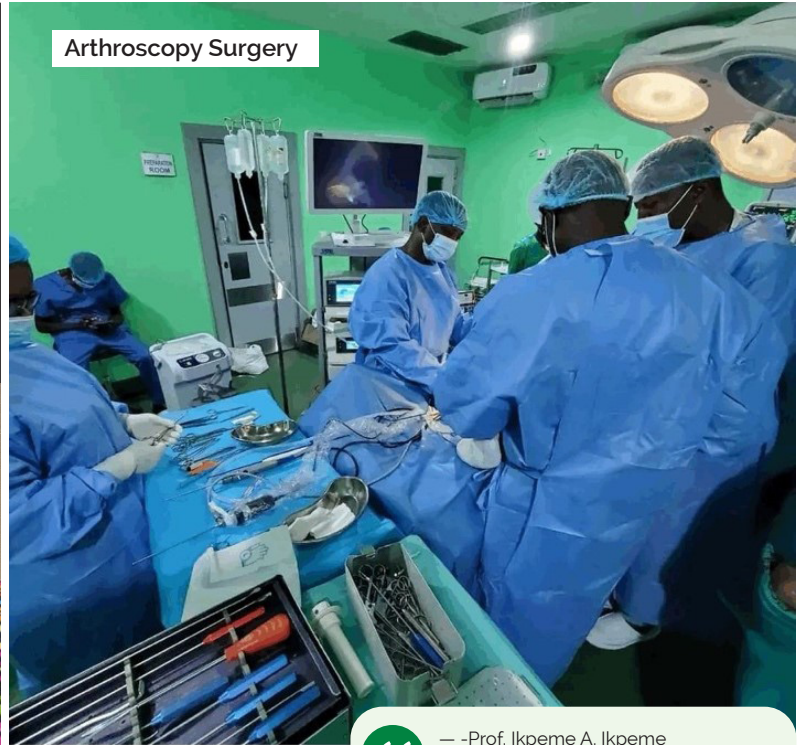
Let's Talk Numbers

79,935 annual outpatient visits
 816 functional bed spaces
 23 specialist clinics
 3,224 healthcare workers

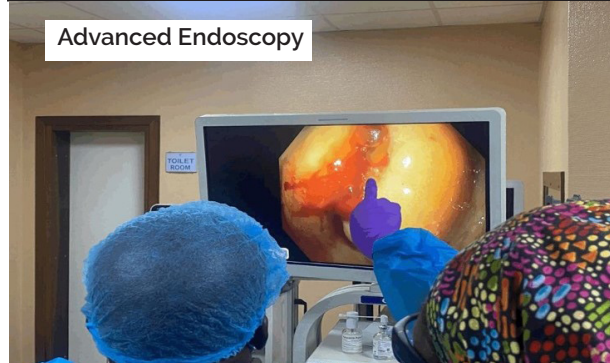
6,419 surgical procedures conducted
 95% postgraduate fellowship examination pass rate

90%+ accredited training programmes
 Multiple international research collaborations

UCTH: READY FOR WHAT COMES NEXT



Arthoscopy Surgery



Advanced Endoscopy

When Readiness Meets Compassion

For 18-year-old Tabot Genta, these investments became deeply personal. Diagnosed with Stage 4 Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma, her journey could easily have ended differently. Instead, a combination of accurate diagnosis, multidisciplinary teamwork, advanced oncology care, and sustained clinical support gave her another chance. After initial investigations suggested Hodgkin's Lymphoma, further testing and immunohistochemistry confirmed a more complex diagnosis. A coordinated team of specialists within UCTH's Paediatric Oncology Unit guided her through six cycles of chemotherapy, carefully monitoring her progress and adjusting treatment where necessary.

By November 2024, she had completed treatment with significant clinical improvement, transforming what had once seemed an impossible diagnosis into a story of hope and survival. As a Cameroonian refugee and



— Prof. Ikpeeme A. Ikpeeme
Chief Medical Director, University of Calabar Teaching Hospital

Readiness is not simply buildings, equipment, or technology. It is the ability to bring together skilled professionals, modern infrastructure, research, innovation, and compassion when lives depend on it

orphan, Tabot faced challenges far beyond her illness. Yet the commitment of healthcare professionals across multiple disciplines ensured that she received the care she needed. Her story reflects a broader principle at the heart of tertiary healthcare delivery: that quality care must remain accessible to those who need it most, especially the vulnerable, regardless of circumstance. Because readiness is not simply buildings, equipment, or technology. It is the ability to bring together skilled professionals, modern

infrastructure, research, innovation, and compassion when lives depend on it. As Nigeria continues to strengthen its health system, institutions such as UCTH demonstrate how sustained investment, innovation, and leadership can translate national reforms into tangible improvements in patient care. Because readiness is not only about preparing for as future challenges. It is also about ensuring that quality healthcare is available when people need it most.

HEALTHY LIVING

KNOW YOUR NUMBERS

That Could Save Your Life

Here is a slightly uncomfortable truth: Most of us can recite our ATM PIN from memory, log into Netflix without looking at our passwords, and debate our favourite football team's goal difference for hours.

But ask us about our blood pressure. Or our blood sugar. Or when we last checked our cholesterol. The answers are often surprisingly vague. Sometimes the conversation shifts quickly to, "God forbid." Sometimes we insist we feel perfectly fine. Sometimes we simply assume that if nothing hurts, then nothing can be wrong.

The irony is that some of the numbers we know best have little impact on our future health, while some of the numbers we rarely think about can literally save our lives. That is because many of the leading causes of illness and death, including hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke, often develop quietly. Long before symptoms appear, our bodies are already sending signals through a handful of important measurements. Think of them as your personal health dashboard. If you know these five numbers, you are already taking one of the smartest steps toward protecting your health.

BLOOD PRESSURE

The Silent Troublemaker

High blood pressure rarely announces itself. No flashing lights. No warning sirens.

Yet it remains one of the leading risk factors for heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease.

HEALTHY TARGET

Below 120/80 mmHg

BLOOD SUGAR

Your Body's Fuel Gauge

Your body needs sugar for energy. Too much of it circulating in the bloodstream for too long, however, can quietly damage vital organs.

HEALTHY TARGET

Fasting Blood Sugar: Below 100 mg/dL

BODY MASS INDEX (BMI)

The Quick Snapshot

BMI compares your height and weight to provide a general picture of whether you are within a healthy range.

HEALTHY TARGET

18.5 - 24.9

WAIST CIRCUMFERENCE

The Number Many People Forget

The bathroom scale tells one story. The measuring tape tells another.

Excess fat around the waist is associated with higher risks of diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic conditions.

HEALTHY TARGET

Men: Less than 94 cm

Women: Less than 80 cm

CHOLESTEROL

Your Body's Plumbing System

Think of cholesterol as traffic moving through your body's highways. Too much "bad" cholesterol can gradually clog those routes, making it harder for blood to flow where it is needed.

HEALTHY TARGET

Speak with your healthcare provider about a cholesterol screening and your ideal range.

THE READY CHECK

How many of these can you answer right now?

I know my blood pressure.

I know my blood sugar level.

I know my BMI.

I know my waist measurement.

I have had my cholesterol checked.

If you ticked fewer than three boxes, it might be time for a routine health

READY STARTS WITH YOU

Across Nigeria, health workers, laboratories, emergency teams, and public health institutions are working every day to keep communities safe and healthy. But readiness is not only a government responsibility. It begins with the choices we make as individuals.

Knowing your numbers. Paying attention to your health. Taking action before a problem becomes a crisis. Because prevention is always easier than treatment.

HEALTH CHALLENGE

Learn. Play. Stay Ready.



WHAT'S YOUR HEALTH READINESS SCORE?

The health system is getting ready. How ready are you?

✓ CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

- | | | | |
|----|--|--|---|
| 1 | | Do you know your blood pressure? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (+1)
<input type="checkbox"/> NOT YET |
| 2 | | Do you drink enough water every day? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (+1)
<input type="checkbox"/> Be honest... 😊 |
| 3 | | Do you sleep at least 7 hours most nights? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (+1)
<input type="checkbox"/> My sleep schedule needs prayers 🙏 |
| 4 | | Do you engage in physical activity at least 3 times a week? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (+1)
<input type="checkbox"/> I will start on Monday 🗓️ |
| 5 | | Do you know where your nearest Primary Healthcare Centre is located? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (+1)
<input type="checkbox"/> I think so... |
| 6 | | Have you gone for a routine health check-up in the last 12 months? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (+1)
<input type="checkbox"/> Not yet, but it's on my list 📝 |
| 7 | | Do you know your blood group? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (+1)
<input type="checkbox"/> No clue 🤔 |
| 8 | | Have you saved emergency contact information on your phone? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (+1)
<input type="checkbox"/> Let me check... (after this) 📱 |
| 9 | | Are you up to date with recommended vaccines? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (+1)
<input type="checkbox"/> I'll check on that |
| 10 | | Do you know your blood sugar level? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES (+1)
<input type="checkbox"/> Not sure |

TOTAL SCORE = /10

No judging.

This isn't an exam.

Your future self is watching.

WHAT'S YOUR SCORE?

8 - 10 POINTS READY

You are ahead of the curve. Keep going and encourage others to do the same.



5 - 7 POINTS GETTING READY

You're on the right track. A few small changes could make a big difference.



0 - 4 POINTS TIME FOR A RESET

Don't panic. Readiness starts with one step. Choose one healthy habit this week and build from there.



**YOU KNOW YOUR PHONE BATTERY.
DO YOU KNOW YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE?**



VS



Healthy today.
Stronger tomorrow.
Better Nigeria. ❤️

QUICK CHALLENGE

Before the end of this week, try to:



Healthy today.
Big impact.
Better Nigoru.

HEALTH MYTH OR FACT?

THINK YOU KNOW YOUR HEALTH FACTS?

LET'S KEEP OUR FACTS STRAIGHT!


TEST YOUR HEALTH IQ
Let's find out.

1 You only need to check your blood pressure if you feel sick.




MYTH
 FACT

2 A person can have high blood pressure without any symptoms.



MYTH
 FACT

3 The HPV vaccine helps protect against cervical cancer.



MYTH
 FACT

4 Regular handwashing helps prevent the spread of many infectious diseases.




MYTH
 FACT

5 Exercise only matters if you're trying to lose weight.




MYTH
 FACT

6 Malaria can be prevented through measures such as sleeping under insecticide-treated nets.




MYTH
 FACT

7 Sleeping 3-4 hours every night is enough as long as you drink coffee.



MYTH FACT



READY FOR THE ANSWERS?

ANSWERS

- 1** MYTH
- 2** FACT
- 3** FACT
- 4** FACT
- 5** MYTH
- 6** FACT
- 7** MYTH

BONUS ROUND

IF YOUR BODY COULD TALK...

Blood Pressure:
"Please stop saying 'I'm strong like iron' and come check me."

Sleep:
"Coffee is not a substitute for me."

Exercise:
"We need to talk about that gym membership."

Waistline:
"I see those weekend plans."

Sugar Cravings:
"We need balance, not a breakup."

SMARTER TODAY. HEALTHIER TOMORROW.

4 - POINT AGENDA

of the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare,
under **COORDINATING MINISTER PROF. MUHAMMED ALI PATE, CON**



RENEWED
HOPE

Improve Governance 01

Enhancing leadership, accountability, and transparency within the health system

Enhancing population health outcome 02

strengthening primary healthcare, reducing the disease burden

Unlocking the health value chain 03

Promoting local production of pharmaceuticals and medical consumables

Strengthening health security 04

Strengthening preparedness, surveillance, and response to public health emergencies.