

The Executive

...AN NGF MONTHLY PUBLICATION

Vol.5. No. 65 July 2025

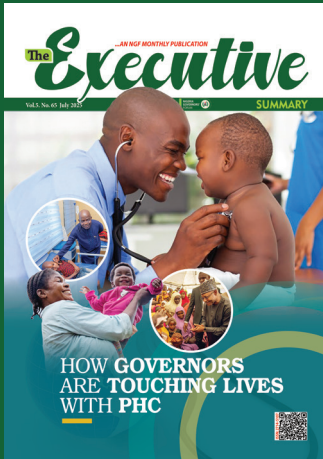
NIGERIA
GOVERNORS'
FORUM

SUMMARY



HOW GOVERNORS
ARE TOUCHING LIVES
WITH PHC





Director-General
Abdullateef
SHITTU

**Ag. Head Media &
Public Affairs**
Halima S.
AHMED

Social Media Officer
June
IFEBE

NGF Health Advisor
Dr. Ahmad
ABDULWAHAB

Agric. Economist
Bunmi
AKANBI

Senior Economist
Abdulaziz
OLORUNISHOLA

IT Officer/ Librarian
Joseph Kingsley
Uzochukwu

Photo Editor
Matthew
Ayeni

Director Legal
Chijioke
CHUKU

The NGF and Primary Healthcare

Not many people are conversant with the remarkable work that the Nigeria Governors' Forum secretariat is putting into ensuring that the average Nigerian remains healthy or always returns a clean bill of health. Indeed, the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) plays a significant role in the Nigerian health sector, particularly in promoting policy implementation at the sub-national level.

The NGF Health Department works to align state governors and top health officials with national health policies, using evidence-based data for engagement and advocacy. They focus on key areas like Universal Health Coverage, strengthening Primary Health Care, and health financing.

Among all of those above, the one that most dignifies the slogan of Universal Health Coverage as mouthed by most of those in the business is Primary Health Care. Apart from its broad-based implementation, it caters most fundamentally to the health needs of the most vulnerable in society. PHC is also the first port of call in healthcare provision. It is this and its perennial impact on the people that makes PHC a core activity of the Nigeria governors' Forum secretariat.

To achieve this remarkable showing the NGF had to subscribe to different test models prior. Primary Health Care Under One Roof (PHCUOR) for example, is a policy to reduce fragmentation in the delivery of Primary Health Care (PHC) services which involves the integration of all PHC services under one authority. Then, fragmentation was identified as the most significant problem facing PHC services and significantly affects utilisation rates and health indices.

Working with National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) in Nigeria, the PHCUOR initiative was implemented in at least 23 states in Nigeria.

Key elements of the Primary Health Care Under One Roof policy include:

- Integration of all PHC services delivered under one authority
- A single management body with adequate capacity to control services and resources, especially human and financial resources
- Decentralized authority, responsibility and accountability
- The three ones principle: one management, one plan and one monitoring and evaluation system
- An integrated and supportive supervisory system

- An effective referral system between and across the different levels of care.

Enabling legislation and regulations Through advocacy, peer learning activities and provision of technical assistance, the NGF health team ensures local commitment and ownership of health and development projects by the Governors and top health officials in the 36 states of the country. The team serves as an interface between stakeholders in health and the state government to promote policy implementation at the sub-national level. For this reason, the NGF health team also midwives the national Health Commissioners' group to establish uniformity in coverage across the subnational environment. The results of this combination are outstanding; yet more work can be done and need to be done.

The PHC Challenge is one confidence booster that the NGF Secretariat, through the instrumentality of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) domesticates good performance among governors. Supreme performance is observed, acknowledged and handsomely rewarded. Apart from the Gates Foundation other donor agencies like the UNICEF and the World Bank are not just idling away but are watching with keen interest and assisting in both cash and kind. It has given governors impetus to deliver both quantitative and qualitative health services to their people.

Currently they are all winners. Although twelve states have been publicly rewarded for their exceptional performances, they are merely first among equals because the disparity between the awardees and the rest are very few and very far between. It is on record that the NGF holds the credit of wiping Nigeria off the global polio map. But this edition of the Executive Summary is specially looking at the states from the perspectives of their handling of Primary Healthcare at the subnational and how the NGF secretariat has facilitated same. The devil, they say is in the details, so peruse this special edition on the PHC and you will be armed to the teeth with the progress that the NGF is injecting on the health of Nigerians at the subnational level.

TABLE OF CONTENTS



7 PRIMARY HEALTH CARE: Conquering Challenges, Birthing Sustainable Access

Borno Gov Zulum builds three new PHCs, rehabilitates 121 to boost access **4**

Adamawa's Primary Healthcare Projects: A Journey in Transformation **10**

Health Renaissance and a shifting paradigm **13**

Gov. Kefas Delivers on Primary Healthcare Promise **15**

Breathing Life into Yobe PHC **18**

Gov Yahaya: Reshaping lives through PHC **20**

How Bago is Driving Primary Healthcare System in Niger **22**

Kogi's Bold Leap Towards Universal Coverage **25**

Nasarawa's Bold Pursuit of 24/7 Primary Care For All **28**

Gov Alia's Grand Vision of Rebuilding PHC Foundations **31**

NGF Secretariat: Supporting Subnational Governance **34**

Kwara's Bold Strides in Transforming Primary Healthcare **38**

Powering Progress: Plateau's Renewed Commitment to PHC **41**

Jigawa: Collaborating for Primary Healthcare Success **43**

Zamfara PHC: From Challenge to Victory **46**

Kaduna: Advancing Primary health care through Innovation and Collaboration **48**

Sokoto's Resilient Primary Healthcare System Takes Shape **51**

Kano's Comprehensive Primary Healthcare at Work **53**

Healing Kebbi: Rebuilding PHC from the Ground Up **56**

Katsina's PHC: A Collaborative Blueprint for Success **58**

Nwifuru: Reinforces PHC infrastructure, equipment, logistics **61**

Gov Otti's Pragmatic Approach to Primary Health Care **64**

Healthcare at Every Doorstep: How Gov Mbah is Crashing Maternal Mortality **67**

Anambra: Consolidating on Winning the PHC Challenge **69**

Hope Rising: Steadily Rebuilding PHC **72**

PHC Impact: When Vision Meets Investment in Ekiti **74**

Leading the Charge: Lagos' Revolution in PHC Delivery **76**

Gov Adeleke's Strides in Osun's PHC **79**

Ogun's Strategic Leap Towards Primary Healthcare Excellence **82**

Ondo: PHC in Overdrive **85**

Oyo's Resilient Primary Healthcare Provides Succour **88**

Bayelsa's PHC Insured via BHIS Scheme **91**

Gov Eno's ARISECARE Boosts PHC in Akwa Ibom **94**

Cross River: PHC Upgrade One Centre at a Time **97**

PHC: A Silent Revolution in Edo **100**

Rivers flowing in Primary Healthcare Delivery **102**

A New Dawn for PHC in Delta **105**



Borno

Gov Zulum builds three new PHCs, rehabilitates 121 to boost access

Borno State, a region that has borne the brunt of a decade-long insurgency, is steadily emerging from the shadows of conflict with a renewed focus on human development, particularly in its critical healthcare sector. The devastating impact of the insurgency left a significant portion of the state's infrastructure in ruins, including vital primary healthcare centers (PHCs).

However, a determined and strategic effort by the Borno State government, in collaboration with an array of local and international partners, is ushering in a healthcare renaissance, marked by extensive rehabilitation, new construction, and comprehensive system strengthening. This feature delves into the remarkable progress made in restoring and advancing primary healthcare services across the state, highlighting the pivotal initiatives driving this transformation.

At the heart of Borno's healthcare revitalization lies an ambitious program to restore and expand its physical healthcare infrastructure. The statistics are a testament to this commitment: 121 Primary Healthcare

Centers (PHCs) have been successfully rehabilitated, breathing new life into facilities that were once dilapidated or completely destroyed by the conflict. These rehabilitated centers are not just structures; they are beacons of hope, offering accessible healthcare services to communities that have long been underserved.

Beyond rehabilitation, the state has embarked on a crucial expansion, with the construction of four new PHCs. These purpose-built facilities are designed to meet modern healthcare standards, each boasting a 30-bed capacity and dedicated nurse's quarters. The inclusion of nurse's quarters is a strategic move, aimed at attracting and retaining healthcare professionals in often remote areas, thereby ensuring consistent staffing and service availability. This expansion is vital for reaching populations in newly resettled areas or those previously cut off from essential services. For instance, efforts by the Office of the Senior Assistant to the President on Sustainable Development Goals (OSSAP-SDGs) have also contributed, with fully equipped 20-bed PHCs inaugurated in areas

like Nganzai and Gwoza, alongside housing units for internally displaced persons (IDPs), further demonstrating a holistic approach to community well-being. Governor Babagana Zulum has also noted the construction of 45 new PHCs in 19 LGAs, underscoring the scale of this infrastructural push.

The commitment to functional infrastructure extends beyond initial construction and rehabilitation. The Borno State government has made significant investments in the distribution of essential drugs to hospitals, ensuring that the newly accessible facilities are well-stocked to treat common ailments and provide necessary medical interventions. Furthermore, substantial funds have been disbursed for the ongoing renovation and maintenance of PHCs. This forward-thinking approach recognizes that infrastructure development is not a one-time event but requires continuous investment to remain effective and sustainable, preventing a return to the pre-rehabilitation state of disrepair. The World Health Organization (WHO), in collaboration with the European Union, has also played a



significant role, donating an ultra-modern health facility in Biu, which is part of an expansion aiming to transform Biu General Hospital into a regional specialist hospital, further bolstering the state's healthcare capacity.

Beyond Bricks and Mortar: Enhancing Equipment and Service Delivery

While robust infrastructure forms the backbone of a strong healthcare system, its effectiveness is amplified by the availability of modern medical equipment and comprehensive service delivery. The Borno State Primary Healthcare Development Agency is actively working to ensure that these facilities are not just shells but fully functional healthcare hubs.

A key initiative in this regard is the procurement of minimum standard medical equipment for primary healthcare centers. This vital effort is funded by the World Bank's Immunization Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services (IMPACT) Project. The acquisition of essential diagnostic tools, treatment apparatus, and other medical necessities directly enhances the quality of care that can be provided at the grassroots level. This means that patients visiting a PHC are more likely to receive accurate diagnoses and appropriate treatment without needing to travel to larger, often distant, secondary or tertiary facilities. The "Invitation to Tender for Procurement of Equipment for CEmONC/Secondary Facilities in Borno State" under the IMPACT Project (dated March 20, 2025) further illustrates the state's proactive steps in equipping its healthcare facilities, including advanced imaging systems and other critical medical devices.

The impact of these improved facilities

and equipment is evident in the state's efforts to expand access to healthcare. The Borno State Contributory Healthcare Management Agency (BOSCHMA) has made remarkable progress, successfully enrolling over 115,628 vulnerable individuals to access free healthcare services since its inception in 2020. BOSCHMA has accredited approximately 183 PHC facilities across the state in collaboration with the National Health Insurance Agency (NHIA), with all secondary facilities also accredited as referral centers. This widespread accreditation and enrollment signify that the revitalized and newly built PHCs are actively being utilized, providing tangible benefits to the populace. The disbursement of N529.9 million as capitation to 162 PHCs, along with ICT support to 133 of these centers, further demonstrates the commitment to operational efficiency and improved service delivery at the primary level.

Comprehensive PHC Development: A Multi-faceted Approach

Borno State's commitment to primary healthcare extends beyond physical structures and equipment, encompassing a holistic strategy for system development and community engagement.

One crucial aspect is the Community Health Strategy Review, where the Borno State

Primary Health Care Development Agency is actively involved in reviewing and validating the Community-Based Health Management Information System (CBHMIS) strategy. This initiative emphasizes robust community participation in healthcare, recognizing that sustainable health outcomes are achieved when communities are empowered and involved in their own health management. By integrating community feedback and local knowledge, the healthcare system becomes more responsive and relevant to the needs of the people it serves.

Maternal and Newborn Care has received particular attention, with the state working diligently to strengthen Comprehensive Emergency Obstetrics and Newborn Care (CEmONC) in health facilities. This involves rigorous assessments of existing infrastructure, available equipment, staffing levels, and the competency of healthcare workers. The goal is to ensure that every mother has access to safe delivery services and that newborns receive the critical care they need, thereby significantly reducing maternal and neonatal mortality rates. Complementing this, the Safer Births Bundle of Care (SBBC) initiative has been launched, marking a significant step towards improving maternal healthcare. The plan is to expand its coverage across the state beyond the pilot



phase, a move championed by Dr. Muiy Aina, representing the Minister of Health and Human Services. This collaborative effort aims to enhance healthcare delivery systems, foster innovative approaches, and improve policies and programs through the collective action of government agencies and development partners. The success of SBBC, as highlighted, is intrinsically linked to adequate funding, a factor that the state and its partners are actively addressing.

Polio Vaccination Campaigns remain a high priority, with Borno State actively participating in national efforts to ensure that all children are protected against this debilitating disease. This proactive stance in public health is further exemplified by recent sensitization programs. On June 2, 2025, the Office of the First Lady of Borno State, Dr. Falmata Babagana Umara Zulum, in partnership with the Nigeria Governors' Forum, UNICEF Nigeria, and the Borno State Primary Health Care Development Board, hosted an impactful session. This program brought together key community figures, including wives of Executive Local Government Chairmen, women's groups, and traditional leaders, to raise crucial awareness about the introduction of the Measles-Rubella (MR) and HPV vaccines. This forward-looking step is vital for safeguarding the health of current children and future generations.

Furthermore, the Borno State Primary Health Care Development Agency is deeply involved in research and data collection initiatives. By understanding the impact of emergencies and other challenges on health, the agency can inform policy and programmatic decisions with evidence-based insights. This continuous learning and adaptation are critical for building a resilient and effective healthcare system in a post-conflict environment. While not explicitly detailed in the provided text, the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund (BHC PF) also allocates funds for Human Resources for Health (HRH) for PHCs, highlighting

the recognition of the need for trained and competent staff to operate these facilities and deliver quality care effectively.

The Power of Partnership and Sustainable Funding

The remarkable progress in Borno State's primary healthcare sector is not solely a government endeavor but a testament to the power of robust collaboration and partnerships. The state is working closely with a diverse range of stakeholders, including local communities, dedicated health workers, and a formidable array of international organizations. Key partners include UNICEF Nigeria, the World Bank, World Health Organization Nigeria, eHealth Africa, World Food Programme, AFENET Nigeria, International Rescue Committee, Rotary International, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Chigari Foundation, Solina Centre for International Development and Research (SCIDaR), and coregroup Partners Project, and Foundation Health. These collaborations bring in essential funding, technical expertise, and programmatic support, which are indispensable for addressing the complex health challenges faced by the state.

A significant financial mechanism supporting these initiatives is the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund (BHC PF). Borno State has demonstrated its commitment by disbursing its counterpart funding, with a notable N209 million approved as part of its contribution to the BHC PF. This fund is crucial for renovating and maintaining PHC operations and is designed to improve access to primary healthcare, increase the fiscal space for health, and strengthen the national health system at the PHC level. The BHC PF also provides operational costs, essential drugs, vaccines, consumables, and supports human resources for health, ensuring that PHCs can meet their operational needs and provide quality services.

Community engagement is further amplified through initiatives like the "Adopt-

a-PHC Naija Challenge," a joint effort by the Borno State Government, UNICEF, and FALUC. This initiative leverages youth advocates to bridge the gap between PHCs and communities, engaging directly through home visits, street campaigns, and digital platforms to debunk myths and build trust, particularly around vaccination uptake. Such partnerships are vital for fostering community ownership and ensuring the long-term sustainability of healthcare interventions. The Borno State Primary Health Care Development Board, under Prof. Mohammed Arab Alhaji's leadership, has also actively engaged with Local Government Area Chairmen/Chairpersons on the Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge, emphasizing localized leadership and accountability.

The successful conclusion of the Maternal and Neonatal Mortality Reduction Innovation and Initiatives (MAMII) Strategy Design Workshop for Borno State, a partnership between the Federal Ministry of Health Nigeria, Borno State Ministry of Health and Human Services, Borno State Primary Health Care Development Board, UNICEF Nigeria, and other key stakeholders, exemplifies the strategic alignment of various actors towards a common goal. Similarly, the state flag-off ceremony of the Polio Outbreak Response 1 (OBR 1) integrated with Maternal and Newborn Child Health Week (MNCHW) at Maimusari Primary Healthcare Centre, Jere LGA, saw widespread support from developing partners, showcasing a unified front against public health challenges.

A Future of Health and Resilience

The concerted efforts in Borno State to rehabilitate and construct new PHC centers, coupled with comprehensive system development, paint a picture of a region determined to overcome its past and build a healthier future. From the physical restoration of facilities and the procurement of vital equipment to the strengthening of maternal and newborn care, the implementation of widespread vaccination campaigns, and the emphasis on data-driven policy-making, every aspect of primary healthcare is being meticulously addressed.

The strong collaborative framework, involving government agencies, local communities, and a diverse range of international partners, is a critical success factor. This synergy ensures not only the availability of necessary resources and expertise but also fosters a sense of shared responsibility and ownership. As Borno State continues its journey of recovery and development, the revitalized and expanded primary healthcare system stands as a testament to resilience, a beacon of hope, and a fundamental pillar in improving the health outcomes and overall well-being of its residents. The commitment demonstrated by all stakeholders suggests a sustainable path towards a healthier Borno, where accessible and quality healthcare is a reality for all.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE: Conquering Challenges, Birthing Sustainable Access

Internal conflicts in parts of the country, poor funding, crime, poor commitment to implementation of approved policies encapsulate the key challenges of sustainable access to Primary Health Care, PHC, programmes. But focused interventions and robust engagements by subnational governments interfacing with Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat with significant funding by foreign partners are positively changing the PHC story.

From its inception, the Nigeria Governors' Forum, NGF, had picked the provision of healthcare to the ordinary citizen as one of its core mandate areas. This is because, empirical evidence has established the link between health and economic development. But in an age of unsettling disruption, civilized survival becomes a bracing, existential project - especially for health system management. Significantly, the World Health Organization, WHO, estimates that Primary Health Care, PHC, addresses 80-90% of a population's health needs, making it an essential component of any healthcare system.

PHC encompasses a wide range of services, including preventive, promotive, and curative services. It addresses the needs of individuals, families, and communities and covers health education, proper nutrition, prevention, and control of locally endemic diseases. It also includes the provision of essential drugs, maternal and child health care, and treatment of communicable diseases.

According to Chairman of the Nigeria Governors' Forum, NGF, who is also the governor of Kwara State, His Excellency AbdulRahman AbdulRasaq, Universal Health Coverage, UHC, should cover all Nigeria's population. PHC is the foundation of UHC, and strengthening PHC facilities is essential. This includes addressing issues of poor funding, improving functionality, and ensuring equitable access to PHC services.

In August 2022, governors, acting under the aegis of Nigeria Governors' Forum, NGF, and speaking at the launch of the Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge at the Banquet Hall of the Presidential

Villa, Abuja, post-Seattle Declaration, vowed to build a resilient primary health care system in their states.

The Seattle Declaration restates commitments of the Nigeria Governors' Forum to strengthen leadership and accountability for the primary health care system at the state level.

The Declaration aims at, "improving the governance of the primary healthcare system at a subnational level by fully implementing the primary health care under one roof policy, and providing active leadership for primary health care through regular engagement with relevant primary health care stakeholders and quarterly primary health care performance review at the State Executive Council meetings;

"To promote progressive increase in primary health care funding by ensuring efficient budgeting that is aligned to annual operational plans, promptly releasing approved budget to the state primary health care board, and primary health care facilities and ensuring that there is a mechanism in place for basic health care provision, fund implementation and oversight at the state and facility levels;

"Recruit requisite health workforce to ensure that all primary health care facilities have the minimum staffing requirements appropriate for their level in line with the state's minimum service package."

In effect, the vow by governors to build a resilient primary health care system in their states reflected the seriousness with which they viewed their health sector mandate. This assertive commitment came against the backdrop of the fact that the state of primary health care (PHC) across the federation was generally considered poor, with significant challenges hindering its effectiveness.

While PHC is intended to be the foundation of the healthcare system, providing accessible and affordable services, a large proportion of Nigeria's PHC facilities are not fully functional with only about 20% of the 30,000 facilities across the country meeting the criteria for full functionality. This inadequacy contributes to poor health outcomes and places a strain on secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities.

However there are ongoing efforts to improve PHCs functionality and effectiveness as well as address the issues of infrastructure, funding, staffing, and service delivery, while also promoting community engagement, strengthening PHC and improving health outcomes at the sub-national's level.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE: Conquering Challenges, Birthing Sustainable Access

Maternal Health

Improved maternal health indicators across many states reflect growing trust in health systems and enhanced access to lifesaving services for women. Gains in antenatal care, skilled birth attendance, facility-based delivery, and postnatal care suggest stronger health infrastructure, better community engagement, and effective maternal health programming. These improvements are foundational for reducing maternal and neonatal mortality and are clear signs that state-led investments in women's health are yielding real and measurable impact.

1. Antenatal Care (ANC 4 Visits)

14 states (38%)



- made positive progress in access to and utilisation of antenatal care services (at least 4 visits).
- These states are Akwa Ibom, Anambra, Bauchi, Bayelsa, Borno, Cross River, FCT, Imo, Kaduna, Kano, Lagos, Niger, Taraba, and Yobe.
 - States improving ANC coverage are taking proactive steps to ensure healthier pregnancies and better outcomes for mothers and babies.

2. Delivery by Skilled Provider

24 states (65%)



- recorded an increase in the percentage of births attended by skilled health providers.
- These States are Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Delta, Ebonyi, Gombe, Kano, Rivers, Yobe, Borno, Edo, Ekiti, FCT, Kaduna, Nasarawa, Niger, Bauchi, Enugu, Jigawa, Kebbi, Lagos, Ogun, Plateau, Sokoto and Taraba.
 - An increase in skilled deliveries reflects improvements in health worker availability, trust in health services, and women's access to quality maternal care.

3. Delivery in Health Facility

26 states (70%)



- recorded positive progress in increasing the number of women delivering in health facilities.
- These states are Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Borno, Delta, Ebonyi, Edo, Enugu, FCT, Gombe, Kano, Lagos, Rivers, Yobe, Bauchi, Ekiti, Kaduna, Ogun, Cross River, Imo, Kebbi, Niger, Ondo, Oyo, Sokoto, Taraba and Zamfara.
 - An increase in facility-based deliveries is a strong indicator of improved access to skilled care, safer childbirth practices, and community trust in health systems. It suggests that more women are receiving the support of trained health professionals in hygienic and well-equipped environments.

4. Mothers Post-natal Check

23 states (62%)



- made positive progress in ensuring mothers receive postnatal check-ups after delivery.
- These states are Bayelsa, Borno, Cross River, Delta, Edo, FCT, Gombe, Jigawa, Lagos, Nasarawa, Plateau, Rivers, Yobe, Abia, Ebonyi, Kano, Niger, Taraba, Benue, Katsina, Ogun, Ondo and Zamfara.
 - Progress in postnatal care means more mothers are surviving and recovering well after childbirth. States making gains in this area are bridging a crucial gap in the continuum of

maternal care, enhancing survival rates and long-term wellbeing for mothers and their babies.

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE: Conquering Challenges, Birthing Sustainable Access

Immunisation

A rise in full immunisation coverage far reflects stronger routine immunisation systems and effective community mobilization. It means more children are protected against life-threatening diseases like measles, polio, and pneumonia.

1. Children Fully Immunised

29 states (78%)



- recorded a positive increase in the percentage of children who are fully immunised.
- These states are Bayelsa, Cross Rivers, Delta, Ebonyi, Enugu, Ekiti, Gombe, Jigawa, Kaduna, Katsina, Ogun, Osun, Rivers, Yobe, Akwa Ibom, Borno, Niger, Oyo, Adamawa, Edo, Kano, Kebbi, Lagos, Nasarawa, Ondo, Sokoto, Taraba, and Zamfara.
 - Full immunisation protects children from life-threatening but preventable diseases such as measles, polio, diphtheria, and pneumonia. Progress in this area reflects strengthened routine immunisation systems, improved vaccine availability, and effective community mobilisation efforts.

Family Planning

Rising demand and declining unmet needs for family planning indicate that more women and families are making informed choices about reproductive health, leading to healthier pregnancies, empowered women, and greater household stability. States showing progress are advancing gender equality and delivering responsive, inclusive services, reducing unplanned pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and the strain on health systems.

1. Demand for Family Planning

32 states (86%)



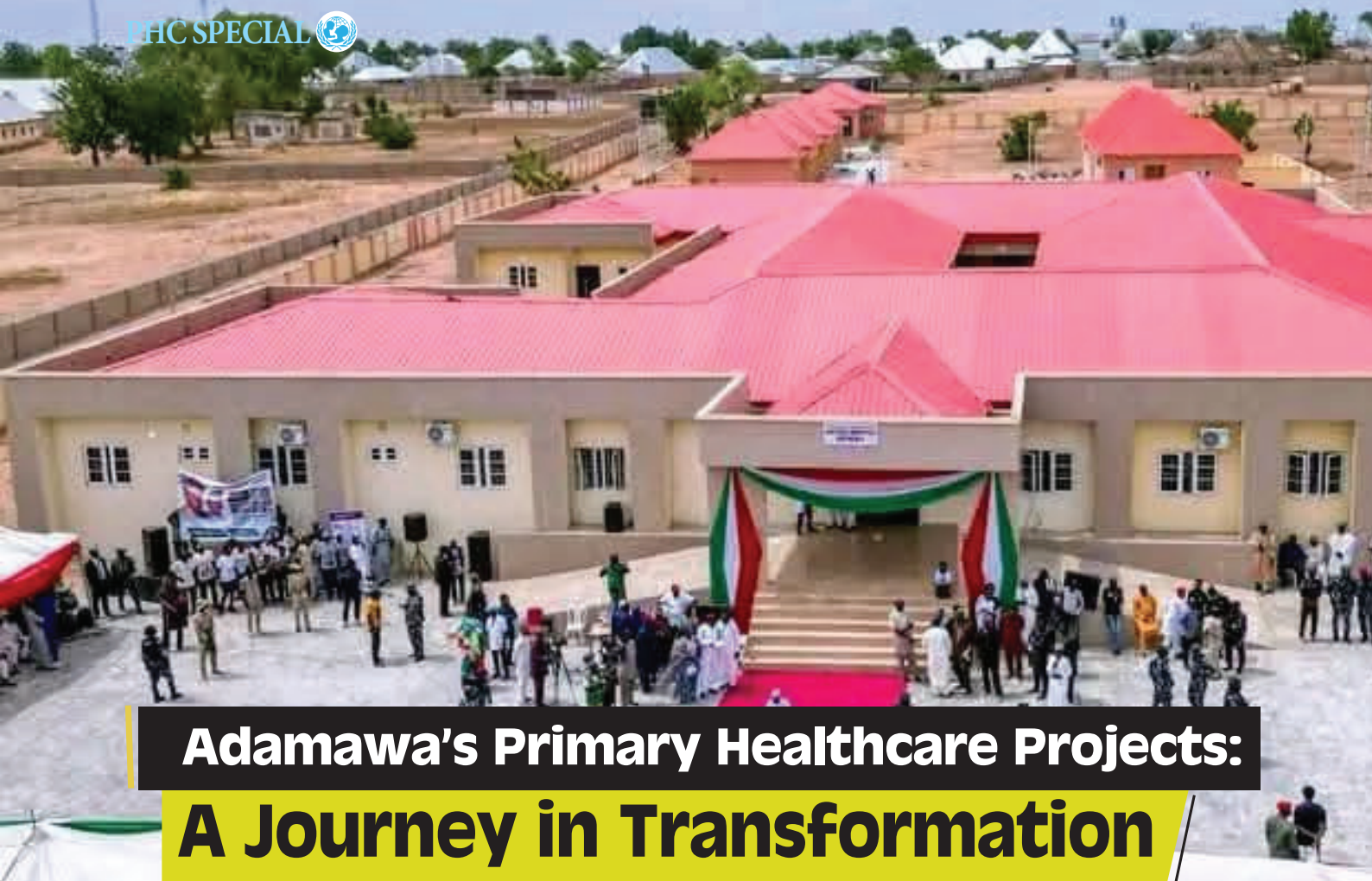
- showed an increase in demand for family planning services.
- These states are Abia, Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Benue, Delta, Ekiti, Gombe, Kaduna, Kano, Niger, Taraba, Yobe, Zamfara, Adamawa, Bauchi, Ebonyi, Imo, Katsina, Kebbi, Nasarawa, Niger, Osun, Oyo, Anambra, Borno, Cross River, Enugu, FCT, Jigawa, Lagos, Plateau, and Sokoto.
 - Rising demand for family planning indicates that more individuals and couples are actively seeking to plan and space their pregnancies.

1. Unmet Needs for Family Planning

19 states (51%)



- made positive progress in reducing the unmet needs for family planning.
- These states are Edo, Oyo Abia, Akwa Ibom, Delta, Ekiti, Ondo, Plateau, Bayelsa, Cross River, Gombe, Imo, Jigawa, Kogi, Lagos, Nasarawa, Osun, Rivers and Sokoto.
 - A decrease in unmet needs means more women who wish to delay or prevent pregnancy are now able to access the contraceptive services they need. This reflects improvements in service availability, quality of care, and community outreach, especially to underserved populations. Addressing unmet needs is essential to reducing unplanned pregnancies, maternal mortality, and unsafe abortions.



Adamawa's Primary Healthcare Projects: A Journey in Transformation

Adamawa State, nestled in Nigeria's North-East, is currently experiencing a profound transformation in its primary healthcare (PHC) landscape. Under the dynamic leadership of Governor Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri, the state government has initiated and diligently implemented a series of impactful projects aimed at revolutionizing PHC delivery. These strategic interventions are designed to ensure that every citizen, particularly those in vulnerable and underserved communities, has access to quality, accessible, and sustainable health services. This concerted effort has not only significantly improved health outcomes across the state but has also earned Adamawa national acclaim, establishing it as a leading example of progress in a region often grappling with developmental challenges.

The bedrock of this transformative agenda is Governor Fintiri's unwavering political will, which has consistently prioritized the health sector as a cornerstone of his administration. This resolute commitment is evident in the tangible projects being executed, from foundational infrastructure development to targeted public health campaigns and the integration of modern medical practices.

Project 1: Enhancing Water Supply Infrastructure at PHC Facilities

A fundamental pillar of effective healthcare delivery is access to clean and reliable water. Recognizing this, the Adamawa State Primary Health Care Development Agency (ADSPHCDA) has undertaken extensive projects to ensure quality water supply at Primary Health Care facilities and in surrounding communities. This critical initiative recently received national recognition, with the ADSPHCDA being honoured with an Award of Excellence at the 2024 International Conference on Water in Abuja, themed "Beyond Access, Quality Matters."

Dr. Sulaiman Saidu Bashir, the Executive Chairman of the ADSPHCDA,

proudly accepted the award on behalf of Governor Fintiri, attributing this significant achievement to the Governor's robust political will and steadfast support for the health sector. The focus of these projects extends beyond merely providing water; it emphasizes the quality of the water, ensuring that PHC centres operate in truly hygienic and conducive environments crucial for patient care and disease prevention.

The success of these water projects is also a collaborative triumph. Dr. Bashir extended profound gratitude to international partners such as UNICEF, IRC, and ICRC. Their consistent support has been instrumental in providing essential infrastructure, including boreholes and water reticulation systems, and in implementing Planned Preventive Maintenance (PPM) mechanisms. This proactive maintenance strategy is vital for ensuring the sustained functioning of these critical water sources, even amidst the challenges of overuse by communities and potential breakdowns. The continuous engagement of these partners underscores a shared vision for resilient health systems, moving beyond initial provision to fostering long-term operational sustainability.

Furthermore, the success of these water projects is deeply rooted in grassroots engagement. The unwavering dedication of frontline PHC workers, Ward Development Committee members, and local community leaders—both traditional and religious—has been pivotal. Their tireless efforts in maintaining the water infrastructure and ensuring community access to clean water highlight the indispensable



role of local ownership and participation. This multi-stakeholder approach, integrating government, international partners, and local communities, creates a robust ecosystem where foundational health initiatives can thrive and deliver tangible, life-changing results. The award serves as a powerful affirmation of Governor Fintiri's holistic commitment to improving the health and well-being of all Adamawa State citizens through comprehensive and sustainable projects.

Project 2: Comprehensive PHC Revitalization and Service Delivery Enhancement

The Fintiri administration's commitment to primary healthcare is perhaps most visibly demonstrated through its comprehensive PHC revitalization projects and ongoing efforts to enhance service delivery. These initiatives are not merely about policy formulation but involve concrete actions on the ground, aimed at upgrading facilities, improving staffing, and ensuring the efficient functioning of PHC centers across the state.

As part of its rigorous oversight mandate, the ADSPHCDA Board recently conducted a strategic field visit to Gombi, Hong, and Mubi South Local Government Areas (LGAs). This visit was a deliberate and hands-on effort to assess the progress of these ongoing PHC revitalization projects. The delegation also meticulously identified critical service delivery challenges that required urgent attention and support, ensuring that interventions are tailored to specific local needs.

The high-level delegation, led by Dr. Sulaiman Saidu Bashir, comprised key figures from various state ministries and agencies, including Mr. Adamu Simon (Board Member I), Mr. Renos Peter (Board Member II), Mr. Yohanna Ularanu (Secretary of the Agency), Comrade Musa Kiri (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government Affairs), Mr. Solomon Kumangar (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information and Strategy), and Mrs. Gloria Stephen, representing the Ministry of Health. This diverse representation ensured that the assessment covered administrative, financial, logistical, and medical perspectives, providing a holistic understanding of the situation on the ground.

During interactive sessions with health facility staff and local PHC authorities, the board members expressed profound appreciation for the revitalization efforts observed in these LGAs. They specifically commended the discernible improvements in infrastructure, which include renovation of existing structures and construction of new ones, improved medical equipment, and better patient environments. They also noted enhancements in staffing levels, with more qualified personnel deployed to rural areas, and an overall improvement in the quality of service delivery across various PHC facilities. These positive changes are the direct result of targeted investments and strategic planning by the Fintiri administration.

The delegation used these interactions to reaffirm Governor Fintiri's unwavering commitment and continued support toward achieving universal health coverage (UHC)

in the state. They emphasized that PHC revitalization remains a cornerstone of his administration's health agenda, reflecting a long-term vision for a robust primary healthcare system. Dr. Bashir particularly lauded the dedication of frontline health workers, acknowledging the daily challenges they face, and encouraged them to sustain their efforts in delivering quality, accessible, and people-centered health services. The Board's visit served a dual purpose: to monitor progress and to engage directly with staff, identify existing gaps, and ensure that the necessary support is mobilized promptly to address pressing needs. This direct engagement fosters a sense of ownership and responsiveness, ensuring that policies formulated at the state level translate into tangible improvements at the community level. The visit concluded with a renewed sense of collaboration and a strong call for all stakeholders to remain committed to the shared vision of building a healthier Adamawa State through strengthened and sustainable PHC systems.

Project 3: Integrating Advanced Diagnostics into Primary Healthcare

Recognizing that effective healthcare transcends basic services, the Adamawa State Government, through ADSPHCDA, is actively pursuing projects focused on integrating advanced diagnostics into its primary healthcare framework. This forward-thinking approach aims to enhance the accuracy of diagnoses and improve treatment outcomes at the grassroots level.

This commitment was prominently showcased by the participation of the Executive Chairman of ADSPHCDA in the high-level Policy and Access Event on Improving Diagnostics, organized by Roche Diagnostics on June 2, 2025, at the Lagos Continental Hotel. While not a direct project implementation, this engagement signifies a strategic project to inform and guide the state's diagnostic integration efforts. It was a crucial gathering, convening key stakeholders from government, the private sector, and international partners to explore innovative strategies for strengthening diagnostic capacities across Nigeria and West Africa. The presence of such a diverse group underscored the collective understanding that robust diagnostic capabilities are non-negotiable for achieving comprehensive health outcomes and advancing Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

The event featured engaging panel sessions that delved into critical aspects of diagnostics. Discussions on "Opportunities for Strengthening Diagnostic Capacities"

focused on the transformative role of public-private partnerships (PPPs). This highlights Adamawa's understanding that government resources alone may not suffice, and that collaboration with the private sector can bring in much-needed technology, expertise, and efficiency for diagnostic projects. The second session focused on "Critical Success Factors, Turning Points, and Key Lessons Learned in the diagnostics space over the past five years," allowing Adamawa to glean best practices and avoid pitfalls in its own diagnostic projects.

Mr. Roberto Taboada, Network Lead and Anglophone West Africa Lead at Roche, emphasized the critical role of cross-sector collaboration and innovation in expanding sustainable access to diagnostics across the region. The ADSPHCDA's active participation in such a high-profile event underscores its commitment to not only integrating advanced diagnostics into primary health care but also to improving overall service delivery throughout Adamawa State. This strategic engagement ensures that Adamawa remains at the forefront of adopting modern healthcare solutions and implementing projects that bring cutting-edge diagnostic capabilities closer to its citizens.

Project 4: Comprehensive Malnutrition Combat and Nutrition Logistics Revolution

Malnutrition remains a persistent challenge, particularly in conflict-affected areas of Adamawa State. The Fintiri administration has launched significant, multi-pronged projects to address this, demonstrating a profound commitment to child health and nutrition security.

One key initiative is the distribution of "Tom Brown" at Targeted Supplementary Feeding Programme (TSFP) and Outpatient Therapeutic Programme (OTP) centres across the state. This project, launched in May 2025, is a collaborative effort between the Adamawa State Government (through ADSPHCDA), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, and the Government of Norway. The official flag-off event at Nana Asmau Primary Health Centre, Yola South LGA, underscored the state's commitment. The highly nutritious Tom Brown blend is specifically distributed to children recently discharged from TSFP/OTP centres to prevent their relapse into severe acute malnutrition and support long-term recovery. This targeted approach ensures that the most vulnerable children receive crucial nutritional support during a critical period.

Complementing this, the Adamawa State Government has made a substantial financial commitment by approving and releasing N300 million for the procurement and distribution of essential nutrition commodities. This significant investment, announced during a high-level stakeholders' meeting on May 23, 2025, underscores the state's serious efforts to combat malnutrition at its roots.

Beyond funding, the meeting also endorsed a revamped nutrition commodity logistics system. This new project is meticulously designed to enhance last-mile delivery, ensuring that vital nutrition commodities reach even the most remote and vulnerable communities. Furthermore, it aims to significantly improve accountability throughout the supply chain, minimizing waste and ensuring that resources are utilized efficiently and effectively. This focus on logistics and accountability is crucial for translating financial investments into

tangible health improvements.

The multi-sectoral participation in the meeting, including representatives from the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), market authorities, religious councils, and security agencies, highlights the holistic and collaborative nature of these projects. This broad-based community and institutional support is vital for ensuring the seamless and secure distribution of nutrition commodities across the state. These comprehensive, collaborative projects are essential for breaking the cycle of malnutrition and building healthier, more resilient communities in Adamawa State.

Project 5: Proactive Public Health Security – Meningitis Vaccination Campaign

In a swift and decisive response to a confirmed outbreak of meningitis, the Adamawa State Government demonstrated its commitment to proactive health security by officially launching a targeted vaccination campaign. This crucial intervention project commenced on Saturday, May 24, 2025, at the Primary Health Care Centre (PHCC) Muva, located in Mubi North Local Government Area.

The flag-off ceremony marked the beginning of a coordinated campaign scheduled to run from May 24 to May 29, 2025. The primary aim of this project was to curb the rapid spread of the disease and protect vulnerable populations in the affected communities. This rapid response is indicative of a well-prepared and responsive health system, capable of mobilizing resources and personnel efficiently during health emergencies.

During their remarks at the ceremony, key officials emphasized the critical need for community-wide mobilization and cooperation. These included the Honourable Commissioner for Health, ably represented by the Permanent Secretary of the State Ministry of Health and Human Services, Pharm. Mathias Zirra Bubanani; the Executive Chairman of Mubi North, represented by Vice Chairperson, Mrs. Veronica John Elias; and the Executive Chairman of the Adamawa State Primary Health Care Development Agency (ADSPHCDA), Dr. Sulaiman Saidu Bashir. They collectively urged parents, traditional leaders, youth, media professionals, and health workers to ensure full participation and help achieve the campaign's target coverage. This broad appeal for participation highlights the understanding that public health interventions are most effective when they are community-driven and supported.





Health Renaissance and a shifting paradigm

In the heart of Nigeria's North-East, Bauchi State is currently undergoing a profound and meticulously orchestrated transformation in its primary healthcare (PHC) landscape. Under the visionary leadership of Governor Bala Mohammed, the state government has embarked upon an ambitious programme of projects designed to fundamentally overhaul PHC delivery, ensuring that accessible, high-quality, and sustainable health services are not merely aspirational but a tangible reality for every citizen. This concerted effort, underpinned by substantial investment and strategic partnerships, is not only addressing long-standing systemic challenges but is also positioning Bauchi as a burgeoning model for PHC development within the Nigerian federation.

The state's commitment to revitalising its PHC system is

unequivocal, recognising that robust primary healthcare forms the bedrock of a resilient and equitable health sector. This feature delves into the multi-faceted initiatives and tangible projects that exemplify Bauchi's journey towards a healthier future, highlighting the pragmatic approach, evidence-based interventions, and unwavering dedication that define this administration's drive for comprehensive health sector reform.

The IMPACT Project: A Multi-Billion Naira Cornerstone of Revitalisation

At the epicentre of Bauchi's PHC transformation lies the ambitious IMPACT Project (Immunisation Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services). This World Bank-supported initiative represents a monumental investment, with the Bauchi State government committing over seven billion naira to the revitalisation of 118 primary healthcare facilities across the state. The sheer scale of this financial commitment underscores the administration's serious intent to address historical underfunding and infrastructural deficits within the PHC system.

The project's launch ceremony, held at the Kirfi Town Primary Healthcare Centre in Kirfi Local Government Area, was a symbolic declaration of this commitment. Governor Bala Mohammed, represented by Abubakar Sulaiman, the Speaker of the State House of Assembly, reaffirmed the government's unwavering dedication to enhancing healthcare delivery through improved service quality and

infrastructure. This is not merely about constructing new buildings; it is about upgrading existing facilities to a Level II standard, ensuring they are fit for purpose and capable of delivering a comprehensive range of quality and effective services.

The scope of the IMPACT Project's infrastructural upgrades is comprehensive. Each of the earmarked PHCs is set to benefit from significant enhancements, including the provision of modern facilities, comfortable staff accommodations – a critical incentive for attracting and retaining medical personnel in rural areas – solar-powered services ensuring consistent electricity supply, and reliable water facilities. These practical improvements are vital for creating conducive working environments for healthcare professionals and hygienic, patient-friendly spaces for communities.

The integration of solar power, in particular, speaks to a pragmatic approach to sustainability, reducing reliance on erratic national grids and ensuring continuous operation.

Governor Mohammed's personal involvement and commitment to accountability are also evident. He has instructed the State Commissioner for Health and the Executive Chairman of the Primary Health Care Board to closely monitor the project's progress, pledging to regularly visit revitalisation sites to ensure contractors adhere strictly to their agreements. This hands-on oversight is crucial for guaranteeing the quality of work and the timely completion of projects, ensuring that the substantial investment translates into tangible benefits for the populace.

Addressing Historical Challenges:

From Scarcity to Sufficiency

Bauchi State's PHC system has, like many across Nigeria, grappled with significant challenges, notably inadequate funding and a severe shortage of medical personnel. A sobering 2024 report by BudGIT highlighted these stark realities,

revealing that out of 1,255 health facilities in the state, a mere 10.9% had at least one general medical doctor. Furthermore, only 19.1% of these facilities employed at least one nurse, and a meagre 18.8% had at least one midwife. This acute deficit of healthcare professionals has historically hampered service delivery and threatened health outcomes for millions of residents, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

However, the current administration's PHC development projects are directly confronting these systemic issues. The revitalisation efforts under the IMPACT Project are not just about bricks and mortar; they are strategically designed to create an enabling environment that attracts and retains healthcare workers. By providing staff accommodations, reliable power, and improved working conditions, the state is making a concerted effort to bridge the human resource gap.

A key objective of the revitalisation project is to significantly improve maternal and child health outcomes, with a specific, pragmatic focus on addressing the tragically high rates of maternal deaths during delivery. This targeted approach is evidence-based, recognising that primary healthcare facilities are often the first, and

sometimes only, point of contact for pregnant women and young children. By strengthening these facilities, the state aims to provide essential antenatal care, safe delivery services, and postnatal support, thereby directly impacting the health and survival of mothers and infants.

Furthermore, the state is implementing various programmes to strengthen the overall PHC system, including manpower development initiatives. This encompasses training and retraining programmes for existing staff, as well as strategies to recruit new personnel. Efforts are also being made to improve data collection and reporting mechanisms, which are crucial for evidence-based planning, monitoring progress, and identifying areas requiring further intervention.

Governor Mohammed's personal involvement and commitment to accountability are also evident. He has instructed the State Commissioner for Health and the Executive Chairman of the Primary Health Care Board to closely monitor the project's progress, pledging to regularly visit revitalisation sites to ensure contractors adhere strictly to their agreements



The headquarters of the Bauchi State Primary Healthcare Development Agency



Gov. Kefas Delivers on Primary Healthcare Promise

In the undulating landscapes of Taraba State, a renewed sense of purpose is galvanizing the primary healthcare sector. Under the visionary leadership of Governor Dr. Agbu Kefas, the state is embarking on an ambitious and comprehensive drive to transform its primary healthcare centres (PHCs), ensuring that quality, accessible healthcare becomes a tangible reality for every citizen, even in the most

remote communities. This commitment, articulated through concrete plans and proactive interventions, signals a new era of health and well-being for the people of Taraba.

Governor Kefas's administration recognizes that a robust primary healthcare system is the bedrock of a healthy society. It is the first point of contact for countless individuals seeking medical attention, and its strength directly impacts the overall health outcomes of the population. The current initiatives are designed to fortify this foundation, making healthcare delivery more efficient, equitable, and effective.

Bolstering the Foundations: Infrastructure and Equipment

Central to Governor Kefas's pledge is the upgrading of primary healthcare centres across the state. This isn't merely a cosmetic facelift but a strategic investment aimed at equipping these vital facilities to better handle common health challenges



Upgrades

Central to Governor Kefas's pledge is the upgrading of primary healthcare centres across the state. This isn't merely a cosmetic facelift but a strategic investment aimed at equipping these vital facilities to better handle common health challenges. By providing equipped health facilities, the administration is laying the groundwork for improved healthcare delivery at the community level. These upgraded PHCs are envisioned as hubs where residents can receive essential medical services, from routine check-ups and basic treatments to maternal and child healthcare, without having to travel long distances to larger, more central hospitals. This commitment to bringing high-quality healthcare closer to the people is expected to have a transformative impact on the health sector.

A tangible demonstration of this commitment came with the recent flag-off of the distribution of motorcycles and Solar Direct Drive (SDD) units, supplied by GAVI/UNICEF. These crucial resources are more than just equipment; they are enablers of change. The motorcycles will significantly enhance mobility for health workers, allowing them to reach remote communities and facilitate outreach programs, especially for immunization and antenatal care. The Solar Direct Drive (SDD) units are particularly vital for maintaining the cold chain for vaccines, ensuring their efficacy even in areas with unreliable power supply. This forward-thinking investment in logistics and technology underscores the administration's resolve to overcome geographical barriers to healthcare access.

Empowering the Frontline: Reinforcing the Healthcare Workforce

Even the most well-equipped facilities cannot

function effectively without skilled personnel. Governor Kefas has acknowledged this critical need and announced plans to recruit and deploy more health workers to various centres throughout the state. This commitment addresses existing staffing shortages and ensures that upgraded PHCs are adequately manned by qualified professionals. The influx of new healthcare workers will strengthen the capacity of the primary healthcare system to deliver a wider range of services, reduce patient waiting times, and provide more personalized care. This focus on human resources demonstrates a holistic understanding of what it takes to build a truly effective healthcare system.

A Shield for the Vulnerable: Expanding Immunization Efforts

A cornerstone of primary healthcare is preventive medicine, and Taraba State is making significant strides in this area, particularly concerning the health of its most vulnerable populations. Governor Kefas has stated that a key focus on primary care includes expanding immunization efforts for children and pregnant women. This proactive measure is expected to significantly reduce maternal and child mortality rates, a critical indicator of public health progress.

Immunization campaigns are vital in preventing vaccine-preventable diseases that disproportionately affect children. By expanding these efforts, the state is protecting its youngest citizens from debilitating illnesses, ensuring they have a healthier start in life. Similarly, vaccinating pregnant women protects both the mother and the unborn child, reducing the risks associated with various preventable diseases during pregnancy.



and childbirth. This emphasis on early intervention and prevention is a testament to the administration's commitment to safeguarding future generations.

Evident Commitment: Resource Allocation and Collaborative Spirit

The government's dedication to primary healthcare is not merely articulated through pledges but is evident in tangible resource allocation aimed at improving everyday health services for residents. This includes funding for medical supplies, essential drugs, and the operational costs of the PHCs. Such consistent resource provision is crucial for the sustained functionality and effectiveness of these community-level health facilities.

Furthermore, the state's collaborative spirit is yielding positive results. The State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Godiya Boma, highlighted the commendable work of the task force committee on immunization and Primary Health Care, operating under the Deputy Governor, Aminu

Abdullahi Alkali. This dedicated committee plays a crucial role in reviving the healthcare sector of the state, ensuring coordination, effective implementation of programs, and responsiveness to emerging health needs. The partnership with international organizations like GAVI and UNICEF, evidenced by the donation of the motorcycles and SDD units, further amplifies the state's capacity to deliver quality healthcare.

A Call for Shared Responsibility: Sustaining the Progress

As Taraba State embarks on this transformative journey, Governor Kefas has also emphasized the importance of community ownership and responsible stewardship. He has appealed to the users of the newly distributed motorcycles and Solar Direct Drive (SDD) units to maintain the equipment responsibly, recognizing that the long-term benefits for communities across the state depend on careful usage and preservation. This call for shared responsibility underscores the understanding that sustainable healthcare improvements require active participation from all stakeholders – government, healthcare workers, and the communities they serve.

Taraba State, under the leadership of Governor Dr. Agbu Kefas, is poised for a significant leap forward in primary healthcare delivery. Through strategic investments in infrastructure, a determined effort to bolster its healthcare workforce, and a clear focus on preventive care and essential services, the state is building a more resilient, accessible, and effective healthcare system. The commitment to bringing high-quality healthcare closer to the people, coupled with a spirit of collaboration and community engagement, promises a brighter horizon for the health and well-being of all Taraba residents. This is not just an upgrade; it is a fundamental shift towards a healthier, more prosperous future for the entire state.



Breathing Life into Yobe PHC



Yobe State has not merely won the prestigious \$500,000 Primary Healthcare Challenge Award for being the North-East's best-performing state in effective primary healthcare service delivery in 2024; it has strategically built on this remarkable success to propel primary healthcare to an entirely new level across the state. This significant accolade, presented by a consortium of development partners including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Dangote Group, the Federal Ministry of Health, the National Primary Health Care Development Agency, and UNICEF, underscores Yobe's extraordinary journey of transformation in its health sector, setting a compelling and progressive example for states across the nation.

Under the resolute leadership of Governor Mai Mala Buni and the committed oversight of Deputy Governor Alhaji Idi Gubana, who also chairs the state's immunization and primary health care committee, Yobe is leveraging this hard-earned recognition not as a final destination, but as a powerful springboard. The state is consolidating and expanding its impressive achievements, driven by an unwavering commitment to achieving universal access to quality, community-centred healthcare, demonstrating a proactive approach that transcends initial victory.

Infrastructure and Accessibility Redefined

The devastating impact of the Boko Haram insurgency left deep scars on Yobe's healthcare infrastructure, particularly disrupting services for vulnerable populations like pregnant women,

newborns, and children. Recognizing this critical gap, the Yobe State Government, even before its challenge victory, embarked on an ambitious drive to rebuild and revitalize its primary healthcare centres (PHCs). Since winning the award, this commitment has been intensified, with a renewed impetus to accelerate infrastructure development and reach more communities.

This strategic focus on infrastructure development has yielded even more remarkable results. As of May 2023, 138 PHCs had been either constructed, refurbished, or equipped, significantly enhancing access to essential services across the state. This ambitious plan aimed to establish at least one PHC in each of the 178 wards by 2023, a goal that the state continues to strive towards with renewed vigor.

Beyond basic PHCs, Yobe has strategically upgraded four general hospitals to specialist facilities and eight PHCs to general hospitals. This tiered approach, now being further optimized post-award, strengthens the entire health system, providing better referral pathways and ensuring that more complex cases can be managed within the state, reducing the need for citizens to travel long distances for advanced care.

The tangible impact of these renovations is profoundly evident on the ground, and stories like that of the Gwange Primary Health Centre (PHC) in Damaturu LGA exemplify the amplified benefits. Rehabilitated and commissioned in December 2022, this facility now boasts separate male and female wards, a modern laboratory, spacious antenatal care (ANC) and immunization rooms, and additional staff quarters. The transformation, already significant, is being built upon, with expanded services and increased patient volumes. Esther Salihu, the Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of Gwange PHC, reports a dramatic increase in services: monthly ANC visits have soared from 20-30 to around 100 per ANC day, and deliveries have surged from less than 20 to an impressive 60-70. Similarly, Amina Sherref, the family planning focal person, notes an increase in women accessing family planning services from less than 100 to about 300 monthly. These numbers are a direct reflection of the improved capacity and trust garnered by the upgraded facilities.

Furthermore, Governor Buni's administration has revitalized an additional 16 non-focal PHCCs, strategically constructing, rehabilitating, and upgrading them to enhance access to quality healthcare services, particularly in underserved rural areas. This targeted expansion demonstrates a commitment to ensuring no community is left behind, a principle that has been underscored and accelerated since the





Jakusko Primary Healthcare Centre

state's recognition.

Accelerated Financial Commitment and Expanded Free Healthcare Initiatives

Yobe State's commitment to healthcare is not just rhetorical; it is backed by substantial and increasing financial commitment. The state has demonstrated strong dedication by allocating 15% of its 2025 budget to the health sector. This significant allocation, a testament to the state's determination to build on its success, underscores the government's understanding that sustained and growing funding is essential for the continuous development and functionality of its advanced healthcare system.

Moreover, the state has championed social equity through the implementation of the Buni Expanded Free Healthcare Scheme. This vital initiative continues to provide free basic healthcare to vulnerable populations, including pregnant women, children under five, and people with disabilities. Building on its foundational success, the scheme is being further streamlined and publicized to ensure even wider reach and uptake, directly addressing financial barriers to accessing healthcare and pushing closer towards achieving universal health coverage.

Enhanced Prevention, Optimized Community Engagement, and Data-Driven Progress

Yobe's dedication extends to preventive healthcare, with significant and continuous improvements in routine immunization. The state has seen a notable and consistent increase in the number of Local Government Areas (LGAs) passing lot quality assurance testing for immunization services. This rigorous quality control, now operating with even greater precision, ensures that immunization campaigns are effective and that children are adequately protected against vaccine-preventable diseases, solidifying Yobe's position as a leader in child health.

Recognizing that healthcare solutions must be community-driven, Yobe has intensified its efforts in community involvement in healthcare interventions. By working even more closely with community leaders and stakeholders, the state ensures a deeply ingrained community-centred approach, fostering greater ownership and significantly increasing the effectiveness of health programs.

This enhanced grassroots engagement is key to building deeper trust and ensuring that health initiatives are not just implemented but truly embraced by local communities.

Crucially, building on its award-winning performance, the state is vigorously focusing on strengthened monitoring and evaluation systems. This commitment to robust, data-driven decision-making allows the government to track progress with even greater accuracy, identify any lingering gaps in service delivery, and make swift, informed adjustments to ensure that interventions are not just effective but optimized. This continuous, self-improving feedback loop is essential for sustained excellence and accountability in the health sector.

Partnerships for Accelerated Progress and a Legacy of Elevated Health

Yobe's success is a direct product of its robust and expanding collaboration and partnerships with various international organizations. The state actively works with entities like the WHO and UNICEF, leveraging their expertise, technical support, and resources to further strengthen its health system and consistently improve service delivery. The very nature of the Primary Healthcare Challenge Award fosters these partnerships, and Yobe is diligently capitalizing on these relationships to access even more resources, training, and innovative solutions, pushing primary healthcare boundaries further.

The \$500,000 PHC Challenge Award is not just a prize; it is a powerful catalyst for continued action and a testament to the tireless efforts of Governor Buni's administration, the amplified dedication of its healthcare workers, and the deepened active participation of its communities. By systematically rebuilding infrastructure, investing increasingly in its people, and embracing dynamic strategic partnerships, Yobe is not just delivering healthcare; it is meticulously building a lasting legacy of elevated health, hope, and well-being for generations to come. This exemplary performance, and the state's unwavering commitment to building on its achievements, serves as a powerful model, demonstrating that with consistent effort and strategic vision, transformative progress in primary healthcare is not only achievable but can be continually advanced to new, unprecedented levels.

Gov Yahaya

Reshaping lives through PHC



Gombe State is scripting a new chapter in grassroots health development. Under the purposeful leadership of Governor Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya, the state is quietly engineering a healthcare revolution, anchored on a revitalized primary healthcare system that is transforming the lives of ordinary people in remote villages and bustling townships alike.

At the centre of this transformation is the Gombe State Primary Health Care Development Agency (GSPHCDA), leading a multi-pronged, data-driven strategy to ensure that no citizen is left behind in the quest for quality, affordable, and accessible healthcare.

The Yahaya administration's vision is ambitious yet grounded in urgent reality: to provide at least two functional PHCs in each of the state's 114 political wards. This resolve has birthed an aggressive infrastructure rollout across all 11 local government areas (LGAs), with over 82 primary healthcare facilities earmarked for full revitalization, backed by a N3 billion state investment approved by the Executive Council.

This includes the construction, renovation, and equipping of healthcare centers, the drilling of boreholes for potable water, and installation of solar energy systems for off-grid power—lifesaving provisions in underserved rural communities.

Already, 64 PHCs have been revitalized under the WHO-supported Impact Project, while UNICEF has backed another 10. One shining example is the revitalized PHC at Lalapido in Shongom LGA, now offering previously unavailable services such as maternal care, immunization, and health education.

In Deba and Akko LGAs, the groundbreaking ceremonies for new PHCs marked a turning point. Dignitaries such as the Emir of Deba, top health officials, and local government chairmen gathered to reaffirm a shared commitment to grassroots health delivery.

“We are not just building structures; we are building systems that ensure no woman gives birth in darkness and no child dies for lack of simple care,” said Dr. Ya'u Kashere, Chairman of the GSPHCDA.

Training the Lifeblood: Capacity Building for Health Workers

A well-built clinic is only as effective as those who staff it. Recognizing this, the state has prioritized human capital development in healthcare. In partnership with the World Health Organization, Gombe trained 600

N1.1 billion

Amount allocated by the state government for the transportation and logistics of medical equipment donated by the World Medical Relief, USA—another testament to Gombe's global appeal and administrative efficiency

2025-2027

The approved Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), integrating health into its fiscal strategy paper and budget policy statement

healthcare workers, equipping them with skills in service delivery, outbreak response, and modern patient care.

The training is part of a larger drive to strengthen health systems by creating a pipeline of capable, motivated, and community-rooted health personnel. These professionals now serve as the face of health reform, from rural immunization campaigns to maternal outreach programs.

Postgraduate programs in obstetrics, pediatrics, and internal medicine have also been launched at the Gombe Specialist Hospital, signaling the government's intent to build a pool of advanced clinical experts within the state.

A Symphony of Partnerships:
WHO, Gates Foundation, UNICEF Join Hands

In an era when donor fatigue is a constant threat, Gombe has managed to secure and sustain the trust of global partners. Through strategic partnerships

with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and UNICEF, the state is aligning local health policies with global best practices.

The Partnership for Improved Primary Healthcare Performance (PIPP) with the Gates Foundation aims to not only develop an investment plan but also monitor delivery outcomes. Similarly, the WHO has donated cholera kits, antimalarial drugs, and funded service delivery monitoring efforts.

Between July and October 2022 alone, 813,169 children between ages 3 and 59 months received seasonal malaria chemoprevention drugs through WHO's support—an initiative that significantly reduced child morbidity during the peak malaria season.

"These partnerships are not cosmetic; they are catalytic," noted Dr. Walter Kazadi Mulombo, WHO Country Representative, during the unveiling of the Doma PHC in Jekadafari ward. "They help save lives today and prepare the system for tomorrow."

Healthcare must not only be about systems—it must be about people. Gombe State has taken this wisdom to heart by integrating community participation into its healthcare policies.

The Village Health Worker Scheme is a striking example, mobilizing local residents to serve as frontline caregivers and liaisons between the community and the health system. These volunteers conduct door-to-door visits, track immunization defaulters, and provide first-response care for basic illnesses.

This model, rooted in trust and cultural familiarity, has expanded access to care while reducing medical myths and misinformation. It also ensures that services are tailored to the specific needs and preferences of each community.

Governor Yahaya's healthcare policies are firmly aligned with the World Health Organization's Universal Health Coverage (UHC) framework, which insists that no one should suffer financial hardship in the quest for healthcare.

At the core of this vision is the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund (BHCPF), a federal initiative that the Gombe government has embraced



wholeheartedly. The fund guarantees free access to health insurance and basic services for the poor and vulnerable.

"The poorest of the poor are benefitting directly," said Dr. Habu Dahiru, Commissioner for Health. "This isn't theoretical access—it's real coverage, in real time, for real people."

To monitor and ensure optimal performance across health facilities and workforce, the state has deployed a biometric tracking system and approved a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework—one of the first of its kind in the region.

Gombe's healthcare transformation is not a flash-in-the-pan project—it is backed by careful financial planning and accountability.

The state has approved the 2025-2027 Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), integrating health into its fiscal strategy paper and budget policy statement. This alignment ensures health spending is not just aspirational, but predictable and sustainable.

The government also allocated N1.1 billion for the transportation and logistics of medical equipment donated by the World Medical Relief, USA—another testament to Gombe's global appeal and administrative efficiency.

Beyond primary healthcare, the Yahaya administration has upgraded Kumo, Kaltungo, and Bajoga General Hospitals and handed over the revitalized General Hospital Kumo to the federal government for conversion into a Federal Medical Centre. These tertiary investments support medical research, specialist services, and training programs for institutions like Federal University Kashere and Lincoln University, Kumo.

Of course, the road ahead isn't without challenges. Nigeria's broader healthcare ecosystem remains fragile, and issues like medical brain drain continue to cast a long shadow.

However, Gombe is hedging its bets through retention policies, strategic bilateral migration agreements, and incentives to keep health workers motivated. The state has also invested in medical supply warehouses to improve logistics and drug availability.

Dr. Dahiru is confident that with proper planning, Gombe can retain a critical mass of trained personnel. "Even if some leave, we will continue to train more. We must prepare for both the present and the future."

With bold political will, transparent governance, and inclusive partnerships, Gombe State is becoming a model for grassroots health transformation in Nigeria.

It is no longer a tale of neglect but one of resolve, a state building from the inside out, where PHC centres now shine as beacons of hope, and every woman, child, and man can look forward to a healthier tomorrow.

From the rolling hills of Shongom to the bustling wards of Jekadafari, Gombe is proving that health is not just the absence of disease—it is a promise kept.

How Bago is Driving Primary Healthcare System in Niger

Niger State is undergoing a silent yet powerful revolution in its healthcare sector, spearheaded by the administration of Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago. Far from being a mere footnote, quality healthcare delivery, particularly at the primary level, has emerged as a foundational promise and a defining feature of his governance. Through strategic investments, uncompromising standards, and a deep commitment to accountability, Niger State is not just building health facilities; it is constructing a sustainable and inclusive healthcare system that is already yielding remarkable results and setting new national benchmarks.

Unprecedented Achievements in PHC System Strengthening: The GAVI Success Story

The administration of Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago has recorded remarkable successes in the GAVI-supported Primary Healthcare (PHC) System Strengthening Project, unequivocally reinforcing its commitment to quality healthcare delivery across the state. This three-year initiative has successfully concluded, leaving behind a legacy of profound improvements in healthcare services at the primary level.

Speaking at the Close-out Meeting of the Niger State GAVI-Supported PHC System Strengthening Program held at the Governor's Lodge in Abuja, Governor Bago proudly detailed the tangible impact of the program. The statistics presented are compelling and speak volumes about the lives saved and improved:



BAGO

A 50% reduction in under-five mortality: This critical indicator has seen a drastic drop from 98 per 1,000 cases to 49 per 1,000 cases since 2018. This represents a dramatic saving of young lives and a testament to improved early childhood interventions and access to care.

A sharp decline in overall mortality rates: From a significant 57 per 1,000 to just 3 per 1,000 live births, demonstrating a comprehensive improvement in health outcomes across all age groups and conditions.

A notable reduction in neonatal mortality: From 29 per 1,000 to 22 per 1,000, highlighting focused interventions addressing the most vulnerable period of a child's life.

A 35% increase in antenatal care (ANC) uptake: With 355,804 women enrolled in 2024, compared to 232,495 in 2022. This surge in ANC attendance is crucial for monitoring pregnancies, detecting complications early, and providing essential health education to expectant mothers.

A significant rise in skilled birth attendance: With 38,857 women delivering under professional supervision in 2024, compared to 36,251 in 2022. This is a direct indicator of increased trust in healthcare facilities and a key factor in reducing maternal and neonatal mortality.

A 5-percentage-point increase in fully immunized children: Rising from 23.5% in 2018 to 28.3% in 2024. This steady increase in immunization coverage is vital for protecting children against preventable diseases and building community immunity.



These remarkable achievements underscore a profound transformation, moving health statistics from mere figures to compelling narratives of lives improved and saved. Governor Bago emphatically reaffirmed his administration's unwavering commitment to sustaining and expanding this quality healthcare services in all primary healthcare centers across the state, ensuring that the hard-won gains continue to benefit every Nigerlite.

Commendations and Sustained Partnerships: A Model for National Health

The success of Niger State's PHC initiatives has garnered widespread commendation from key development partners, highlighting the collaborative spirit and effective implementation.

Cristian Munduate, the UNICEF Representative in Nigeria, ably represented by the Chief of Child Protection, Ibrahim Sesay, lauded the "strong partnership between Niger State and GAVI." He emphasized that the three-year PHC System Strengthening Project has successfully expanded access to equitable healthcare services, a critical objective for UNICEF. Similarly, the Chief of Health, UNICEF Nigeria, Dr. Shyam Pathak, acknowledged the exemplary efforts of Governor Bago and urged continued investments in immunization, birth registration, and nutrition, recognizing these as fundamental pillars for consolidating the progress achieved.

The successful close-out of the GAVI-supported project in March signifies a milestone, but for Governor Bago, it marks a renewed dedication to deepening healthcare reforms. His administration remains steadfast in its resolve to ensure a sustainable and inclusive healthcare system for all Niger State residents, indicating a long-term vision that extends far beyond project cycles. This unwavering

Bago described the project as a "major milestone" in his administration's agenda to transform the health sector and bring quality healthcare closer to rural and underserved populations. He revealed that these 20 facilities constitute the first phase of an even broader and more ambitious plan to establish 100 Level 2 primary healthcare centers across the state. An additional 40 centers are slated for construction in the coming months, rapidly expanding the coverage and accessibility of healthcare services across Niger State.

A critical aspect of Governor Bago's approach is his assurance of the financial sustainability of this massive initiative. He explicitly cited the substantial funds available in the state's Healthcare Development Fund, demonstrating prudent financial planning and a commitment to ensuring these vital projects are not hampered by funding shortfalls.

To further ensure the efficient operation and maintenance of these new facilities, Governor Bago has introduced an innovative incentive scheme: a monthly award of N5 million to any center that demonstrates an exemplary maintenance culture and delivers customer-friendly services. This groundbreaking initiative aims to foster healthy competition among healthcare providers, incentivize high standards, and ensure the long-term viability and cleanliness of these vital community assets. It is a pragmatic move designed to prevent facilities from falling into disrepair after commissioning, a common challenge in many developing contexts.

The Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), Muyi Aina, lauded this initiative, describing it as a "landmark achievement" and a "model for other states to emulate." He specifically noted that "the quality and scope of the centers set a new benchmark for Level 2 primary healthcare services in Nigeria," a powerful endorsement from the highest national authority on primary healthcare.

A Governor Walking the Talk: Fulfillment of a Foundational Promise

In an era where health statistics often read like silent cries from the margins, and with more Nigerians resorting to expensive medical tourism, Niger State is witnessing a quiet but powerful revolution. Going by Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago's charter with the people of Niger State, it is abundantly clear that the provision of basic social amenities, particularly quality healthcare, was never a mere footnote but a foundational promise.

The ongoing construction and commissioning of fully equipped Level II Primary Health Care Centres across the state is not just a development project; it is a direct fulfillment of one of his Charter One commitments with the people under the

commitment to continuity is crucial for translating short-term gains into lasting improvements.

Building from the Ground Up: 20 Brand-New, State-of-the-Art PHCs Commissioned

In a significant and highly visible stride towards improving healthcare delivery, Governor Umaru Bago has recently commissioned 20 newly constructed Level 2 primary healthcare centers across 16 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of the state. This is not a mere renovation program, nor is it a series of cosmetic facelifts. As the Governor himself emphasized, these are completely reconstructed facilities, built from the ground up and fully equipped to serve rural communities who have, for far too long, been marginalized and deprived of basic healthcare services.

During the commissioning ceremony in Minna, Governor

Niger State, under Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago, is not merely engaging in a routine upgrade of its healthcare system. It is implementing a comprehensive, well-funded, and strategically designed revolution in primary healthcare delivery





Improved

Livelihoods pillar, which stood as his first and foremost priority. This demonstrates a governor "walking his talk," transforming campaign policy promises into tangible infrastructure that unequivocally reflects his dedication to the well-being of every Nigerlite.

Governor Bago's commitment to healthcare did not suddenly begin in office; it was a cornerstone of his campaign manifesto. What is currently being witnessed in the massive investment and deliberate construction of PHCs is not a deviation or a surprise—it is governance in alignment with campaign promises. Bago is not just ticking boxes; he is walking in step with the vision he sold to the people and delivering on the social contract he signed during the campaigns.

This revolution is driven not by slogans or fleeting photo opportunities, but by a governor whose commitment to quality healthcare is becoming a defining feature of his administration. Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago is not merely talking about healthcare reforms; he is actively building them. These newly commissioned centers are not renovations, refurbishments, facelifts, or quick fixes. They are completely reconstructed facilities, built from the ground up and equipped to serve rural communities who, for far too long, have been left behind. The Governor famously rejected initial proposals to simply refurbish dilapidated structures, opting instead for the bolder, more impactful route of building modern healthcare centers from scratch.

These centers are designed to be not only affordable and accessible but also dignified in their structure, service, and purpose. Each facility is meticulously equipped with essential drugs, dedicated delivery rooms, reliable solar power systems, a clean water supply, and qualified personnel. This is not infrastructure for its own sake; it is about saving lives, restoring dignity, and instilling hope in communities that have long been deprived of basic healthcare. It translates directly to reducing the arduous distances a woman in labor must travel to access professional help. It means the elderly can find respectful and accessible care close to home. Crucially, it means children receive life-saving vaccines in clean, safe environments, rather than under makeshift shelters or crumbling buildings.

The effect of this unwavering commitment is already demonstrably measurable. Recent statistics reveal that Niger State has recorded a significant nine-point drop in maternal mortality—an extraordinary achievement in a region historically plagued by high maternal and child death rates. Additionally, there has been a remarkable increase in deliveries attended by skilled birth attendants, a clear and vital sign that women are not just

accessing care, but crucially, trusting the quality and safety of that care.

The National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) has emphatically recognized the monumental efforts of Governor Bago, with its Executive Director, Dr. Muyi Aina, famously calling him "the face of impact in Nigeria." This powerful endorsement from the national body underscores the transformative scale and exemplary nature of Niger State's healthcare reforms.

Sustaining the Gains: A Vision for the Future

Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago's vision for Niger State's healthcare extends far beyond the current wave of commissioning. He has articulated a clear plan to build 100 Level 2 Primary Healthcare facilities, with 20 already commissioned and another 40 slated for construction in the coming months. The assurance of financial sustainability through the substantial Healthcare Development Fund demonstrates foresight and a commitment to long-term impact.

The Governor's introduction of the N5 million monthly award for exemplary maintenance culture and customer-friendly service is a groundbreaking incentive that will drive continuous improvement and foster a sense of ownership among healthcare providers. This innovative approach is



designed to ensure that these valuable assets remain functional and effective for years to come. Furthermore, the naming of facilities after prominent individuals, including the late Hajiya Zainab Yakubu Garba (Maitumbi PHC), the late Peter Sarki (Peter Sarki road PHC), and even the Governor's wife, Hajiya Fatima Umaru Bago (Anguwan Daji PHC), serves to memorialize significant contributions and foster community connection with these vital institutions.

In conclusion, Niger State, under Governor Mohammed Umaru Bago, is not merely engaging in a routine upgrade of its healthcare system. It is implementing a comprehensive, well-funded, and strategically designed revolution in primary healthcare delivery. By achieving remarkable reductions in mortality rates, increasing essential service uptake, investing in state-of-the-art facilities from the ground up, and fostering a culture of excellence and sustainability, Niger State is rapidly becoming a compelling model for what dedicated leadership and pragmatic governance can achieve in transforming public health outcomes across Nigeria.



Kogi's Bold Leap Towards Universal Coverage

Kogi State is currently undergoing a remarkable transformation in its primary healthcare sector, driven by an unwavering commitment from Governor Ahmed Usman Ododo's administration. With substantial investments, strategic partnerships, and a clear vision for accessible and quality healthcare, Kogi is rapidly becoming a compelling model for public health development in Nigeria. The ongoing projects are not just about erecting buildings; they're about building a healthier future for every citizen, from urban centres to the remotest villages.

A Multi-Billion Naira Investment in Primary Healthcare Facilities

At the heart of Kogi's healthcare revitalization is an unprecedented financial commitment. The state government has allocated over N7 billion to the upgrade and revitalization of 88 Primary Healthcare Centres

(PHCs) across the state. This massive "88 PHCs" project is a World Bank-supported initiative, underscoring the confidence and collaboration garnered from international partners.

Governor Ododo personally demonstrates his dedication, as seen during his working visit to the Obuburu Primary Healthcare Centre in Adavi LGA on June 9th, 2025. This facility is one of the 88 impact projects currently being upgraded to a Level 2 facility. His satisfaction with the progress and commendation for the Hon. Commissioner for Health, Hon. Abdulazeez Adams Adeiza, and KSPHCDA Executive Director, Dr. Mu'azu Musa Omeiza, highlight the administration's hands-on approach. The Governor's directive to contractors to prioritize quality, adhere to specifications, and ensure timely completion further emphasizes the high standards expected.

This "88 PHCs" project

complements other significant efforts to bolster PHC infrastructure. The state is concurrently upgrading seven PHCs under the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF), revitalizing 21 PHCs through the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), and rehabilitating eight PHCs with support from UNICEF/Global Fund. In total, these initiatives represent a comprehensive overhaul of primary healthcare infrastructure, aimed at ensuring that modern, well-equipped facilities are within reach of every Kogi resident.

The official handover of project sites to four carefully selected contractors—INKNUEL Ltd, Multipurpose Erand Ltd, QSA Nig Ltd, and Base-SAN Ventures—marks a crucial step. Governor Ododo, represented by Dr. Abdulazeez Adeiza, urged these contractors to uphold professionalism and complete the projects within the ambitious four-month timeframe. Importantly, the government has stressed the need to engage local communities and adhere to social and environmental safeguards, ensuring these projects benefit and are embraced by the very people they serve. Project Manager of INKNUEL Ltd, Retired Brig.-Gen. Stephen Bawa, has assured timely and high-standard delivery, pledging to involve local youth in the execution.

Expanding Health Insurance for Universal Coverage

Kogi State is making significant strides toward achieving universal

health coverage by 2030, with a robust health insurance program that is steadily expanding its reach. Currently, over 167,000 enrollees are already benefiting from the state's health insurance program, a clear indicator of its growing impact.

The state's comprehensive health plans are meticulously designed to ensure equitable access to healthcare services across all socio-economic groups. These include the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF), the "Bello Care Programme", and schemes tailored for vital contributors, formal sector employees, political office holders, and students in tertiary institutions.

Looking ahead, the Kogi State Health Insurance Agency plans to enroll an ambitious 200,000 persons annually over the next decade, further expanding coverage and ensuring more residents benefit from affordable healthcare. To improve accessibility and convenience for residents, the state plans to establish health insurance offices in all Local Government Areas and hospitals. This strategic decentralization will make enrollment and access to healthcare services significantly more convenient. Furthermore, the government has emphasized accountability, warning that ineffective health facilities and service providers will face appropriate sanctions, ensuring the integrity and quality of the scheme.

A key achievement in this regard is the establishment of the Kogi State Health Insurance Agency, a bold move to reduce out-of-pocket healthcare expenditure. Since its inception, the Agency has developed operational guidelines and a benefit package, established a functional Governing Board, and implemented robust Information and Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure to drive the enrollment process and claims management. It also generates revenue through registration and accreditation of service providers. A notable achievement is the enrollment of 31,491 vulnerable individuals into the Kogi State Health Insurance Agency



Vulnerable Programme/Bello Care, alongside the ongoing enrollment of 700 pregnant women into the Sen.

level. The Task Force plays a critical role in coordinating and overseeing various primary healthcare activities, including immunization, maternal and child health, disease prevention and control, and health promotion. Dr. Abdulazeez Adams, the Commissioner for Health, noted that this task force provides a platform for inter-sectoral coordination and collaboration, ensuring that directives are translated into real improvements at the state level. Similar inter-sectoral coordination committees are planned for the Local Government level. The World Health Organization (WHO) Kogi State Coordinator, Sani Ibrahim, commended the state government for demonstrating "political will, strategic vision and commitment to



Smart Adeyemi Vulnerable Health Insurance program.

Strengthening Systems: Task Forces, Cold Chains, and Human Resource Planning

Kogi State's achievements extend beyond infrastructure to crucial systemic improvements that underpin effective primary healthcare delivery.

A significant step has been the inauguration of a State Task Force on Primary Health Care Services. Chaired by the Deputy Governor, Comrade Joel Salifu, this committee is tasked with ensuring the effective implementation of public health programs and improving healthcare delivery, particularly at the grassroots

health sector transformation."

Another vital accomplishment is the strengthening of the Cold Chain System. The Kogi State Central Cold Chain Store has been revitalized to ensure the proper storage of vaccines for children and women. This includes the installation of a 33kva power line, transformer, and a 60kva solar inverter system, guaranteeing the integrity of crucial vaccines regardless of power fluctuations.

Recognizing the importance of human capital, the state has completed a human resource mapping exercise to assess the specific needs of primary healthcare facilities. This strategic planning ensures that staffing decisions are data-driven, addressing

gaps and optimizing the deployment of healthcare professionals.

Holistic Health Development: From Infrastructure to Innovation

Governor Ododo's administration has made healthcare a thematic area of focus, recognizing that a healthy population is a wealthy population. Over the last five years, Kogi State has witnessed a tremendous increase in its Health Financing Fiscal Space and huge investments in health infrastructure, workforce capacity building, procurement and distribution of essential medicines, and electronic data capturing and tracking systems to improve its Health Management Information System.

Key achievements in health infrastructure include:

Establishment of a World-Class Reference Hospital in Okene: Designed to handle complicated medical and surgical cases and promote medical tourism within the state.

Renovation and Remodeling of Kogi State Specialist Hospital Lokoja: This ongoing project includes the construction of an ultra-modern administrative complex (two suspended floors) and a Psychiatric Department, alongside the complete renovation of the entire hospital.

Construction of two new Ultra-Modern General Hospitals: Located in Eganyi, Ajaokuta Local Government Area, and Gegu – Beki, Kogi Local Government Area, expanding access to secondary care.

Renovation of Cottage Hospital Adavi-Eba.

Significant upgrades to College of Health Science & Technology Idah and College of Nursing and Midwifery Obangede: Including new academic blocks, clinics, hostels, perimeter fencing, and equipment provision, ensuring a pipeline of well-trained healthcare professionals.

Construction and Furnishing of a Nutrition House for Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria (ANRiN): To accelerate the delivery of nutrition services to malnourished children.

Revitalization of Confluence Advance Diagnostic and Imaging Center (CAMDIC): Improving accessibility to advanced laboratory and radio-diagnostic investigations previously sought outside the state.

Revitalization of 239 Primary Health Care Centers (1 PHC Per ward): A testament to the commitment to grassroots healthcare.

Provision of Essential Medical Equipment: Including clinical,



laboratory, and radiological equipment.

Furthermore, the Kogi State Primary Health Care Development Agency has made significant organizational advancements, including the acquisition of a new office building and the signing of the Agency's Amendment Bill into Law in April 2019, providing a stronger legal and operational framework. The Agency is also on the verge of disbursing the Basic Health Care Provision Fund to health facilities, having completed 19 out of 20 requirements. Other achievements include the release of N67 million for the expansion and installation of 100 KVA Solar energy in October 2019, the commencement of Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria (ANRiN), and the BHCPF pre-implementation assessment of 239 selected PHCs. The agency has also conducted extensive training for local government health authority account officers, immunization and cold chain officers, and PHC workers on COVID-19 safety measures, alongside the distribution

of Personal Protective Equipment and motorcycles/laptops to RI Officers. A significant boost to immunization and malaria progress comes from the approval and release of N36 million for the Immunization Plus and Malaria progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services Project (IMPACT).

The government also plans to establish three primary healthcare centres in each of the state's 21 Local Government Areas, a direct response to the need for enhanced healthcare delivery in rural areas and improved access to essential services for all residents.

These comprehensive initiatives are expected to significantly improve health outcomes, reduce mortality rates, and enhance the overall quality of life for Kogi residents. The intensified focus on primary healthcare aims to make healthcare services more accessible, affordable, and efficient for the entire population. Kogi State is not just building infrastructure; it's building a foundation for sustainable health and well-being.

Nasarawa's Bold Pursuit of 24/7 Primary Care for All

Nasarawa State is orchestrating a profound transformation in its primary healthcare (PHC) landscape, driven by an unwavering commitment to making quality, accessible healthcare a tangible reality for every citizen, regardless of their location.

Under the strategic vision of Governor Abdullahi Sule, the state is not merely renovating health centres; it is fundamentally revitalizing its entire PHC system to provide 24-hour daily services across all 147 electoral wards. This ambitious, pragmatic, and highly collaborative endeavour is setting a new benchmark for grassroots healthcare delivery in Nigeria.

The cornerstone of Nasarawa's healthcare revolution is a vast project focused on the revitalization of health centres across all 147 electoral wards. This ambitious undertaking is being implemented through the Nasarawa State Primary Healthcare Development

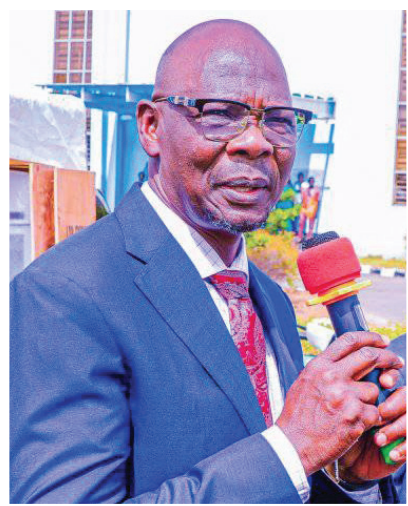
Agency (NSPHCDA), signaling a centralized, coordinated, and efficient approach to healthcare reform. Dr. Usman Iskilu Saleh, the Executive Secretary of the Agency, unveiled these plans during a recent interaction with members of the Correspondents Chapel of the Nigeria Union of Journalists.

Dr. Saleh emphasized that revitalizing PHCs is a holistic intervention encompassing critical components: human resources, robust facilities (buildings), and essential equipment to enable personnel to function effectively. The overarching goal is to ensure that healthcare providers are well-equipped

to cater to the health needs of the people at the local level, making care truly accessible.

The project is a testament to strong partnerships, with significant collaboration from the World Bank and other development partners. Dr. Saleh expressed optimism that the completion of these facilities will usher in a "new chapter in healthcare delivery" for Nasarawa State. He detailed the ambitious rollout: 58 facilities are already undergoing revitalization and are expected to be completed by June 2025. Beyond these 58, more facilities are slated for revitalization within the current year and beyond, demonstrating a sustained commitment.

"We have 147 wards in Nasarawa State. So, it is expected that we have one basic healthcare provision facility per ward. That is, 147," Dr. Saleh explained. "So, the Nigerian government is expected to, by the end of this year



2025, ensure that all these facilities are functional and revitalized. So far, through The World Bank, State funding, and other sources, 58 facilities in Nasarawa State have already commenced revitalization and it is expected to be completed soon. So, by this June, we will have 58 revitalized healthcare facilities."

He further added to the scope of revitalization, noting that "We have other facilities like the Global Fund that will take care of eight (facilities), constituency projects, and the State government is preparing for nine and then three basic healthcare provision facilities. When you add, I think it is 76 facilities to be taken care of." This multi-source funding and multi-project approach underscores a comprehensive strategy to ensure every corner of the state benefits from improved PHC services.

The 24-Hour Commitment: Elevating Access and Reducing Referrals

A defining feature of Nasarawa's PHC revitalization is the commitment to 24-hour daily operation for these facilities. Dr. Saleh elucidated what "revitalization" truly means in this context: "Revitalization simply means the facility would work for 24-hours. There is no time that that facility would be off, it works continuously." This critical shift addresses a major challenge in primary healthcare, where limited operating hours often force patients to seek care at higher-level hospitals for conditions that could easily be managed at a PHC.

Dr. Saleh acknowledged this systemic issue: "Something that could be taken care of at the health centre, at the end of the day, it is taken to the general hospital or teaching hospital. We have a referral system in the healthcare system." By ensuring continuous service, Nasarawa aims to strengthen the referral system, ensuring that PHCs truly serve as the first point of contact, managing minor ailments and only referring complex cases to general or teaching hospitals. This not only optimizes resource utilization at higher-level facilities but also significantly enhances patient convenience and access, especially for emergencies at odd hours. He expressed strong optimism that this initiative will ensure both rural and urban dwellers in Nasarawa State have equal opportunities to access health facilities at all times, bridging geographical and temporal access gaps.

The IMPACT Project: Driving Maternal and Child Health Outcomes

A crucial component of Nasarawa's PHC development is its collaboration with the Immunization Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Service (IMPACT) Project. This World Bank-supported initiative is specifically designed to improve maternal and child health, directly addressing child morbidity and mortality rates.

Adamu Yakubu-Ohaganyi, the Programme Manager for IMPACT in Nasarawa State, clarified that the project's focus on renovating the 58 healthcare facilities across the 13 local government areas is directly aimed at improving healthcare service delivery to address maternal and child mortality and morbidity. This strategic alignment ensures that infrastructure upgrades translate directly into better outcomes for the most vulnerable populations.

During a recent bid opening ceremony for the IMPACT Project in Lafia, Yakubu-Ohaganyi disclosed that a total of 14 companies had bid for the contracts to upgrade facilities across the state, with awards strictly based on merit. Dr. Usman Iskilu Saleh, represented by Dr. Stephen Iliya-Sasetu, Director of Planning, Research, Monitoring and Evaluation, reiterated the agency's primary responsibility to provide quality healthcare services to communities and its resolve to strengthen the health sector. Dr. Saleh emphasized that the available resources for the IMPACT Project represent an important step not only in enhancing maternal and child health but also in improving the livelihoods of people, especially those in remote communities. He urged yet-to-be-awarded contractors to ensure the highest quality outputs, setting a clear standard for project execution.

The transparent bidding process and emphasis on merit reflect the state's commitment to accountability and efficient resource utilization. The support from traditional institutions is also vital; the Emir of Lafia, Justice Sidi Bage Mohammed, appreciated the IMPACT Project for its "human-driven projects" and assured his commitment to provide all necessary support for the benefit of the state's people. Upaa Tarfa-Richard from Tyonex Nigeria Limited, speaking on behalf of the bidders, commended the NSPHCDA for the opportunity and appealed for a transparent evaluation process, reinforcing the emphasis on fairness.

Beyond Buildings to Workforce Development and Sustainability

Nasarawa's revitalization efforts extend beyond just physical structures; they encompass a holistic approach to strengthening the entire healthcare ecosystem. Dr. Usman Saleh confirmed that the revitalization is a comprehensive intervention covering health infrastructure, essential equipment, medicaments (medicines), and crucial manpower development. This integrated strategy ensures that the facilities are not only physically present but also fully functional with the necessary tools, supplies, and skilled personnel.

The state government's commitment to strengthening healthcare services is further highlighted by Governor Abdullahi Sule's consistent fulfillment of counterpart funding obligations to international health partners, including the World Bank. This financial discipline is critical for unlocking and leveraging significant external support, demonstrating a pragmatic and



believable approach to project financing.

The initiative aims to significantly address healthcare access challenges in rural areas and actively encourage residents to utilize primary healthcare centers for their needs, thereby reducing the overcrowding often seen in larger hospitals due to minor ailments. This strategic redirection of patient flow enhances efficiency across the entire health system.

Understudying the Nasarawa Model: An International Seal of Approval

Nasarawa State's progressive strides in healthcare delivery have gained international attention. Health experts from Kenya's Ministry of Health recently paid a working visit to Nasarawa State to understudy and potentially adopt its model for reducing maternal deaths and the process of administering injectable and implant-based family planning. This is a significant endorsement of Nasarawa's effectiveness and innovation in public health.

The Kenyan team, led by Serem Edward under the IntegratE Project (implemented by the Society for Family Health - SFH), expressed their overall impression with the quality of healthcare delivery in the state. Their learning visit was not only focused on improving efforts to tackle maternal and child mortality in Kenya but also aimed at improving service delivery among Community Pharmacists and Patent and Proprietary Medicine Vendors in their country. Specifically, the delegation, which included medical practitioners, doctors, pharmacists, and key health officials, sought to adopt a workable method and understand how community-based providers administer contraceptive implants, bringing family planning services closer to the population.

Serem Edward commended the Nasarawa Government for the "exceptional implementation of the IntegratE Project." He highlighted Kenya's modern contraceptive prevalence rate of 57% and expressed optimism that learning from Nigeria's (and specifically Nasarawa) model could help further reduce maternal and child mortality in his country. He noted that "Nigeria's intervention is crucial because it extends family planning services to communities where human resources are limited," acknowledging the innovative approach of decentralizing these vital services. Salome Aya, Reproductive and Family Planning Coordinator in the Nasarawa State Ministry of Health, further highlighted the state's achievements in expanding access to contraceptive services, reinforcing the evidence base for Kenya's interest.

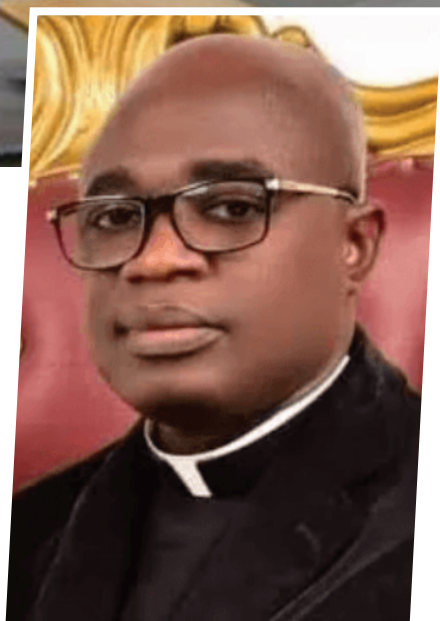
Partnership with the Media: Ensuring Transparency and Public Awareness

Dr. Usman Iskilu Saleh recognized the crucial role of the media in his agency's success. He warmly welcomed members of the Correspondents Chapel, emphasizing that "Healthcare delivery is teamwork. And you are also leaders. You are part of the leadership and part of the decision-making of this Agency." He implored reporters to work together with the agency as friends, to "tell us the truth and nothing but the truth," and to "take ownership of the agency." This open invitation for collaboration underscores a commitment to transparency and public engagement in the healthcare reform process.

Isaac Ukpoju, Chairman of the Correspondents Chapel, congratulated Dr. Saleh on his appointment and acknowledged Governor Sule's commitment to the health sector. He expressed the Chapel's willingness to partner and support the agency's mission to provide quality healthcare to the people of Nasarawa State, ensuring that the public is properly informed of its activities and achievements. Ukpoju further commended the Agency's reforms, highlighting "significant improvements in primary healthcare delivery over the past four months," providing independent validation of the ongoing progress.

In conclusion, Nasarawa State, under Governor Abdullahi Sule's decisive leadership, is not merely talking about healthcare reform; it is actively implementing a comprehensive, well-funded, and strategically partnered transformation. By prioritizing 24-hour PHC services, leveraging international collaborations like the World Bank and IMPACT Project, investing in a holistic approach to facility and human resource development, and even serving as a model for other nations, Nasarawa is charting a compelling path towards truly accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare for all its citizens.

Gov Alia's Grand Vision of Rebuilding PHC Foundations



In the fertile plains of Nigeria's Middle Belt, Benue State is currently undergoing an unprecedented revolution in its primary healthcare (PHC) delivery system. Under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Governor Hyacinth Alia, the state government has embarked upon a series of ambitious and meticulously planned projects, fundamentally reshaping access to quality health services for its burgeoning population. This concerted effort, underpinned by substantial investment and strategic partnerships, is not only addressing long-standing systemic challenges but is also positioning Benue as a burgeoning model for PHC development within the Nigerian federation.

The state's commitment to revitalising its PHC system is unequivocal, recognising that robust primary healthcare forms the bedrock of a resilient and equitable health sector. This feature delves into the multi-faceted initiatives and tangible projects that exemplify Benue's journey towards a healthier future, highlighting the pragmatic approach, evidence-based interventions, and unwavering dedication that define this administration's drive for comprehensive health sector reform.

The Grand Vision: Rebuilding the Foundations of Health Equity

Governor Hyacinth Alia's administration has articulated an unwavering desire to ensure that every Benue indigene and resident enjoys optimal

healthcare services, regardless of their location within the state. This profound commitment is the driving force behind the extensive rehabilitation, upgrade, and revitalisation of PHCs across Benue. The understanding is clear: without a robust primary healthcare system, the burden on secondary and tertiary facilities becomes unsustainable, and the health needs of the populace remain largely unmet.

The scale of this ambition is reflected in the flagship projects currently underway. The state government has embarked on a massive undertaking to revitalise 98 Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) under the Immunization Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services (IMPACT) Project.

This initiative is designed to elevate these facilities to Level II standard, a significant upgrade that ensures they are capable of delivering a comprehensive range of quality and effective services. The Deputy Governor, Dr. Sam Ode, underscored this commitment during the flag-off ceremony at Akpegede PHC, Otukpo Local Government Area (LGA), emphasising the administration's desire for every Benue citizen to access the best healthcare services wherever they reside.

Beyond the initial 98 PHCs, the state government has even more expansive plans, with a strategic vision to rehabilitate an additional 172 PHCs. This phased approach demonstrates a long-term commitment to ensuring widespread access to modern, well-equipped healthcare facilities across all 23 local government areas. The sheer number of facilities targeted for intervention highlights a pragmatic understanding of the geographical spread and the historical neglect that many rural health posts have endured. This comprehensive rehabilitation effort aims to equip these centres with state-of-the-art medical equipment, transforming them into truly functional and impactful healthcare hubs.

The financial commitment underpinning these projects is substantial. The state has launched a revitalisation project valued at over seven billion naira for the 118 facilities mentioned in the initial overview, and a N1.6 billion project specifically for the revitalisation of



22 PHCs across five Local Government Areas, focusing on construction, rehabilitation, and renovation. While the exact interplay between the N7 billion and N1.6 billion figures requires further granular detail, it is clear that significant capital is being injected into the PHC sector, a testament to the Governor's prioritisation of health. These investments are crucial for addressing the identified gaps in medical equipment and supplies, ensuring that PHCs are well-equipped to provide essential services, thereby moving the state from a foundational 'level one' to a more advanced 'level two' of PHC functionality.

Tangible Transformations: Features of the Revitalised PHCs

The revitalisation efforts in Benue are not merely about cosmetic changes; they involve profound infrastructural and functional upgrades designed to dramatically improve the patient experience and healthcare delivery capabilities. Each health centre undergoing rehabilitation is being meticulously equipped with features that address critical needs and ensure 24-hour service availability.

Key features of these upgraded PHCs include:

- At least two consulting rooms: Providing adequate private spaces for patient consultations, enhancing confidentiality and efficiency.
- Male and female inpatient wards: Allowing for short-term admissions and observation, particularly for patients requiring more intensive care than a basic outpatient service.
- A fully equipped laboratory: A crucial addition for accurate and timely diagnostics at the primary level, reducing the need for referrals to distant secondary facilities.
- A modern delivery ward: A paramount feature, directly addressing maternal and child health outcomes. As the Commissioner for Health and Human Service, Dr. Yanmar Ortese, succinctly put it, the goal is to ensure that "any pregnant woman who comes here for delivery will do so and come out alive with her baby." This focus on safe delivery is a direct, evidence-based intervention against maternal mortality.
- A dispensary or pharmacy: Ensuring immediate access to essential medicines and reducing the burden of sourcing drugs from external, often distant, pharmacies.
- Two one-bedroom apartments for staff working night shifts: This is a particularly pragmatic and vital feature. Addressing the shortage of medical personnel in rural areas often hinges on providing conducive living conditions. These on-site accommodations ensure 24-hour service availability, a critical factor for emergency medical response and continuous patient care, especially during night hours. Beyond these internal enhancements, the projects also encompass significant external infrastructure improvements:
- At least two standard toilets (for staff and patients): Promoting hygiene and dignity.
- A separate toilet for physically challenged individuals, with a ramp and handrails for easy access: Demonstrating an inclusive approach to healthcare access, ensuring facilities are usable by all members of the community.

- A perimeter fence with a gate and gatehouse for security: Enhancing safety for both staff and patients, and protecting valuable government assets from vandalism.
- A motorised solar-powered borehole for clean water supply: Ensuring a consistent and sustainable source of potable water, vital for hygiene, sanitation, and clinical procedures, reducing reliance on erratic public water systems.
- Solar-powered electricity to ensure uninterrupted services: A critical provision that guarantees continuous operation of medical equipment, lighting, and refrigeration for vaccines, even in areas with unreliable grid electricity. These detailed specifications for each revitalised centre highlight a comprehensive and thoughtful approach to PHC development, moving beyond mere renovation to creating truly functional, safe, and accessible healthcare environments.

Strategic Partnerships and Funding Mechanisms: Propelling Progress

The ambitious scale of Benue's PHC revitalisation is made possible through a robust framework of strategic partnerships and diversified funding mechanisms. The state government understands that achieving universal health coverage requires a collaborative ecosystem, bringing together expertise and resources from various sectors.

The primary funding for the PHC revitalisation projects stems from a crucial partnership with the World Bank's Immunisation Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services (IMPACT) Project. This international collaboration provides substantial financial and technical support, ensuring that the projects adhere to global best practices and achieve sustainable outcomes. The involvement of the World Bank underscores the credibility and strategic importance of Benue's healthcare agenda.

Complementing the IMPACT Project, the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund (BHCPF) plays a vital role. Facilitated by the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), the BHCPF is a national fund designed to provide a minimum package of health services to all Nigerians. Benue's effective utilisation of these funds is critical for sustaining the operations of the revitalised PHCs, covering costs associated with essential drugs, consumables, and basic human resources.

The funding strategy for these PHC revitalisation projects is meticulously structured. Each facility undergoing

rehabilitation is earmarked to receive at least N80 million for renovations. Specifically, N268,610,171.20 has been allocated for the rehabilitation of six facilities under the BHCPF, while the IMPACT project will renovate the remaining 98 facilities. Mrs. Grace Ashi Wende, Executive Secretary of the State Primary Healthcare Board, confirmed that the World Bank-funded renovations will follow a competitive bidding process, ensuring transparency and value for money, while the Federal Government funds will adhere to strict Public Procurement guidelines. This commitment to transparent procurement processes is a pragmatic measure to ensure efficient use of resources and prevent corruption.

Furthermore, the foresight of the administration is evident in the fact that bills of quantities have been prepared for all 276 BHCPF facilities, even though only 104 facilities are currently being renovated. This proactive planning ensures that additional partners, government bodies, or individuals interested in funding future renovations can easily access the necessary documentation, thereby facilitating future expansion and sustainability of the PHC network.

Addressing Human Capital and Quality Assurance: The Bedrock of Service Delivery

While infrastructural upgrades are vital, the human element remains the most critical component of effective healthcare. Benue State's PHC development projects are keenly focused on addressing the historical challenges of medical personnel shortages and ensuring high-quality service delivery.

A 2024 report by BudgIT had starkly highlighted the dire situation: only a small percentage of health facilities in Benue had even one general medical doctor, nurse, or midwife. Governor Alia's administration is directly tackling this by creating more conducive working environments within the revitalised PHCs, particularly through the provision of staff accommodations. This pragmatic incentive is crucial for attracting and

retaining qualified healthcare professionals, especially in rural areas where accommodation can be a significant deterrent. The goal is to ensure that "there would be a personnel to attend to a patient" even late at night, a direct response to the historical lack of 24-hour service.

The Commissioner for Health and Human Services, Dr. Yanmar Ortese, stressed the importance of adequate primary healthcare facilities, noting that the ultimate goal is to ensure that patients can consult doctors whenever they visit the centres. This implies a commitment not just to physical presence but to the availability of skilled medical expertise at the primary level.

To ensure the quality and integrity of the projects, routine supervision is being conducted by dedicated teams from both the Benue State Government and the NPHCDA. This meticulous monitoring process, involving officials like Engineer Mukhtari Haladu (BSPHCB) and Abdullahi Chiroma (NPHCDA), assesses the level of project compliance, identifies any challenges, and ensures that the revitalisation efforts are on track to achieve their objectives. This continuous quality improvement mechanism is a research-based strategy for strengthening health systems, fostering a culture of excellence, and ensuring that the substantial investments translate into tangible improvements in patient care.

Community Engagement and Sustainability: Securing the Future of Benue's Health

The transformative strides in Benue's primary healthcare are not isolated government endeavours but are deeply ingrained in a philosophy of robust Community Engagement and a clear focus on long-term Sustainability. The state government recognises that the success and longevity of these vital projects hinge on the active participation and ownership of the communities they serve.

During the groundbreaking ceremony for the rehabilitation of the PHC in Akpegede, Otukpo LGA, the Executive Secretary of the BSPHCB, Mrs. Grace Wende, passionately urged the communities where the PHCs are located to protect them as their own. "Because it belongs to you and it will serve you for better healthcare service delivery in your communities," she stated. This call for community ownership is a pragmatic and research-based strategy, recognising that the long-term viability of public infrastructure hinges on local involvement and protection against vandalism.

The response from local leadership has been overwhelmingly positive, indicating that this message is resonating. The traditional ruler of Otukpo, the Och'Otukpo Odu, Chief John Eimonye, represented by Chief Ben Onyelokwu, expressed profound gratitude to the government for the intervention and assured that the people would provide the necessary security to ensure uninterrupted work at the facilities. Similarly, the Otukpo Local Government Council Chairman, Mr. Maxwell Ogiri, represented by the Councillor Secretary, Simon Enyi, lauded Governor Alia for making the project a reality and urged the people to ensure that work on the PHCs proceeded without hitches. This strong community buy-in and commitment to safeguarding the facilities are crucial for their sustained operation.

The Special Adviser to the Governor on Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Mr. Denen Aondoakaa, further assured that his office would "ceaselessly continue to support the Benue State Primary Healthcare Board, BSPHCDB, in every way possible to ensure top-notch healthcare delivery in the rural communities." This commitment from local government structures reinforces the multi-tiered support system for PHC.

The World Health Organization (WHO) State Coordinator, Dr. Abdulkarim Mohammed, represented by Susan Ikwebe, also assured that the global organisation would continue to provide its technical support in healthcare service delivery, urging the people to always visit the revitalised facilities for their health needs. This ongoing technical partnership is vital for ensuring that Benue's PHC system remains aligned with international best practices and benefits from global expertise.

With these comprehensive initiatives, Governor Hyacinth Alia is firmly reinforcing his administration's commitment to accessible, affordable, and quality healthcare for all in Benue State. The focus on revitalisation, infrastructural upgrades, human resource development, and community ownership paints a clear picture of a state building a resilient and equitable health system for generations to come.

Benue's Blueprint for a Healthier Future

Benue State, under the determined leadership of Governor Hyacinth Alia, is undeniably forging a magnificent path in primary healthcare development. The sheer scale of the PHC revitalisation projects, targeting hundreds of facilities for upgrade to Level II standard, is a testament to an administration that is not shying away from the significant investment required to transform its health sector. This commitment is evident in the tangible improvements: modern facilities, reliable solar power, consistent water supply, comfortable staff quarters, and fully equipped delivery wards, all designed to enhance service delivery and attract skilled personnel to previously underserved areas.

The state's pragmatic approach is further highlighted by its direct confrontation of historical challenges, such as chronic underfunding and severe personnel shortages. By focusing on maternal and child health, strengthening the overall PHC system through manpower development and improved data collection, and fostering genuine community participation, Benue is building a health system that is both responsive and sustainable. Rigorous monitoring by state and national agencies ensures accountability and quality, while local ownership by traditional and religious leaders secures the longevity of these vital projects.

Benue's journey is a compelling narrative of how political will, strategic partnerships, and a comprehensive, evidence-based approach can lead to profound and lasting improvements in primary healthcare. The state is not just improving health outcomes; it is building a resilient, equitable, and high-quality PHC system that serves as a powerful blueprint for other subnational entities across Nigeria and beyond. This is a true health renaissance, promising a healthier and more prosperous future for all residents of Benue State.



NGF SECRETARIAT: SUPPORTING SUBNATIONAL GOVERNANCE



The NGF Health Department works assiduously to align state governors and top health officials with national health policies, leveraging evidence-based data for engagement and advocacy

sought to integrate all PHC services under a single, unified authority.

Key elements of PHCUOR, meticulously promoted by the NGF Secretariat, include:

Integration of all PHC services delivered under one authority through streamlining management and resource allocation.

The PHCUOR promotes the establishment of a single management structure with adequate capacity that ensures effective control over human and financial resources.

It also empowers local structures for responsive service delivery.

Through relentless advocacy, peer learning activities, and the provision of technical assistance, the NGF health team ensures local commitment and ownership of health and development projects by governors and top health officials across all 36 states. The team serves as an indispensable interface between national and international health stakeholders and state governments, promoting uniform policy implementation at the sub-national level.

To this end, the NGF health team facilitated the establishment and supports

the Nigeria Health Commissioners' Forum that fosters a community of practice that strives for consistency in healthcare coverage across the diverse subnational environment.

The results of this concerted effort include the establishment of State Primary Healthcare Boards, State Health Insurance Agencies, State Committees on Food and Nutrition across the 36 states. In fact 2/3 of states now have Drug Management Agencies and most states now have PHC task-forces chaired by the Deputy Governors.

While the headlines often focus on the individual triumphs and challenges of Nigeria's 36 state governors, a powerful, largely unsung force works tirelessly behind the scenes, orchestrating a silent revolution in subnational governance. This force is the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), a non-partisan policy hub that has become indispensable in aligning state-level initiatives with national development goals, particularly in critical sectors like primary healthcare.

Its remarkable work, often out of the public eye, is profoundly impacting the daily lives of millions of Nigerians, ensuring better health outcomes and more accountable governance across the federation.

Many may not be fully conversant with the profound reach of the NGF Secretariat, yet its fingerprints are all over some of Nigeria's most significant developmental strides. From spearheading the eradication of polio to driving the widespread

adoption of standardised healthcare policies, the Secretariat acts as the vital bridge between federal aspirations and state-level implementation, fostering an environment of peer learning, technical assistance, and strategic collaboration.

THE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

A significant driver of the NGF Secretariat's success in galvanizing state performance is the Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge. This innovative initiative, designed to incentivise the implementation of the Seattle declaration on PHC, is meticulously domesticated by the Secretariat in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health, Gates Foundation, Aliko Dangote Foundation, NPHCDA and UNICEF. This creates a healthy competition among governors and is a powerful mechanism where supreme performance in PHC delivery is not only observed and acknowledged, but handsomely rewarded.

This challenge has proven to be a significant confidence booster, creating a virtuous cycle of improvement. While twelve states have been publicly rewarded for their exceptional performances, these states are recognized as "first among equals." The Secretariat prides itself on the fact that the disparity between the awardees and the rest is minimal, indicating a widespread uplift in PHC delivery across the board. This speaks volumes about the NGF's ability to drive systemic change, rather

At the heart of the NGF's health mandate is a deep commitment to Primary Health Care (PHC). This is not merely a policy preference but a strategic imperative, given PHC's fundamental role as the first point of contact for citizens seeking healthcare and its unparalleled ability to cater to the needs of the most vulnerable in society.

The NGF Health Department works assiduously to align state governors and top health officials with national health policies, leveraging evidence-based data for engagement and advocacy. Their focus extends beyond PHC to encompass Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and robust health financing mechanisms, but PHC remains the undisputed core activity, truly dignifying the slogan of "health for all."

The historical context of PHC in Nigeria reveals a pervasive issue of fragmentation, where multiple authorities often managed different aspects of PHC services, leading to inefficiencies and poor utilisation rates.

To combat this, the NGF championed and facilitated the implementation of the Primary Health Care Under One Roof (PHCUOR) policy. This transformative initiative, developed by the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) and partners,



than isolated successes.

The Multifaceted Role of the NGF Secretariat in Subnational Governance

While primary healthcare is a shining example, the NGF Secretariat's influence extends far beyond the health sector. Its core functions are designed to strengthen subnational governance across a wide spectrum of public policy areas:

POLICY HUB AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT ENGINE: The Secretariat acts as a central repository of knowledge, providing administrative, research, and technical support to governors. It develops "How-To Guides" in critical governance areas such as Policy and Strategy/Monitoring and Evaluation, Public Financial Management, and Human Resource Management, encouraging states to adopt proven approaches for better governance and improved development performance.

PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: The NGF advocates for principles of transparency, accountability, and effective governance practices across Nigerian states. It designs and implements state-level scorecards to engage governors on key policy issues, including nutrition scorecard, health insurance scorecard and PHC system strengthening scorecard among many others. The NGF Nutrition Scorecard, for instance, holds governors accountable to key nutrition commitments, motivating action through data visualisation and tailored recommendations.



NGF Chairman, Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq

Furthermore, the National Council on Nutrition has adopted and upscaled it to the National Nutrition Scorecard. The Secretariat also engages with bodies like the Financial Reporting Council (FRC) to enhance transparency and accountability in the public sector.

FACILITATING PEER LEARNING AND BEST PRACTICE SHARING: A fundamental aspect of the NGF's work is providing a platform for governors to exchange successful strategies and ideas. Through retreats, workshops, and direct technical assistance (via its HelpDesk), the Secretariat fosters an environment where states can learn from each other's experiences, replicate successes, and collaboratively address common developmental challenges. The State Peer Review Mechanism (SPRM), launched in 2009, stands as a flagship program, enabling states to elevate their governance through meticulous reviews and inter-state dialogues.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS AND POLICY

COORDINATION: The NGF serves as a crucial forum for dialogue and coordination between state and federal governments, fostering a more cooperative form of federalism. It allows governors to leverage their collective strength to shape national policy decisions, influence national politics, and negotiate on issues such as minimum wage and resource allocation.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT: The Secretariat understands that effective governance requires skilled personnel. It supports states in improving their human resource management, developing policies, structures, and training programs that build the capacity and manage the performance of civil servants to deliver strategic objectives. Initiatives like the "Sustained Secretariat Support for Cross-Sector Engagement in Human Capital" project highlight this focus.

STRATEGIC INDUCTIONS FOR NEW



GOVERNORS: The NGF Secretariat plays a vital role in easing the transition for newly elected and returning governors through comprehensive induction programs. These programs offer platforms for peer learning, policy orientation, and engagement with critical stakeholders, aiming to strengthen leadership effectiveness and continuity across subnational governments.

CATALYST FOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS: The NGF partners with organisations like the World Bank on initiatives such as the State Action on Business Enabling Reforms (SABER) Program which replaced the States Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability (SFTAS) Programme for Results. The Secretariat provides technical assistance, advisory support, and guidance to states to meet reform requirements and

access performance-based grants, ultimately improving business environments and public financial management at the subnational level.

THE LEGACY OF INVISIBLE IMPACT

It is on record that the NGF holds the credit for Nigeria's remarkable achievement of being wiped off the global polio map, a testament to its coordination and advocacy capabilities. This singular success story encapsulates the broader impact of the NGF Secretariat. While the public often sees the governors, it is the dedicated team at the Secretariat that provides the foundational intelligence, technical guidance, and a facilitating platform that empowers these leaders to deliver tangible results.

It is on record that the NGF holds the credit for Nigeria's remarkable achievement of being wiped off the global polio map, a testament to its coordination and advocacy capabilities



DG. NGF, Abdulateef Shittu

Kwara's Bold Strides in Transforming Primary Healthcare



Under the dynamic leadership of Governor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, Kwara State is experiencing a profound transformation in its primary healthcare (PHC) sector. Through strategic investments, targeted interventions, and robust partnerships, the state is making significant strides in ensuring that quality, affordable healthcare services are accessible to all, particularly focusing on maternal and child health and driving down mortality rates. Kwara's unwavering commitment to revitalizing its health infrastructure and empowering its workforce is not just a promise; it's a tangible reality that has earned the state national recognition for its exemplary progress. This isn't just about statistics; it's about making a real difference in the lives of Kwarans, from expectant mothers to young children and the elderly.

A Multi-Pronged Approach to Facility Renovation and Upgrade: Building the Foundation of Care

The bedrock of Kwara's healthcare revolution lies in the extensive renovation and upgrading of Primary Healthcare Centres across various local government areas. This comprehensive effort reflects a deep understanding that functional, well-equipped facilities are often the first, and sometimes only, point of contact for citizens seeking essential healthcare services. Notable examples include the revitalized PHCs in Tanke, Mawokpan, and Afon, which now serve as beacons of improved access and quality care within their communities. These renovations are not superficial; they encompass structural integrity, improved layouts, and a more conducive environment for both patients and healthcare providers.

This commitment to infrastructure development is not a one-off event, but rather an ongoing, ambitious program. The state has embarked on a large-scale project to upgrade 70 PHC facilities across its three senatorial districts to Level 2 PHCs, at an impressive cost of N5 billion. Professor Nusirat Elelu, the astute Executive Secretary of the Kwara State Primary Health Care Development Agency (KWSPHCDA), highlighted the comprehensive nature of this intervention during the contract signing ceremony. Beyond mere infrastructural upgrades,

the initiative includes solarization to ensure reliable power supply, the provision of staff quarters to attract and retain healthcare professionals in remote areas, guaranteed potable water supply for hygiene and patient needs, and the supply of ultra-modern hospital equipment across all benefiting PHC facilities.

The overall objective, as Prof. Elelu succinctly explained, is to make all PHC facilities "fit for purpose" – ensuring they are fully capable of serving as effective first contacts for people at the grassroots level within the national health system. This monumental initiative is substantially supported by the World Bank-backed Immunisation Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services (IMPACTS) project, a testament to Kwara's ability to attract and leverage international partnerships due to its demonstrated commitment.

Building on past successes, Prof. Elelu also noted that 53 PHCs had already undergone prior renovation, with nine more currently undergoing upgrades, illustrating a continuous and sustained effort to enhance healthcare

access statewide. Governor AbdulRazaq's commitment is unwavering, with plans to upgrade even more facilities in the near future, ensuring no community is left behind. Furthermore, the state government, through the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF), continues to flag off renovations of additional PHCs, such as Adana PHC in Kaiama Local Government Area, Budo Egba PHC in Asa Local Government Area, and Oke-Onigbin PHC in Isin Local Government Area. These efforts are directly bringing quality healthcare services even closer to previously underserved and remote communities. The strong buy-in and ownership from community leaders, such as Oba Kamaldeen Salawudeen of Oke-Onigbin and Alhaji Ibrahim Ahmed of Budo-Egba, who have expressed their profound appreciation and pledged full support, are crucial indicators of the projects' likely success and sustainability. This collaborative spirit, where communities actively participate and take ownership, is a hallmark of Governor AbdulRazaq's approach to grassroots development.

Equipping for Excellence: Modern Tools for Better Outcomes and Enhanced Service Delivery

Beyond investing in the physical structures, Kwara State has made significant and strategic investments in equipping its PHCs with the latest medical and laboratory tools. This is a crucial step towards enhancing diagnostic capabilities and ensuring effective treatment at the primary care level, thereby reducing the need for costly and often distant referrals. These procurements are directly translating into improved patient care and more accurate health assessments. Specific notable investments include:

Laboratory equipment in 193 PHCs: This enhances the ability to conduct basic but essential diagnostic tests, crucial for identifying common ailments and guiding treatment protocols.

30 ultrasound scan machines: This represents a revolutionary addition to antenatal care, allowing for early and regular monitoring of pregnancies, which is vital for reducing maternal and infant mortality.

73 outreach tricycles and 186 outreach motorcycles: These indispensable tools empower healthcare workers to navigate challenging terrains and reach even the most remote communities, ensuring crucial outreach services like immunization



campaigns, health education, and follow-up visits are conducted effectively.

186 desktop computers: This investment boosts data management capabilities, enabling more efficient record-keeping, disease surveillance, and better health management information systems.

72 boreholes: Providing vital access to clean and potable water sources directly at health facilities, which is fundamental for sanitation, hygiene, and overall public health.

These extensive equipment procurements are largely facilitated through the World Bank IMPACTS project, which demonstrates trust in Kwara's financial prudence and commitment. Notably, each benefiting PHC received a substantial N4.6 million disbursed directly into their accounts. This direct funding model ensures remarkable autonomy and responsiveness to local demands, empowering individual PHCs to invest in what truly matters most for their specific communities, based on their needs assessments and approved investment plans. The Kwara State Primary Health Care Development Agency (KWSPHCDA) has affirmed that these funds are being utilized for facility upgrades, purchase of equipment, and other items critical for strengthening basic healthcare services at the grassroots.

Investing in Human Capital: The Bedrock of Quality Care and Sustainable Progress

Recognizing that modern facilities are only as good as the professionals operating them, Governor AbdulRazaq's administration has made staff recruitment and continuous training a top priority. This commitment is aimed at strengthening the healthcare workforce and enhancing overall service delivery across the state. The state has actively recruited a diverse range of healthcare professionals, including medical officers, midwives, and nurses, to fill critical gaps, reduce workload, and boost capacity at the grassroots level. This systematic approach ensures that the renovated and equipped facilities are adequately staffed with skilled personnel.

A particularly impactful initiative has been the recent training of 193 healthcare workers on the use of Partograph. This vital graphical tool for monitoring labor progress is instrumental in the early detection of complications during childbirth, allowing for timely interventions. Its widespread adoption across the state is a direct, evidence-based strategy to further reduce maternal mortality rates, a key health indicator for



Powering Progress:

Plateau's Renewed Commitment to PHC

Plateau State is actively embarking on a robust transformation of its primary healthcare (PHC) landscape, demonstrating a profound commitment to enhancing health access and delivery across its diverse communities. Under the leadership of Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutswang, the state is addressing long-standing challenges in its healthcare system through a multi-pronged approach that includes significant infrastructure upgrades, innovative power solutions, strategic workforce recruitment, and essential maternal health interventions. These concerted efforts are laying a solid foundation for a more resilient, accessible, and efficient primary healthcare system that directly benefits citizens at the grassroots level.

Rebuilding the Foundation: Renovation and Upgrade of 82 PHCs

A cornerstone of the Plateau State Government's commitment to primary healthcare is the extensive renovation and upgrade of 82 PHCs across the state's 17 Local Government Areas (LGAs). This ambitious initiative directly addresses the dilapidated state of many facilities that were barely functional. Governor Mutswang revealed that upon his administration's assumption of office, less than 5% of the over 1,000 PHCs in the state were operational. This stark reality underscored the urgent need for a comprehensive overhaul, prompting the swift awarding of contracts for these 82 PHC renovations.

The objective of this widespread upgrade is clear: to significantly improve the infrastructure and functionality of these vital healthcare facilities. By enhancing the physical environment, the state aims to create more conducive and effective spaces for healthcare delivery, encouraging both patients to seek care and health workers to perform their duties efficiently. This foundational investment in infrastructure is critical for the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the PHC system. The Governor expressed

confidence that by the end of 2025, more primary healthcare centers in the state will become fully functional, marking a significant improvement in the state's healthcare capacity.

Illuminating Care: The Nigeria Solar for Health Project (NISHP)

Perhaps one of the most transformative initiatives in Plateau State's PHC development is the implementation of the Nigeria Solar for Health Project (NISHP). This innovative project, generously supported by the European Union (EU), is set to provide solar power to over 25 Primary Healthcare Centres across all 17 LGAs of the state. Governor Mutswang, who personally inaugurated the project's Steering Committee, emphasized the critical role of uninterrupted power supply in modern healthcare.

Electricity is indispensable for operating essential diagnostic machines, ensuring the proper storage of temperature-sensitive vaccines, and preserving vital medicines. Without a steady power source, even newly renovated PHCs cannot function optimally, particularly during night hours or in remote areas prone to grid instability. Mrs. Inga Stephanowicz, Head of Section, Green and Digital Economy, EU-Nigeria, highlighted that research indicates only 40% of functional PHCs in Nigeria currently have regular power supply, a trend the NISHP project aims to reverse. She commended the Plateau State Government for fulfilling its obligation by providing the 30% counterpart funding for this initiative, demonstrating the state's strong commitment.

Mr. Tinyan Ogiehor, Senior Stakeholders Engagement Manager of NISHP, elaborated on the project's broad impact. Beyond simply powering the PHCs, the initiative will establish solar mini-grids

that will also enhance the operations of 75 small businesses located within these facilities. This innovative approach provides a dual benefit: strengthening healthcare services while simultaneously boosting local economic activities around the PHCs, creating a symbiotic relationship that supports community development. For this initial phase, at least one PHC in each LGA will benefit from the NISHP project.

Furthermore, in a strategic move towards sustainable energy solutions, Stephanowicz also revealed plans for the construction of a hydro-solar power plant at Assop Falls in Riyom LGA. This larger-scale clean energy project will complement the solar energy supply to healthcare facilities, ensuring a more robust and resilient power infrastructure for the state's health sector in the long run. The NISHP project aligns perfectly with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by providing basic health, community services, and electrification needed for people to live healthy lives and raise families.

Strengthening the Backbone: Recruitment of Health Workforce

Recognizing that infrastructure alone is insufficient without a competent and adequate workforce, the Plateau State Government is actively pursuing the recruitment of additional healthcare professionals. This critical initiative aims to strengthen the human capital at both PHCs and General Hospitals across the state. The recruitment drive includes various positions within the Hospital Management Board and the Primary Health Care Board, ensuring a comprehensive approach to addressing manpower shortages.

A functional PHC relies heavily on the availability of skilled personnel, from doctors and nurses to community health extension workers and laboratory technicians. By investing in its health workforce, the government is ensuring that the revitalized facilities are adequately staffed to provide quality services. This commitment to human resources is fundamental to improving patient care outcomes and sustaining the long-term effectiveness of the state's healthcare system.

Targeted Expansion and Strategic Programs: Holistic Healthcare Development

Plateau State's commitment to PHC extends to strategic expansions and the implementation of impactful health programs.

Wase PHC Upgrade: The government is giving serious consideration to upgrading the Wase Primary Health Care (PHC) facility to a Cottage, Comprehensive, or General Hospital. This is a direct response to a request for an increased healthcare presence in the area, particularly following the elevation of the Wase General Hospital to a Federal Medical Centre. This upgrade will be determined by the existing infrastructure and the specific healthcare needs of the community, demonstrating a flexible and responsive



approach to local demands for higher-level care. This move ensures that while the federal facility serves a broader regional purpose, the local population of Wase still has robust access to essential services.

HOPE-PHC Program: The government is implementing the Human Capital Opportunity Prosperity and Equity (HOPE) Program, a comprehensive initiative that includes several key components aimed at revitalizing healthcare. This program focuses on: * Revitalizing healthcare facilities: Complementing the 82 PHC renovations, this ensures a broader and more sustained focus on infrastructure. * Increasing the availability of essential medicines: Addressing drug stock-outs is crucial for effective treatment and patient confidence in the PHC system. * Strengthening community health services: This aspect emphasizes preventative care, health education, and outreach programs that directly engage communities in their own health and well-being.

Safer Births and Maternal Health Kits: In a significant effort to combat maternal and infant mortality, Dr. Nicholas Baamlong, Plateau State Commissioner for Health, announced the procurement and distribution of 48,000 mama kits. These kits, which contain essential delivery supplies such as sanitary pads, gloves, disinfectants, and baby clothing, are being distributed free of charge. This initiative is designed to: * Encourage more pregnant women to seek antenatal care: Providing these kits acts as an incentive, drawing women into the formal healthcare system for crucial pre-natal services. * Increase the number of women who choose to deliver in hospitals: By making essential delivery supplies readily available and promoting institutional births, the state aims to reduce home deliveries conducted in unsafe conditions, thereby improving maternal and infant health outcomes significantly. This direct intervention is a powerful tool in saving lives and improving reproductive health indicators.

The Plateau State Government, under Governor Caleb Manasseh Mutfwang, is demonstrating a strong, multi-pronged, and determined commitment to enhancing healthcare services at the grassroots level. By simultaneously embarking on the extensive renovation of 82 PHCs, pioneering solar power solutions for over 25 PHCs through NISHP, undertaking strategic recruitment of health professionals, and implementing vital programs like the HOPE-PHC initiative and the distribution of mama kits, the state is systematically addressing the core challenges of healthcare access and quality. These initiatives are not just about building facilities; they are about building a more resilient health system, ensuring that citizens across Plateau State have access to quality, affordable, and uninterrupted healthcare services, particularly in rural and underserved areas. The synergy between infrastructure, technology, human resources, and targeted health interventions positions Plateau State on a promising trajectory towards universal health coverage and improved population health outcomes.

Jigawa: Collaborating for Primary Healthcare Success



Jigawa State, a vibrant and largely agrarian state in Nigeria's North-West, has historically contended with significant public health challenges. Like many regions across the nation, it faced issues ranging from limited access to healthcare facilities, particularly in remote areas, to low immunization coverage and high rates of maternal and child mortality. These challenges often meant that preventable diseases led to severe outcomes, and vulnerable populations struggled to access even the most basic medical attention.

However, under the leadership of Governor Mallam Umar Namadi, Jigawa State has embarked on a remarkable and transformative journey in its primary healthcare (PHC) sector. The state's commitment to strengthening routine immunization services, improving access to healthcare for vulnerable populations, and enhancing overall infrastructure and service delivery has positioned it as a beacon of progress in the national drive towards Universal Health Coverage



(UHC). This impressive stride is not merely a result of state-level initiatives but is significantly bolstered by strategic partnerships and the invaluable support and advocacy of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) Secretariat.

A Foundation of Immunization: The GAVI-MOU Success Story

One of Jigawa State's most celebrated accomplishments in primary healthcare is its dramatic improvement in routine immunization coverage. The state has been consistently recognized for its sustained investment in this critical area, largely facilitated by its adherence to the GAVI-MOU (Memorandum of Understanding). This partnership with GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, has been instrumental in revolutionizing the state's immunization landscape.

According to Dr. Shehu Sambo, the Director of Primary Health Care in Jigawa State, the immunization uptake witnessed an astounding increase from a mere seven percent in 2016 to 49 percent in 2021 for Penta 3 coverage. This seven-fold increase is, as Dr. Sambo noted, "unheard of in Jigawa," given that the state had never before achieved double-digit immunization coverage. This monumental leap can be attributed to several strategic interventions. Jigawa has significantly strengthened its cold chain system, crucial for maintaining vaccine efficacy. This



includes the procurement and installation of essential equipment such as walk-in cold rooms, freezers, and Solar Direct Drive refrigerators. Furthermore, logistical support for vaccine distribution has been enhanced with the provision of three new vehicles, ensuring that vaccines reach even the most remote communities.

Beyond infrastructure, the state has invested heavily in human resources for immunization. The GAVI PHC MoU project, a three-year partnership, led to the recruitment and integration of 330 personnel into the government workforce, with an additional 924 recruited by the state government. This influx of dedicated healthcare workers, coupled with innovative strategies like "state outreach on immunization" and "health ambassador innovation," has been pivotal. The state has also seen 70% (416,250) of adolescent girls vaccinated against Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and a fourfold increase in measles vaccination coverage, underscoring a comprehensive approach to preventive health. Addressing vaccine noncompliance has also been a key focus, with the state actively analyzing contributing factors and implementing targeted interventions to overcome community resistance and misinformation.

J-Basic Healthcare Services: A Safety Net for the Vulnerable

Understanding that financial barriers often impede access to healthcare for the poorest, Jigawa State officially launched the J-Basic Healthcare Services for Vulnerable Citizens on October 1st, 2024. This transformative initiative, flagged off by Governor Mallam Umar Namadi, represents a historic commitment to healthcare equity.

With an investment of N1.5 billion, the program aims to provide free and accessible comprehensive healthcare services—both treatment and preventive—to 143,500 carefully selected beneficiaries across all 287 political wards in the state, with 500 individuals enrolled per ward. Dr. Abdullahi Muhammad Kainuwa, the Commissioner of Health, emphasized that this program is built upon the foundation of the State Health Equity Programme, designed to deliver high-quality services to the poorest and most vulnerable. "This initiative reflects our state's unwavering commitment to addressing healthcare disparities and reducing inequalities within

our communities," he stated. The transparent and inclusive selection process, involving community leaders and civil society organizations, ensures that the program reaches those who need it most. The long-term vision extends beyond saving lives; it aims to empower individuals and communities by reducing health-related poverty, enabling greater productivity, regular school attendance for children, and overall economic thriving for families.

Infrastructure Development: Building Functional PHCs

Jigawa's commitment to robust primary healthcare is visibly manifested in its infrastructure development. The state has earned recognition for having some of the most functional Primary Healthcare Centers (PHCs), particularly in areas like Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) and overall service delivery. This functionality is a direct result of significant investment.

The Jigawa State Government has approved a substantial N9.78 billion for the revitalization of 114 ward-level PHCs across the state. This initiative is part of Governor Namadi's broader commitment to achieving Universal Health Coverage and improving access to quality healthcare services in all 27 local government areas. The project is being funded and implemented under the World Bank's Immunization Plus and Malaria Progress for Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services (IMPACT) Programme, which focuses on enhancing immunization coverage, reducing malaria incidence, and strengthening health systems at the grassroots.

Furthermore, the state's dedication to infrastructure is exemplified by the commissioning of a N200 million state-of-the-art primary healthcare hospital in Yayari Ward, Hadejia city. This facility, personally initiated and funded by the senator representing Jigawa Northeast Senatorial District, was lauded by Governor Namadi as a "solid, high-standard project that could stand even in Abuja." The Governor noted that this donation perfectly aligns with the state's ongoing plan to establish one primary healthcare clinic in each of the 281 political wards, with approximately 70% of this ambitious target already achieved.

Human Resources for Health: Empowering the Frontline

A strong healthcare system is only as good as its workforce. Jigawa State has implemented a comprehensive human resources strategy to ensure its PHCs are adequately staffed and skilled. This includes a performance management system for health workers, notably the Annual Performance and Evaluation Report System (APER), which is linked to recruitment, development, and career progression. This system aims to incentivize performance and ensure continuous professional growth.

The impact of these HR initiatives is evident in the significant increase in skilled personnel. Beyond the 330 personnel integrated through the GAVI PHC MoU and the 924 recruited by the state government, the number of midwives working in the PHC setting has surged from about 120 to over 500. This substantial increase has had a direct positive correlation with Skilled Birth Attendance (SBA), which has risen from less than 20% to almost 60%. As Dr. Sambo highlighted, when women deliver in well-run facilities with skilled attendants, they are more likely to bring their children for immunization and postnatal care, creating a positive cycle of health.

Community Engagement and Strategic Partnerships

Jigawa State's success is deeply rooted in its emphasis on community participation and robust partnerships. The state has actively involved community structures, such as Village and Ward Health Committees, to decentralize Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (MNCH) services. This approach fosters local ownership and ensures that health initiatives are tailored to community needs. Traditional rulers and religious institutions have played a crucial role in advocating for and increasing public awareness and support for health programs, particularly immunization.

The state's commitment to citizen engagement is further demonstrated by the approval of a Special Citizen Engagement Programme, "Gwamnati da Jamma'a" (Government and Community). This initiative will organize town hall meetings across all 27 local government areas, providing a direct platform for the governor and government officials to interact with citizens, promote engagement in shaping their future, and inform them about development projects.

Jigawa State collaborates extensively with international partners, including UNICEF, WHO, and the FCDO-funded LAFIYA Program, among others. These collaborations provide essential technical support, funding, and expertise, enabling the state to implement large-scale health initiatives like the MNCH2 programme and the IMPACT project.

Other Notable Initiatives

Beyond these core pillars, Jigawa State has implemented other crucial healthcare initiatives. The Pneumo-Watch project, for instance, has focused on improving access to medical oxygen in hospitals, a vital resource for pediatric, accident & emergency, and intensive care units. The state has also embarked on the construction of new general hospitals and the provision of free dialysis services for renal patients, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to healthcare that extends beyond primary care to address specialized medical needs.

The Indispensable Role of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) Secretariat

The remarkable strides made by Jigawa State in PHC development are a testament to its proactive governance, but they are also significantly propelled by the strategic influence and support of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) Secretariat. The NGF acts as a crucial coordinating body, facilitating a national push for healthcare reform and providing a platform for states to learn, collaborate, and access vital resources.

The NGF's contributions to Jigawa's PHC success are multifaceted:

Policy Advocacy and Prioritization: The NGF consistently advocates for increased investment and policy prioritization of primary healthcare at both federal and state levels. This advocacy creates a conducive environment for governors like Mallam Umar Namadi to champion ambitious PHC agendas and allocate substantial state budgets to health. Jigawa's allocation of N879.25 million to healthcare, representing 15.6% of its budget, is a strong indicator of this prioritization, aligning with the NGF's encouragement for states to increase health spending.

Facilitating Partnerships and Resource Mobilization: The NGF plays a pivotal role in brokering and formalizing partnerships between states and international development partners. The GAVI-PHC MoU, which has been central to Jigawa's immunization success, was signed in 2022 between the Jigawa State Government, the Federal Government, the Nigeria Governors Forum, GAVI, and UNICEF. This

highlights the NGF's direct involvement in unlocking critical funding and technical support for states.

Technical Guidance and Capacity Building: The NGF Secretariat provides technical assistance and guidance to states on developing and implementing effective PHC programs. This includes advising on human resource strategies, health information systems, and infrastructure development, which directly informs Jigawa's efforts in these areas.

Promoting Peer Learning and Best Practices: The NGF serves as a platform for peer learning, allowing states to share their successes, challenges, and innovative solutions in healthcare delivery. Jigawa's ability to implement effective strategies, such as strengthening task forces on PHC through strong leadership and governance, is likely influenced by insights gained from other states through NGF-facilitated exchanges.

Ensuring Accountability and Sustainability: The NGF encourages states to adopt transparent financial management systems and to monitor progress against health indicators. This focus on accountability helps ensure that resources, including those from the BHCPF and international partners, are utilized efficiently and effectively, contributing to the long-term sustainability of PHC initiatives.

A Model for Universal Health Coverage

The combined efforts of the Jigawa State government and its partners have yielded impressive results. The notable decline in the under-five mortality rate from 213 to 161 per 1,000 live births between 2018 and 2024, as highlighted by UNICEF, is a testament to the positive impact of these interventions. The significant increases in measles vaccination coverage, Ante-natal Care (ANC) coverage (fivefold increase), and Skilled Birth Attendance (SBA) (fourfold increase) further underscore the tangible improvements in health outcomes.

Jigawa's commitment to its 12-Point Agenda, which prioritizes health sector transformation at the grassroots level, signals a clear path forward. While the journey to achieving Universal Health Coverage remains dynamic and requires sustained effort, Jigawa State stands as a compelling model for how strategic investment, robust partnerships, and a strong political will, amplified by the collaborative platform of the Nigeria Governors' Forum, can truly transform primary healthcare and improve the lives of its citizens. The ongoing focus on retaining health workers, maintaining equipment, sustaining outreach services, and strengthening data collection will be crucial in building on these successes and ensuring a healthier future for all Jigawa residents.

Jigawa's commitment to its 12-Point Agenda, which prioritizes health sector transformation at the grassroots level, signals a clear path forward. While the journey to achieving Universal Health Coverage remains dynamic and requires sustained effort, Jigawa State stands as a compelling model for how strategic investment, robust partnerships

Zamfara PHC: From Challenge to Victory

Zamfara State has unequivocally emerged as a shining example of primary healthcare excellence in Nigeria, not only by achieving remarkable improvements in its health system but also by securing the prestigious title of best-performing state in the North-West zone on the Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge. This significant recognition, accompanied by a cash prize of over N185 million, is a testament to the state's tireless efforts and strategic initiatives, propelling its primary healthcare delivery to unprecedented heights.

The journey to this triumph has been marked by a steadfast commitment from the Zamfara State Government, supported by critical partnerships with global health powerhouses like UNICEF, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Aliko Dangote Foundation. This collaborative spirit has been instrumental in revamping the "Primary Health Care Under One Roof (PHCUOR)" policy, aiming to maximize state governors' commitment to progressively increasing PHC funding and improving health outcomes.

One of Zamfara's most significant achievements is its remarkable success in halting the circulation of the mutant poliovirus. This monumental feat underscores the effectiveness of its immunization campaigns and robust disease surveillance systems. Building on this, the state has recorded a significant reduction in outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles, meningitis, and yellow fever. A striking example of this progress is the recording of only two cases of diphtheria in 2024, despite large-scale outbreaks in neighboring states. This proactive and efficient disease control is a clear indicator of a strengthened primary healthcare



Governor Lawal

system that is vigilant and responsive.

Rebuilding and Modernizing: Investing in Healthcare Infrastructure

Recognizing that accessible healthcare begins with functional facilities, Zamfara State has made substantial investments in renovating and modernizing its primary health care centers. These upgrades extend beyond mere aesthetics, encompassing crucial improvements such as equipping facilities with solar power, solar-powered boreholes, and improved sanitation facilities. This strategic investment in sustainable infrastructure ensures that PHCs can provide 24-hour services efficiently, even in remote areas, and offer a conducive environment for both

Zamfara State's journey in primary healthcare is a powerful narrative of transformation. From overcoming the significant challenges posed by insecurity to achieving tangible improvements in health outcomes, the state has demonstrated unwavering dedication

patients and healthcare workers.

The commitment to infrastructure is evident across various levels of healthcare. While the focus remains on primary care, the state has also undertaken the renovation and modernization of the Ahmad Sani Yariman Bakura Specialist Hospital in Gusau, transforming it into a true referral center equipped with advanced diagnostic tools like CT scans and MRI machines – a notable achievement for a state hospital. Similar upgrades are seen in other general hospitals, including those in Talata Mafara and Shinkafi, which have been converted to Zonal Referral Specialist Hospitals.

Empowering the Workforce: Recruitment and Training

A robust healthcare system is only as strong as its workforce. Zamfara State has addressed this critical component by undertaking the recruitment and training of a substantial number of health workers to improve service delivery at the primary health care level. This includes the recruitment of 759 health workers through the Health Services Management Board, 50 staff at the School of Nursing, and the formalization of appointments for casual staff at the primary health care board. This continuous investment in human capital ensures that the revitalized facilities are adequately staffed with skilled professionals, capable of delivering quality care to communities. The state also prioritizes strengthening training institutions like the College of Nursing and Midwifery in Gusau and the College for Health Science and Technology in Tsafe.

Strategic Partnerships and Recognition

Zamfara's success is a testament to its collaborative approach. The state has actively fostered partnerships with

Zamfara PHC: From Challenge to Victory

renowned organizations such as UNICEF, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Aliko Dangote Foundation. These alliances provide crucial financial support, technical expertise, and resources that amplify the state's capacity to strengthen its primary health care system. The Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge award, organized by the Nigerian Governors Forum with support from these partners, directly recognizes Zamfara's "unprecedented achievements," including the construction of a primary health care (PHC) in each of the 147 wards across the state.

The Executive Secretary of the Zamfara State Primary Health Care Board (ZPHCB), Dr. Tukur Isma'il, highlighted that the award was a result of factors like "bringing health care under one roof in the state, consistent data, issue of annual plan and persistent routine immunizations meetings and chaired by state deputy Governor among other factors." This comprehensive approach to governance, data utilization, and consistent program implementation has clearly set Zamfara apart.

Addressing Specific Needs and Sustaining Progress

Beyond the general improvements, Zamfara State is also focusing on specific health challenges. Efforts are being

intensified, in collaboration with the Federal Government, through the Maternal and Newborn Mortality Reduction, Innovation and Initiative (MAMII) project to reduce the high rate of maternal and newborn mortality. The state has also committed to establishing an affordable and comprehensive health insurance scheme, providing access to quality healthcare services for its people.

The state's commitment to improving monitoring and evaluation systems, as highlighted by WHO representatives, further solidifies its dedication to sustainable progress. This ensures that interventions are data-driven, gaps are identified promptly, and services are continually optimized.

Zamfara State's journey in primary healthcare is a powerful narrative of transformation. From overcoming the significant challenges posed by insecurity to achieving tangible improvements in health outcomes, the state has demonstrated unwavering dedication. The Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge award is not just a recognition of past achievements; it's an affirmation of Zamfara's proactive strategy to continually build on its successes and elevate primary healthcare delivery to new, exemplary standards, making it a true model for other states in Nigeria and beyond.

Kaduna:

Advancing Primary health care through Innovation and Collaboration



Kaduna State, a strategically important and populous state in Nigeria's North-West, has long faced the complex challenges inherent in delivering equitable and quality healthcare to its diverse population. Historically, issues such as inadequate human resources, dilapidated infrastructure, and limited access to essential services, particularly in remote and underserved local government areas like Ikara, Soba, and Makarfi, have presented significant hurdles. These challenges often translated into high maternal and child mortality rates and a general strain on the healthcare system.

However, under the visionary leadership of Governor Uba Sani, Kaduna State is undergoing a profound and systematic overhaul of its health sector, with a resolute focus on strengthening Primary Health Care (PHC). This comprehensive approach, encompassing massive recruitment drives, infrastructure revitalization, technological integration, and robust partnerships, is rapidly transforming the state's healthcare landscape, earning it national and international accolades. These remarkable strides are not just internal achievements but are also significantly bolstered by the broader collaborative environment fostered by the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) Secretariat, which champions PHC development across the nation.

Addressing the Human Resource Gap: A Massive Recruitment Drive

A cornerstone of Governor Uba Sani's healthcare agenda is the direct and decisive action to address the critical shortage of healthcare workers. The Kaduna State Government has approved the recruitment of an impressive 1,800 new staff to fill personnel gaps across all Primary Health Care (PHC) facilities. This substantial recruitment drive, as articulated by the Commissioner for Health, Hajiya Umma Ahmad, is crucial for strengthening Kaduna's leadership in PHC. It directly aims

to improve healthcare delivery, reduce the persistently high maternal and child mortality rates, and enhance the overall health and well-being of residents. This commitment to human capital is a recognition that even the best facilities are ineffective without a dedicated and sufficient workforce.

PHC Revitalization and Upgrade to Level 2 Status: A New Standard of Care

Beyond increasing manpower, Kaduna State is investing heavily in upgrading its healthcare infrastructure. A staggering 255 PHC facilities across the state are currently undergoing comprehensive revitalization. This ambitious project involves not only the provision of modern equipment and essential drugs but also a significant upgrade of all these facilities to "Level 2 status." This upgrade is a pivotal component of Governor Uba Sani's health sector overhaul, signifying a commitment to elevating the standard of care available at the grassroots.

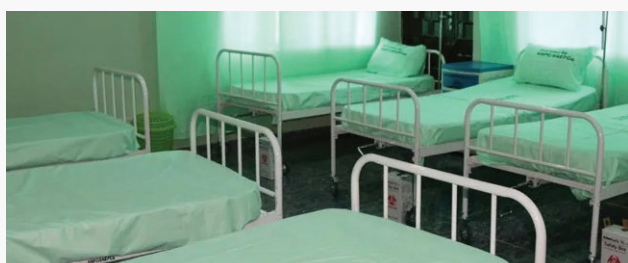
These upgraded PHCs will offer a broader range of crucial services, moving beyond basic care to include the management of uncomplicated diabetes and hypertension, severe asthma

resuscitation, assisted deliveries, and other essential healthcare services. This expansion of services at the primary level is designed to decongest secondary and tertiary hospitals, making quality care more accessible and reducing the burden on higher-level facilities.

Strategic Financial Allocation and Infrastructure Enhancements

The state's commitment to healthcare is underscored by its substantial financial allocation. The Kaduna State government has earmarked a remarkable N71.65 billion to enhance medical services and infrastructure. This significant investment is complemented by the distribution of over N3 billion worth of modern medical equipment to 290 primary healthcare centres, ensuring that facilities are not just renovated but also well-equipped to provide advanced care.

Infrastructure and logistics enhancements extend beyond the PHCs. The state is undertaking the construction of a 300-bed specialist hospital and establishing emergency



medical services. Nine secondary health facilities are also undergoing upgrades. Further improvements include the upgrade of the state's medical stores to 'Pharmagrade' standards, ensuring the integrity and proper storage of medical supplies. A new medical oxygen plant has been established at the Yusuf Dantsoho Memorial Hospital in partnership with UNICEF, complementing an existing facility, with plans to set up two additional oxygen plants. A fully equipped neonatal center has also been set up at Yusuf Dantsoho Memorial Hospital, specifically targeting the reduction of neonatal mortality and morbidity.

Logistical advancements are also a key focus. A revised Service Level Agreement with Fly Zipline International Nigeria Limited has been put in place, enhancing the delivery of essential healthcare resources, including drugs and vaccines, via aerial drones to remote and hard-to-reach areas. This innovative approach ensures timely access to critical supplies, particularly in emergencies.

Pioneering Digital Health Initiatives

Kaduna State is at the forefront of leveraging technology to revolutionize its healthcare system. In 2021, the state collaborated with Elephant Healthcare to digitize its public primary healthcare system, successfully rolling out digital solutions across more than 170 facilities within five months. This initiative has significantly improved data management and patient care, allowing for more informed decision-making and efficient service delivery.

New digital health initiatives include the Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system, which streamlines patient data management, and the launch of Project 10 Million. This ambitious project focuses on screening citizens for hypertension and diabetes, enabling early detection and management of these prevalent non-communicable diseases. The state is also boosting its emergency response capabilities through the Kaduna State Emergency Medical Services and Ambulance System (KADSEMSAS), integrating technology for more efficient and rapid emergency care.

Strategic Partnerships and International Recognition

Kaduna State's success is deeply intertwined with its proactive approach to forging and sustaining partnerships. The state has a history of collaborating with global organizations and donors to elevate healthcare service delivery. In 2016, it partnered with the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) to install over 1.3 megawatts of solar power in PHC facilities, enhancing reliability. The Kaduna State Primary Health Care Board has secured significant grants, including a \$2.6 million commitment from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2018, specifically to accelerate the state's primary healthcare service delivery plan.

Recent collaborations include a groundbreaking initiative with health bodies Dimagi Inc. and Solina Health, launching the Dimagi CommCare Connect Child Health Campaign. This program combines digital technology with frontline community health workers to deliver critical child health services directly to households, including Vitamin A supplementation, Zinc/ORS administration for diarrhea, and MUAC screening for malnutrition. Supported by funding from GiveWell, this digital tool streamlines data collection, monitoring, and reporting, offering valuable insights to optimize interventions.

The state has also renewed its Memorandum of Understanding with the Pharmaceutical Group of Manufacturing Association of Nigeria to ensure affordable and equitable distribution of medical supplies, with the Kaduna State Health Supply Management Agency (KADHSMA) now achieving 100% distribution to health facilities.

These comprehensive efforts have not gone unnoticed. In

December 2024, Kaduna State received international recognition and a cash prize of \$500,000 as the best-performing state in Primary Health Care in the North West region. This prestigious accolade, along with 10 other awards earned by Governor Uba Sani, including the Excellence Award from the International Supply Chain Education Alliance (ISCEA), underscores the state's unwavering commitment and the tangible results of its health sector transformation.

Community Participation and Engagement

A key aspect of Kaduna's healthcare strategy is its emphasis on community involvement and feedback. Efforts have been made to assess and enhance client satisfaction within PHC services, recognizing that effective healthcare delivery must be responsive to the needs of the populace. The engagement of 1,354 Community Health Influencers, Promoters, and Service Providers (CHIPS) across 14 Local Government Areas is a testament to this commitment, aiming to extend healthcare services directly to underserved communities and foster a sense of ownership.

The Indispensable Role of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) Secretariat

Kaduna State's remarkable progress in PHC development, while driven by strong state-level leadership, operates within and significantly benefits from the broader enabling environment fostered by the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF) Secretariat. The NGF serves as a critical convener, advocate, and facilitator for health sector reforms across Nigeria, indirectly but powerfully influencing the strides made in states like Kaduna.

The NGF's contributions are evident in several ways:

Advocacy for Increased Health Investment: The NGF consistently advocates for greater budgetary allocation to the health sector by state governments. Kaduna State's commitment of 15% of its 2024 budget (N71.65 billion) to health, making it the second-largest allocation after education, aligns perfectly with the NGF's sustained push for increased health financing. This advocacy helps to elevate health as a top priority for governors.

Facilitating Donor Partnerships: The NGF plays a crucial role in establishing and strengthening relationships between state governments and international development partners. The significant grants and collaborations Kaduna has secured from entities like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, UNICEF, and GAVI (often channeled through NGF-facilitated MOUs) are a direct outcome of the NGF's efforts to mobilize resources and technical assistance for states. The NGF's involvement in the GAVI PHC MoU project, as seen in other states, creates a framework that Kaduna likely benefits from in its immunization and PHC strengthening efforts.

Promoting Peer Learning and Best Practices: The NGF provides a vital platform for governors and state health officials to share experiences, learn from successful models, and adapt best practices. Kaduna's comprehensive approach, encompassing infrastructure, human resources, and digital health, reflects a synthesis of effective strategies that may have been shared and discussed within the NGF's peer learning initiatives. The state's recognition as the best-performing PHC state in the North West region further solidifies its role as a model for others, a concept central to the NGF's mission.

Harmonizing Health Policies and Strategies: The NGF works to ensure a more coherent and integrated national health system by encouraging states to align their health policies with national objectives, such as achieving Universal Health Coverage. Kaduna's initiatives, from PHC revitalization to digital health, are consistent with national health blueprints and the broader UHC agenda championed by the NGF.

Supporting Human Capital Development: The NGF's emphasis on strengthening the health workforce across states aligns with Kaduna's massive recruitment drive and its focus on training and performance management systems for health workers.

Kaduna State's journey in primary healthcare development under Governor Uba Sani's administration is a compelling narrative of strategic vision, significant investment, and effective implementation. By aggressively tackling human resource shortages, revitalizing and upgrading PHC facilities, embracing digital health solutions, and fostering strong partnerships, the state is fundamentally transforming healthcare access and quality for its citizens. The international recognition and awards received are a testament to the tangible impact of these efforts. While the path to achieving optimal health outcomes is continuous, Kaduna State, bolstered by the collaborative spirit and advocacy of the Nigeria Governors' Forum Secretariat, stands as a leading example of how focused governance can build a resilient, accessible, and high-quality primary healthcare system, serving as a model for other states in Nigeria and beyond.



Sokoto's Resilient Primary Healthcare System Takes Shape



Sokoto State is charting an inspiring course in primary healthcare, demonstrating a profound commitment to improving the health and well-being of its citizens. Through strategic investments in infrastructure, a determined effort to bolster its healthcare workforce, and the implementation of targeted programs, the state government is not merely addressing existing health challenges but actively building a more resilient and accessible primary healthcare system for all.

This transformative journey is characterized by a holistic approach, recognizing that effective primary healthcare is the bedrock of a healthy society. From the crucial recruitment of skilled professionals to the ambitious renovation and construction of health facilities, Sokoto's achievements reflect a dedication to ensuring that quality healthcare is within reach for every man, woman, and child.

Rebuilding the Backbone: Strengthening the Healthcare Workforce

One of the most critical challenges facing healthcare systems globally is the shortage of qualified personnel. Sokoto State has taken bold and decisive steps to address this head-on, demonstrating a clear understanding that even the best



facilities are ineffective without skilled hands to operate them.

A landmark achievement in this regard is the recruitment of 845 nurses and midwives. This significant injection of healthcare professionals directly tackles staffing shortages in primary healthcare centres across the state, ensuring that more communities have access to trained medical personnel for essential services. These newly recruited individuals are the frontline heroes, providing direct care, administering immunizations, and offering crucial health education.

Beyond immediate recruitment, Sokoto is also investing in the future of its healthcare workforce through an innovative scholarship program. The state is providing scholarships for students pursuing medical studies abroad, with a groundbreaking commitment to automatic employment upon graduation. This forward-thinking initiative addresses the long-term need for specialized medical expertise within the state, creating a pipeline of highly qualified professionals who are guaranteed a role in serving their home communities. This not only tackles brain-drain but also offers a powerful incentive for young Sokoto indigenes to pursue careers in medicine.

Infrastructure and Service Delivery: Pillars of Progress

The vision for primary healthcare in Sokoto extends beyond human resources to the physical infrastructure that houses these vital services. The state government has embarked on an ambitious program of renovation and construction, fundamentally transforming the landscape of healthcare access.

Already, seven primary health centres have undergone significant renovation, improving facilities and creating more conducive environments for both patients and healthcare providers. These

renovations enhance the functionality of existing centres, equipping them with better amenities and the necessary space for comprehensive care. Looking ahead, the state has even more ambitious plans, with a commitment to construct 199 additional primary health centres. This monumental undertaking will drastically improve access to quality healthcare, particularly in underserved and rural areas, bringing essential services closer to the people who need them most.

Alongside infrastructure development, the government is prioritizing the provision of essential healthcare services, with a particular emphasis on pregnant women. This focus acknowledges the critical role of maternal health in overall community well-being. Initiatives are firmly in place to strengthen maternal and child health programs, with the ultimate goal of reducing alarming maternal and infant mortality rates. This includes addressing the devastating challenge of Vesicovaginal fistula (VVF), a debilitating condition that disproportionately affects women in rural areas. By providing comprehensive care, from antenatal services to safe delivery and postnatal support, Sokoto is safeguarding the lives of mothers and their newborns. The recent distribution of essential drugs and Mama Kits across all 23 local government areas, with an expenditure of over N1.5 billion, underscores the government's commitment to ensuring safer deliveries, especially in remote areas.

Furthermore, the state is actively expanding mass immunization programs against childhood diseases. This proactive approach ensures that children are protected from preventable illnesses, contributing to a healthier and more productive future generation. The provision of health equipment to all 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs) is a crucial step in ensuring that all primary healthcare centres are adequately equipped to deliver these essential services, from routine check-ups to emergency care.

To ensure the highest standards of care, Sokoto State is implementing regular technical supervision and in-service training programs for healthcare workers at all levels. This continuous professional development ensures that staff are up-to-date with the latest medical practices, equipped with the necessary skills, and motivated to deliver optimal services.

A progressive step in expanding the scope of primary healthcare is the state's ongoing effort to integrate mental health care into primary health services. This initiative recognizes the interconnectedness of physical and mental well-being and seeks to provide accessible mental health support at the community level, reducing stigma and improving overall health outcomes. The inauguration of 16 projects at the Neuropsychiatric Hospital Kware further highlights the state's commitment to addressing mental health challenges comprehensively.

Building Bridges: Collaboration and Community Engagement

Sokoto State understands that sustainable healthcare development requires collective effort. The government is actively fostering strong relationships with donor partners, leveraging their expertise and financial support to amplify its healthcare initiatives. These collaborations are vital in augmenting resources and implementing innovative solutions to improve healthcare services across the state.

Crucially, the government is also deeply invested in working with community leaders and stakeholders to ensure the success of healthcare initiatives. This grassroots approach fosters ownership and promotes active participation from



These achievements are not merely statistics; they represent tangible improvements in the lives of countless individuals. Reduced maternal and infant mortality, increased access to essential services, and a more robust and responsive healthcare system are the hallmarks of Sokoto's health revolution

the beneficiaries themselves. By engaging communities, health programs become more relevant, acceptable, and ultimately, more effective, building a sense of shared responsibility for health outcomes.

A Future of Health and Well-being

The comprehensive efforts undertaken by the Sokoto State government in primary healthcare are painting a vibrant picture of progress and promise. From bolstering its workforce and upgrading vital infrastructure to implementing targeted programs for vulnerable populations and fostering crucial partnerships, the state is demonstrating a clear and unwavering commitment to improving the health and well-being of its citizens.

These achievements are not merely statistics; they represent tangible improvements in the lives of countless individuals. Reduced maternal and infant mortality, increased access to essential services, and a more robust and responsive healthcare system are the hallmarks of Sokoto's health revolution. As the state continues to build upon these foundations, it is poised to create a lasting legacy of health and prosperity for all its people.

Kano's Comprehensive Primary Healthcare at Work



Kano State, a bustling commercial hub and Nigeria's most populous state, has historically grappled with immense healthcare demands. Its vast population, coupled with the complexities of delivering services across urban and rural divides, has presented persistent challenges in ensuring equitable access to quality healthcare. Issues ranging from overburdened facilities and inadequate resources to gaps in preventive care and limited health insurance coverage have long characterized the state's health landscape. However, under the current administration, Kano State is charting a new course, embarking on an ambitious and multi-faceted transformation of its primary healthcare (PHC) delivery system. This comprehensive overhaul, marked by innovative programs, strategic investments, and a renewed focus on community well-being, is rapidly positioning Kano as a leader in public health reform.

The state's commitment to revitalizing its health sector is evident in a series of proactive initiatives aimed at strengthening routine immunization, improving access for vulnerable populations, enhancing infrastructure, bolstering service delivery, and fostering robust community participation. These efforts are not merely incremental changes but represent a systemic shift towards a more resilient, accessible, and patient-centred primary healthcare system, ultimately driving the state closer to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

A cornerstone of Kano's preventive health strategy is the reactivation of its School Health Services program. This initiative underscores the understanding that a healthy child is a foundation for a healthy society. By integrating

essential health services directly within the school environment, the program aims to proactively address the health and well-being of school-aged children. This includes regular health screenings, health education, and early intervention for common childhood ailments. The long-term impact of such a program is profound, as it not only improves immediate health outcomes for students but also instills healthy habits from a young age, potentially reducing the burden of disease in adulthood. It also serves as a critical entry point for identifying and managing health issues that might otherwise go unnoticed, ensuring that children can learn and thrive without the impediment of preventable illnesses.

Enhancing Educator Welfare: The Eyeglasses Distribution Initiative

Recognizing the vital role of teachers in shaping the future, Kano State has extended its health initiatives to support its educators. A unique program involved the distribution of 38,400 eyeglasses to schoolteachers aged 40 and above. This seemingly simple yet impactful initiative directly addresses a common health challenge among older professionals – vision impairment. By improving vision, the state is not only enhancing the personal well-being of its teachers but also directly improving their productivity and effectiveness in the classroom. Clear vision is fundamental to teaching, lesson preparation, and classroom management. This program



demonstrates a holistic approach to public health, understanding that the health of key societal pillars, like educators, has ripple effects across the community, contributing to better educational outcomes and overall human capital development.

Kano State is making significant strides in managing chronic health conditions, particularly those affecting vulnerable populations. The ABBA CARE Program is a testament to this commitment, providing Hydroxyurea – a crucial medication for managing sickle cell disease – to patients across the state. Sickle cell disease poses a significant public health burden in Nigeria, and access to this essential medication can dramatically improve the quality of life, reduce painful crises, and extend the lifespan of affected individuals. This program offers a lifeline to many families, easing the financial and emotional strain associated with managing this lifelong condition.

Similarly, the Abba Gida-Gida Diabetic Support Program focuses on children living with Type 1 diabetes. This program provides them with essential tools like glucometers and diagnostic kits, enabling early detection, consistent monitoring, and effective management of their condition. Early and proper management of Type 1 diabetes in children is critical to preventing severe complications and ensuring they can lead full, active lives. These targeted interventions for chronic diseases highlight the state's move towards a more comprehensive



and specialized primary healthcare model that addresses the specific needs of its diverse population.

Expanding Access to Specialized Care: Dental Chairs for PHCs

In a move to broaden the scope of services available at the primary healthcare level, Kano State has strategically distributed dental chairs to high-volume primary healthcare centers. Traditionally, dental care has often been a specialized service accessed at secondary or tertiary facilities, making it less accessible for many, especially in rural areas. By equipping PHCs with dental chairs, the state is decentralizing basic dental care, making it more convenient and affordable for communities. This

enhancement allows for preventive dental services, early detection of oral health issues, and treatment of common dental problems, contributing to improved overall health outcomes and reducing the burden of oral diseases. It's a clear indication of the state's commitment to expanding the range of services offered at the grassroots level.

Recognizing the critical period of pregnancy and early childhood, Kano State has launched a vital program to provide free maternity kits to pregnant women and children under five. This initiative ensures that expectant mothers have access to essential supplies needed for a safe delivery and postnatal care, while also providing crucial items for the newborn. This directly contributes to reducing maternal and neonatal mortality by promoting safer birthing practices and supporting early child care.

Complementing this, midwives in public health facilities are now receiving free delivery kits. This support empowers midwives to provide safe and effective delivery services, reducing the financial burden on them and ensuring they have the necessary tools to assist women during childbirth. These programs collectively underscore the state's dedication to improving maternal and child health outcomes, which are key indicators of a strong primary healthcare system.

Strengthening Management and Service Delivery: The Gates



Road, ease vehicular movement and improve connectivity. This means better access for patients to health facilities and for healthcare workers to reach communities, especially in emergencies. The installation of wireless solar-powered traffic lights enhances road safety and aligns with the state's climate adaptation and green energy agenda, potentially contributing to a more reliable power supply for health facilities in the long run. Even the investment in the Ministry of Power and Renewable Energy aligns with the broader goal of ensuring stable energy for critical health infrastructure. These general infrastructure improvements contribute to the overall quality of life and economic activity, which in turn have a positive impact on public health.

Foundation Partnership

The commitment to quality in Kano's PHC system is further solidified by the Kano Primary Health Care Management Capacity Strengthening Project, supported by the prestigious Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. This partnership aims to significantly improve the management and overall quality of primary healthcare services across the state. Such collaborations bring in not only financial resources but also invaluable technical expertise, best practices, and a focus on data-driven decision-making. This project is crucial for ensuring that the state's investments in infrastructure and human resources translate into tangible improvements in service delivery and patient outcomes.

Data-Driven Health: House-to-House Identification and Enumeration

To ensure no child or pregnant woman is left behind, Kano State is implementing a rigorous house-to-house identification and enumeration program for children under five and pregnant women. This systematic approach is vital for accurately identifying target populations, improving vaccination coverage, and ensuring access to other essential health services like antenatal care and nutritional support. By having precise data, the state can tailor its outreach efforts, allocate resources more effectively, and track progress, leading to more equitable and comprehensive service delivery. This proactive data collection mechanism is a hallmark of a modern, efficient, and responsive primary healthcare system.

A critical component of achieving Universal Health Coverage is ensuring financial protection for citizens seeking healthcare. Kano State has established the Kano State Contributory Healthcare Scheme, managed by the Kano State Contributory Healthcare Management Agency. This scheme aims to provide financial protection for healthcare services through a pooled fund, contributed by individuals and potentially other sources. By spreading the cost of healthcare across a larger population, the scheme reduces the burden of out-of-pocket expenses, which often deter vulnerable individuals from seeking timely medical attention. This initiative is fundamental to making healthcare truly accessible and affordable for all residents, regardless of their economic status.

Broader Infrastructure Enhancement: A Conducive Environment for Health

While the N51.5 billion approved by the Kano State government for infrastructure enhancement is a broad allocation, it indirectly supports the PHC development by creating a more conducive environment for healthcare access and delivery. Investments in the rehabilitation and asphalt overlay of strategic roads, such as Mumbayya House to Tal'udu Junction and Sharada

Kano State's journey in primary healthcare development is a compelling narrative of strategic vision, proactive governance, and sustained commitment. Under Governor Mallam Umar Namadi's leadership, the state has moved beyond addressing symptoms to implementing systemic reforms. From reactivating school health services and providing targeted support for chronic conditions to investing heavily in infrastructure, human resources, and digital health, Kano is building a robust and resilient PHC system. The emphasis on free services for vulnerable citizens, coupled with the establishment of a contributory healthcare scheme, underscores a deep commitment to equity and financial protection.

These remarkable accomplishments are not isolated but are part of a broader, collaborative effort that leverages partnerships with international organizations like UNICEF, WHO, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The state's proactive engagement with these partners, combined with its internal drive for innovation and community participation, positions Kano as a leading example in Nigeria's quest for Universal Health Coverage. The ongoing initiatives demonstrate a clear understanding that a healthy population is the bedrock of sustainable development, and Kano State is undeniably on the path to realizing a new dawn for health for all its citizens.

HEALING KEBBI: Rebuilding PHC from the Ground Up

In the heart of northwestern Nigeria, a quiet revolution is underway. Once plagued by dilapidated hospitals, health worker shortages, and devastating maternal mortality rates, Kebbi State is rewriting its healthcare story. Under the stewardship of Governor Nasir Idris, what was once a bleeding system is now pulsing with life—through targeted reforms, strategic partnerships, and a people-first vision that puts the health of the most vulnerable at its centre.

Across towns and villages, the signs are unmistakable: refurbished primary healthcare centres, modernized general hospitals, motivated health workers, and expectant mothers walking out of clinics with free delivery kits. In Kebbi today, healthcare is no longer a privilege, it is becoming a right.

Infrastructure: Bricks, Beds, and Better Days

Governor Idris isn't just patching walls—he's laying foundations for a healthier future. Over N970 million has been invested in revamping Argungu General Hospital, transforming it from a tired relic into a modern facility equipped with new medical technologies and infrastructure. But that's just the tip of the iceberg.

Six general hospitals across the four Emirates of the state have undergone comprehensive upgrades. These renovations

include procurement of life-saving equipment, improvement of patient wards, installation of diagnostic units, and capacity expansion to meet growing demand.

One standout project is the newly inaugurated 100-bed Mother and Child Hospital in Tsamiya, Bagudu LGA. Built in collaboration with the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Sustainable Development Goals (OSSAP-SDGs), the hospital features two operating theatres, recovery rooms, general and private wards, laboratories, and ultra-sound rooms. It is designed to slash maternal and child mortality rates not just in Kebbi, but also in parts of neighbouring Benin Republic.

Meanwhile, the State Teaching Hospital has been equipped with solar power systems, ensuring round-the-clock electricity supply and stable care for patients in critical conditions.

Behind every successful health system is a strong workforce. Recognizing this, Governor Idris embarked on a historic recruitment drive that brought 890 new health workers into the fold.

This includes over 500 newly recruited doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and laboratory scientists. Additionally, 390 casual staff who were previously supported by GAVI were formally absorbed into the state civil service—a move that brought stability, morale, and improved service delivery across PHCs.

To further incentivize and retain skilled professionals, the state harmonized health worker salaries with national structures, offering

competitive packages and secure career pathways.

Kebbi isn't working in isolation. It is leveraging the federal Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHC PF) to plug systemic gaps in service delivery. Through the Kebbi State Health Insurance Agency (KBSHIA), the state has channeled BHC PF to make healthcare more accessible and affordable.

The agency is now facilitating the enrollment of thousands into a social health insurance scheme that protects vulnerable households from out-of-pocket expenses. This approach aligns perfectly with the state's long-term goal of achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) by 2030.

One of the boldest steps is the domestication of free psychiatric medications, now reaching over

20,000 patients across the state and neighbouring communities.

Perhaps Kebbi's most unique contribution to Nigeria's PHC success story is its use of traditional leaders as health ambassadors. The state was the first to formally engage emirs and village heads for social mobilization during Immunization Plus Days (IPDs).

This cultural strategy has paid off handsomely. Immunization coverage has risen, and previously reluctant communities are now participating in maternal and child health programmes. According to UNICEF, neonatal mortality dropped from 55% to 49%, while under-5 mortality fell from 252 to 159 per 1,000 live births between 2018 and 2024.

In collaboration with these leaders, the state ensures pregnant women attend antenatal care and deliver in clinics under skilled supervision. The result? More healthy babies, fewer complications, and a growing trust in the formal healthcare system.

Kebbi State's maternal health strategy is not all talk. Through a state-wide distribution of free delivery kits, expectant mothers receive essential items needed for safe births. These kits are more than tokens; they are tools of survival that ensure sterile conditions and timely intervention.

Additionally, the government has deployed modern ambulances to key health facilities. These ambulances cut referral times for complicated cases, bridging the distance between rural clinics and urban hospitals. It's an upgrade that turns fatal delays into life-saving speed.

Supply chain disruptions used to cripple PHCs in Kebbi. But Governor Idris is tackling this head-on with the rollout of a drug revolving fund. This scheme is designed to maintain a consistent stock of essential medicines, eliminating the age-old problem of "no drugs" at the point of care.

At the same time, the state is investing

Kebbi State's maternal health strategy is not all talk. Through a state-wide distribution of free delivery kits, expectant mothers receive essential items needed for safe births

in modern medical equipment. From scanning rooms to delivery sets, labs to emergency carts, the healthcare centres are now armed with the tools they need to deliver real care, not just first aid.

Strategic Partnerships: UNICEF, Canada, and Beyond

Transformation on this scale requires collaboration. Kebbi has drawn from deep wells of support through strategic partnerships with UNICEF, USAID, the European Union, MTN Foundation, and the Government of Canada.

A major new initiative—backed by Global Affairs Canada and implemented by UNICEF—aims to integrate gender-responsive health and nutrition services across the state. This includes training for health workers, community sensitization, and technical support for the State Primary Health Care Development Agency.

UNICEF's Country Representative, Michael Juma, commended Kebbi's leadership, citing dramatic improvements in PHC services, rising immunization rates, and reductions in neonatal and under-5 mortality as signs of serious progress.

The reforms have not gone unnoticed. Governor Nasir Idris has been honoured with the "Excellence in Healthcare Delivery and Human Capacity Development" award from the Postgraduate Medical College Fellows Association and the National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria.

This prestigious award, to be presented during the 19th Annual Scientific Conference and All Fellows Congress (ASCAF) in Sokoto, recognizes the governor's work in transforming Kebbi's health sector. It places him among a rare few in Northern Nigeria to receive such national acclaim.

Professors Simeon Isezuo and Jacob Ndas Legbo, the award committee's chair and secretary, noted that Kebbi's model—marked by strategic hiring, infrastructure upgrades, and health financing reform—could serve as a template for other states.

Governor Idris has proven he's not afraid to make hard calls. Upon discovering substandard conditions at Argungu General Hospital despite heavy investment, he swiftly removed the Chief Medical Director and called for a replacement who would uphold the standards now expected statewide.

It was a clear signal: the era of negligence is over.

Looking Ahead: UHC by 2030 and Beyond

With these sweeping reforms, Kebbi State is setting its sights on Universal Health Coverage by 2030. This means not just building hospitals or hiring staff, but institutionalizing a healthcare system that delivers for every man, woman, and child regardless of income, location, or status.

That ambition is echoed in Kebbi's participation in the World Bank-funded IMPACT project and its efforts to align state plans with the Federal Government's Renewed Hope Agenda.

Health is no longer an afterthought in Kebbi. It is front and centre, prioritized in budgets, policies, and community dialogue.

As the sun rises over Argungu and Tsamiya, and the wail of a newborn echoes through a freshly painted ward, one thing is clear: Kebbi is healing. Its clinics are humming. Its mothers are hopeful. And its leaders are no longer content with the status quo.



Katsina's PHC: A Collaborative Blueprint for Success

Katsina State is steadily rewriting its healthcare narrative, demonstrating how focused partnerships and strategic investments can yield tangible improvements in public health. Recent initiatives, bolstered by significant funding and collaborative efforts from international organizations and the state government, are transforming primary healthcare (PHC) and routine immunization services, bringing vital care closer to the people and fostering a healthier, more resilient populace. This is not merely about statistics; it's about real impact on the lives of mothers, children, and communities.

A \$8.5 million Boost to Maternal and Child Health: A Strategic Partnership Delivers

A cornerstone of Katsina's healthcare progress is the \$8.5 million Primary Healthcare Project, a pivotal three-year endeavour jointly funded by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), GAVI, the international vaccination group, and the Katsina State government. This monumental project, recently handed over to the state, was meticulously designed to bolster primary healthcare systems and routine immunization, with a clear and unwavering focus on improving the health outcomes of mothers and children. The significant financial commitment, totaling approximately \$8,539,995, underscores the gravity of the mission and the collaborative spirit driving it.

Speaking during the handover ceremony at the Government House in Katsina, Governor Dikko Radda proudly underscored his administration's unwavering commitment to citizen health. He highlighted how this

strategic partnership has profoundly strengthened the state's immunization program, ensuring broader reach and higher efficacy. Furthermore, it has enhanced the capacity of the state's dedicated health workers, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to deliver high-quality care. Crucially, the program has ensured that even the most hard-to-reach communities receive essential health services, bridging geographical divides that often hinder access to care. The Governor also noted the tangible improvement in the functionality of the Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) across the state, making healthcare not just available, but truly accessible to its citizens. Governor Radda affirmed that "Our commitment to strengthening Primary Healthcare Centres does not end here as the government remains dedicated to sustaining the gains achieved." This statement reflects a forward-looking perspective, acknowledging that while significant progress has been made, the journey towards optimal health outcomes is ongoing.

The impact of this collaboration is already evident and demonstrably successful. Mr. Rahama Farah, Head of UNICEF Field Office Kano, revealed impressive and encouraging statistics that speak volumes about the project's effectiveness. The under-5 mortality rate in Katsina has seen a remarkable reduction, dropping from a significant 188 per 1,000 live births in 2018 to an encouraging 105 in 2024, as reported by the National Demographic Health Survey. This reduction represents a dramatic saving of young lives and a testament to improved care. Furthermore, the program has achieved a notable increase in vaccination coverage for

Penta3, rising from 33.7% in 2018 to an impressive 53.3% in 2023. These gains are particularly noteworthy and commendable given the persistent security challenges faced by the state. This demonstrates the resilience, adaptability, and unwavering effectiveness of the program's implementation even in adverse circumstances. Mr. Farah noted, "All the key partners of the GAVI/UNICEF/state-funded support Memorandum of Understanding should be proud of their contributions to improved

Governor, provided the overall leadership, with the Katsina State Primary Health Care Agency as the primary implementing partner, supported by Local Government Authorities and traditional and religious bodies at the grassroots.

Empowering the Frontline: 2,000 Healthcare Workers to Benefit from Holistic Development

Recognizing that a robust and effective healthcare system is only as strong as its workforce, Katsina State is also investing heavily and strategically in its healthcare professionals. A new and innovative project, 'Enhancing Resilience in Frontline Community Healthcare (EnRiCH)', is a significant collaboration between CARE Nigeria and the Katsina State government. This ambitious initiative aims to empower an impressive 2,000 healthcare workers across Katsina State over the next three years, ensuring they are well-equipped to meet the evolving health needs of communities.

This initiative goes beyond traditional training programs. Dr. Hussaini Abdu, Country Director of CARE Nigeria, explained that the EnRiCH project will comprehensively support the professional development, certification, and economic empowerment of frontline health workers. This will be facilitated via a cutting-edge digital learning platform, ensuring accessibility and flexibility for the beneficiaries. Critically, the project will also establish Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) to foster greater financial independence and resilience among these vital healthcare workers. This holistic approach is a powerful acknowledgment of the socioeconomic challenges often faced by many healthcare providers, recognizing that their well-being and stability directly influence the quality and consistency of the care they are able to provide. Dr. Abdu stated, "This initiative is not just about training; it is about equipping community health workers with the tools, skills, and resources necessary to deliver high-quality, safe, and effective health services." He emphasized leveraging existing structures and deploying digital technologies to enhance capacity. Through CARE's VSLA approach, networks of health workers will not only learn leadership and management skills but also enhance their financial independence, serving as platforms for knowledge exchange, problem-solving, and collective action to drive community-led improvements in maternal and child health outcomes.



health outcomes for children, mothers, pregnant women, adolescent girls, and families in Katsina State." He further elaborated that the program's overarching goal was to improve health outcomes for children and mothers in Katsina state by strengthening the PHC systems and routine immunization (RI) services, a goal that has clearly been met with remarkable results. The GAVI PHC MOU Programme allocated \$7,942,328, while the state co-financed an additional \$597,667, showcasing a robust and shared commitment. The Katsina State government, through the Deputy

\$597,667

Additional amount co-financed by the State government to showcasing a robust and shared commitment in healthcare

Building Climate-Resilient Health: A Proactive Stance Against Emerging Threats

Katsina State is not only addressing immediate health needs but also taking a remarkably proactive approach to a pressing global challenge: climate change. Recognizing its profound implications for public health, the state government is making concerted efforts to strengthen its healthcare system against growing climate threats. This involves a strategic focus on developing climate-resilient health infrastructure and meticulously integrating environmental considerations into public health planning and policy.

At a recent stakeholder training session held in Kano, Alhaji Musa Funtua, the State Commissioner of Health (ably represented by Dr. Muawiyah Aliyu, Director of Public Health), stressed the urgent need for robust health adaptation planning in light of increased climate variability. Dr. Aliyu pointed out a critical observation: "Diseases that were once easily manageable have now become more complex due to rising climate impacts." This underscores the evolving nature of health challenges.

To confront these complex and evolving challenges, the Katsina State Government has introduced several strategic initiatives. These include the development of climate-resilient health infrastructure, ensuring that facilities can withstand and operate effectively in changing climatic conditions. Crucially, there are ongoing community awareness campaigns on climate-related health risks, empowering citizens with knowledge to protect themselves.

To ensure effective implementation and coordination, the state has established a robust three-tier coordination structure: the State Council on Climate Change,

chaired by the Governor; the State Climate Technical Committee, chaired by the Commissioner for Environment; and the State Forum on Climate Change, led by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment. These bodies will provide crucial oversight for climate-health integration and offer clear policy direction, aligning with the national Health National Adaptation Plan (HNAP) developed by the Federal Ministry of Health in collaboration with the National Council on Climate Change. Hajiya Rukayya Muhammad, representing the National Council on Climate Change, affirmed that "Our goal is to help states understand the climate-health nexus and align their adaptation efforts with national priorities. This will allow for better integration of climate resilience, particularly at the primary healthcare level." This forward-looking strategy underscores Katsina's recognition that climate change is not just an environmental issue, but a profound public health emergency requiring proactive, integrated responses.

Tangible Investments: Renovations, Training, and Proactive Drug Procurement Drive Change

Beyond these major strategic projects, the Katsina State government is making significant and direct investments in its PHC infrastructure and services, demonstrating a commitment to tangible, on-the-ground improvements. The state has commendably renovated and upgraded 168 primary healthcare facilities, ensuring that these vital centers are equipped to provide 24-hour improved and critical healthcare service delivery. This comprehensive renovation project, which began last year with 102 facilities and now encompasses 168 across all 34 LGAs, includes not just infrastructure upgrades but also the provision of essential equipment, construction of staff quarters, secure wall fencing, reliable water supply, and solar lighting in all facilities, enhancing operational efficiency and patient comfort.

Furthermore, a substantial investment in human capital is evident: over 5,000 healthcare workers have been trained on integrated PHC services, ensuring a well-prepared and multi-skilled workforce. Additionally, 150 midwives have been engaged and strategically posted to various healthcare facilities, a crucial step to significantly improve skilled birth attendance at delivery, directly impacting maternal and child survival rates. The Executive Secretary of the State Primary Healthcare Agency, Shamsuddin Yahaya, disclosed these achievements, highlighting the proactive measures taken by the state.

In 2024, the state allocated a substantial N125



Katsina's PHC Revolution: A Collaborative Blueprint for Success

million for the procurement of drugs, ensuring that essential medications are readily available and distributed to all comprehensive health centers. This strategic procurement aims to ensure that diseases and outbreaks such as diphtheria and cholera are either prevented or swiftly responded to across the state. A similar proactive gesture was seen in 2023, where N50 million was earmarked and used for drug procurement. Mr. Yahaya also detailed significant efforts in nutrition, where N300 million was paid in the 2024 budget as matching funds to UNICEF for the procurement of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) for the treatment of acute malnutrition and other important nutritional supplements. An additional N200 million was earmarked as matching funds for UNICEF for the procurement of nutrition commodities, demonstrating a robust commitment to addressing nutritional deficiencies.

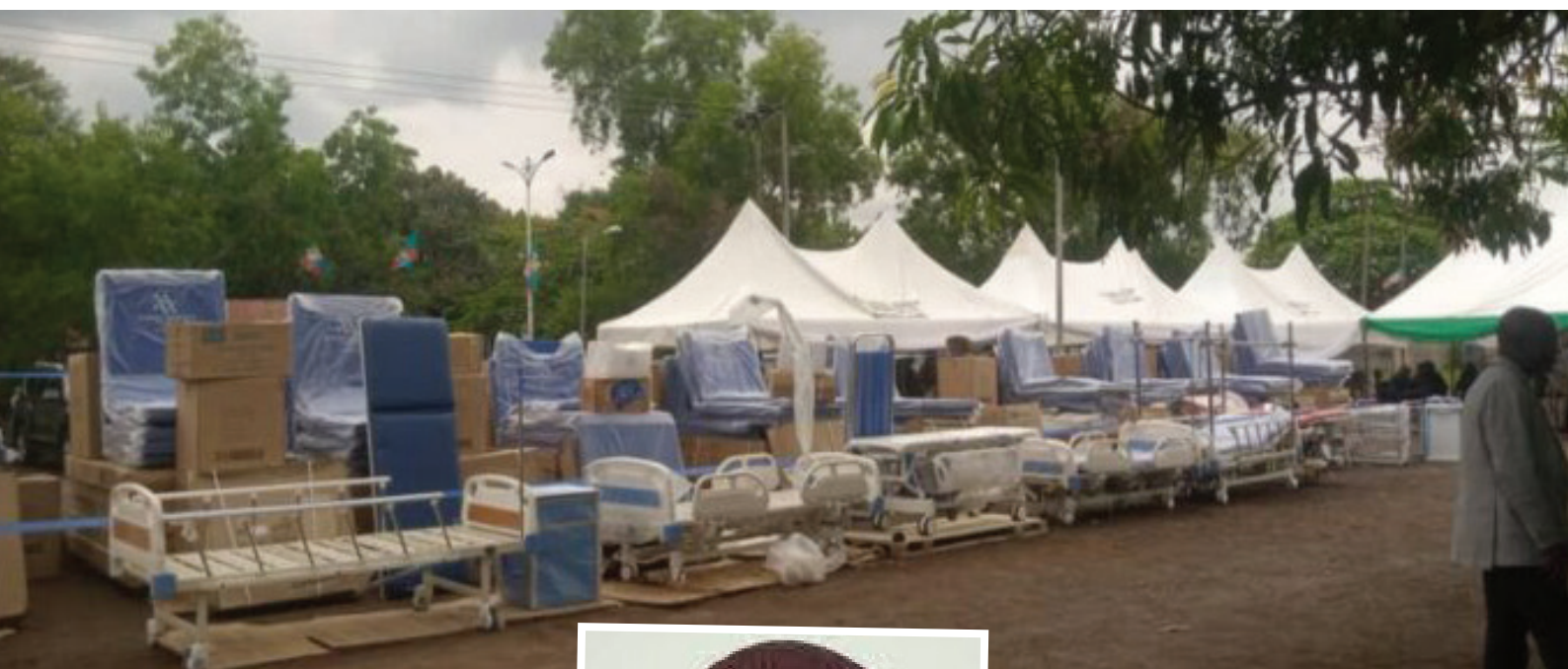
The state has also introduced valuable innovations to improve healthcare delivery. One such innovation is the implementation of biometric data capturing to ensure that healthcare workers remain in their designated places of work – specifically, one facility per LGA – allowing for effective monitoring and accountability. Moreover, the government has engaged local doctors, including senior doctors and consultants, to provide invaluable mentoring to primary healthcare workers and to provide direct services, fostering knowledge transfer and enhancing the quality of care at the grassroots level.

Katsina State's multi-faceted and integrated approach to healthcare, encompassing robust infrastructure development, strategic human resource empowerment, proactive climate resilience planning, and the provision of essential services like clean water, paints a pragmatic and believable picture of success. The strong collaboration between international partners like UNICEF, GAVI, and CARE Nigeria, coupled with the Katsina State government's clear vision, sustained investment, and innovative strategies, is not just improving health statistics; it is genuinely building a healthier, more resilient, and more prosperous future for the people of Katsina. The commitment to continuity and sustainability demonstrated by the Governor suggests that these are not fleeting victories but rather foundational steps in a long-term health transformation.

Katsina State government is making significant and direct investments in its PHC infrastructure and services, demonstrating a commitment to tangible, on-the-ground improvements



Nwifuru: Reinforces PHC Infrastructure, Equipment, Logistics



Ebonyi State, often lauded as the "Salt of the Nation," is currently undergoing a profound and transformative period in its healthcare sector under the astute leadership of Governor Francis Nwifuru. Since assuming office, Governor Nwifuru has embarked on an ambitious agenda aimed at fundamentally revamping the state's health infrastructure, enhancing human capital, and ensuring that quality healthcare is not merely a privilege but an accessible right for all its citizens. This comprehensive approach, particularly focused on strengthening Primary Healthcare (PHC), is laying a robust foundation for a healthier, more productive, and resilient populace, marking a new era of development and well-being for Ebonyi.

The challenges facing healthcare in many developing regions are multifaceted, often encompassing dilapidated infrastructure, acute shortages of skilled personnel, inadequate equipment, and limited access to essential medical supplies. Ebonyi State was not immune to these systemic issues. However, Governor



Nwifuru's administration has recognised that a healthy population is the bedrock of sustainable economic growth and social stability. Consequently, his government has initiated a series of strategic interventions designed to address these long-standing deficits head-on, with a particular emphasis on bolstering the primary healthcare system – the critical first point of contact for the majority of the population.

A cornerstone of Governor Nwifuru's healthcare agenda has been the substantial investment in medical infrastructure and the procurement of state-of-the-art equipment. While the exact number of entirely new PHC hospitals or facilities constructed is not explicitly detailed, the state's strategy has centred on a meticulous and impactful improvement of existing infrastructure and a significant enhancement of diagnostic and treatment capabilities across its healthcare network. This approach ensures that resources are optimally deployed to uplift the functionality and efficacy of current facilities, thereby extending their reach and improving the quality of care delivered.

A standout achievement in this regard is the procurement of four Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machines. This is a monumental acquisition for any state, particularly within the Nigerian context, where access to such advanced diagnostic technology is often limited to major urban centres or private institutions. While these MRI machines are primarily destined for the state's 13 General Hospitals, their



impact will undoubtedly cascade down to the primary healthcare level. PHCs, as referral points, will now be able to refer patients requiring intricate diagnostic imaging to well-equipped secondary facilities within the state, significantly reducing the need for costly and often prohibitive inter-state travel. This not only improves diagnostic accuracy and speed, leading to better patient outcomes, but also strengthens the entire referral pathway, making the healthcare system more integrated and efficient. The presence of such high-end equipment elevates the overall standard of medical care available in Ebonyi, attracting specialists and instilling greater confidence in the public health system.

Complementing this, the administration has also focused on providing enhanced medical supplies for all 13 General Hospitals. A consistent and adequate supply of essential drugs, consumables, and medical disposables is fundamental to the effective functioning of any hospital. By ensuring that these secondary facilities are well-stocked, the state is addressing a common bottleneck in healthcare delivery, where even renovated facilities can be rendered ineffective by a lack of basic supplies. This commitment to robust supply chain management directly benefits patients, ensuring that necessary treatments are available when required, and indirectly supports PHCs by providing a reliable source for patient referrals requiring more complex interventions.

Beyond fixed infrastructure and diagnostic tools, Governor Nwifuru's administration has made significant strides in improving healthcare logistics and emergency response capabilities. The procurement of 52 ambulances, with 20 already delivered, is a game-changer for patient transport and emergency medical services. The plan to allocate two ambulances to each General Hospital across the state ensures that every major healthcare hub has dedicated vehicles for rapid patient transfer. This is particularly crucial for PHCs, which often serve remote and rural communities. In cases of medical emergencies or when a patient requires a higher level of care than a PHC can provide, these ambulances will facilitate swift and safe transportation to the General Hospitals, potentially saving countless lives. This investment underscores a strategic commitment to reducing response times and improving access to critical care, bridging the geographical gap between primary and secondary healthcare tiers.

Furthermore, in a move designed to boost morale, enhance mobility, and improve oversight, the Governor has sanctioned the purchase of Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs) for medical doctors working in General Hospitals across Ebonyi State. While seemingly a welfare initiative, its impact on healthcare delivery is profound. Improved personal mobility for doctors can enable them to supervise, support, and visit multiple facilities, including PHCs, more effectively. It can also serve as a powerful incentive, attracting and retaining medical professionals in the state, particularly in areas that might otherwise be less appealing due to logistical challenges. This investment in the welfare of medical personnel reflects a holistic understanding that the quality of healthcare is inextricably linked to the well-being and motivation of its workforce.

A specific, tangible example of ongoing support to primary healthcare facilities was highlighted by Dr. Ovuoba Emeka Philip, the Executive Secretary of the Ebonyi State Primary Healthcare Development Agency. On 5th July 2024, Dr. Philip oversaw the handover of essential hospital equipment and reagents to Dr. Nwamini Solomon, the Doctor in Charge of the Ebonyi SMOH Staff Clinic in Centenary City, Abakaliki. This targeted provision, made possible through the UNICEF Challenge Fund, demonstrates continuous, partner-supported efforts to equip individual facilities with the necessary

tools for effective patient care. Dr. Nwamini's acceptance speech, expressing joy and promising diligent use of the supplies, underscores the immediate positive impact of such interventions at the facility level.

Cultivating Competence: Human Capital Development and Welfare

Recognising that the most sophisticated infrastructure is only as effective as the people who operate it, Governor Nwifuru's administration has placed a strong emphasis on human capital development within the healthcare sector. Addressing the chronic shortage of medical personnel and ensuring their continuous professional development are central to this strategy.

A significant achievement in this regard is the hiring of 195 new medical personnel. This substantial recruitment drive directly tackles the longstanding issue of understaffing across various healthcare cadres, from doctors and nurses to community health extension workers. By increasing the workforce, the state aims to improve patient-to-staff ratios, reduce the burden on existing personnel, and ensure that more patients can access timely and quality care at both PHCs and General Hospitals. This influx of new talent is crucial for operationalising the newly equipped facilities and expanding service delivery to previously underserved communities.

Crucially, the administration has demonstrated an unprecedented commitment to the welfare of these new recruits by implementing a salary increase of N150,000 for all 195 newly hired medical personnel. This is a bold and strategic move designed to make healthcare professions in Ebonyi State highly attractive and competitive. In a landscape often plagued by poor remuneration and brain drain, this substantial salary increment serves as a powerful incentive, not only in attracting top talent but also in retaining them within the state's health system. It boosts morale, acknowledges the invaluable contributions of healthcare workers, and ensures that they are adequately compensated for their demanding roles. This investment in human welfare is a long-term strategy for building a stable, motivated, and highly skilled medical workforce.

Beyond recruitment and remuneration, the administration has invested in continuous professional development through a pioneering facility-based onsite clinical training programme. This programme is being rolled out in an impressive 198 public and private health facilities across the state, utilising the innovative Low Dose, High-Frequency (LDHF) approach. The LDHF

methodology is a highly effective adult learning model that involves delivering small, manageable chunks of training content (low dose) repeatedly and consistently over time (high frequency). This approach contrasts with traditional, lengthy, one-off training sessions, which often result in rapid knowledge decay.

For PHC workers, LDHF training is particularly beneficial. It allows them to acquire and reinforce critical clinical skills directly within their work environment, minimising disruption to service delivery. This continuous, practical learning ensures that healthcare providers remain updated on best practices, improve their diagnostic and treatment capabilities, and enhance their overall competency in managing common health conditions, maternal and child health issues, and emergency situations at the primary level. The inclusion of both public and private health facilities in this training programme underscores a comprehensive vision for elevating the standard of care across the entire health sector, fostering a more unified and competent healthcare ecosystem in Ebonyi State. This systematic approach to skill enhancement is vital for ensuring that the improved infrastructure and equipment are matched by a highly capable workforce.

A Strategic Vision for a Healthier Ebonyi

Governor Nwifuru's initiatives in the healthcare sector are not isolated projects but integral components of a broader, strategic vision for Ebonyi State's holistic development. The "Salt of the Nation" is being repositioned as a state where human capital is prioritised, and the well-being of its citizens is paramount. The investments in healthcare infrastructure, advanced medical equipment, improved logistics, and, crucially, human capital development, are all designed to achieve

several overarching objectives.

Firstly, these reforms are directly aimed at improving health outcomes for the populace. By making healthcare more accessible, enhancing diagnostic capabilities, ensuring the availability of essential medicines, and providing highly skilled personnel, the administration is working to reduce morbidity and mortality rates, particularly among vulnerable groups such as mothers and children. The focus on PHCs means that preventive care, early diagnosis, and management of common illnesses are strengthened, preventing conditions from escalating into more severe and costly complications.

Secondly, the initiatives are designed to restore and enhance public trust in the state's public health system. When facilities are functional, well-equipped, and staffed by competent and motivated professionals, citizens are more likely to seek care within the formal system, moving away from unregulated alternatives. This renewed confidence is vital for the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of health programmes, including immunisation campaigns and disease surveillance.

Thirdly, the developmental impact of these healthcare reforms cannot be overstated. A healthy population is a productive population. By reducing the burden of disease, improving maternal and child health, and ensuring access to care, the state is fostering a workforce that is healthier, more energetic, and capable of contributing meaningfully to economic activities. This directly translates into increased productivity, reduced healthcare expenditures for families, and overall socio-economic prosperity. The establishment of medical colleges further positions Ebonyi as a centre for medical education, attracting talent and investment, and creating a ripple effect of economic opportunities.

Finally, the collaborative spirit evident in the partnership with organisations like UNICEF, through initiatives like the Challenge Fund, highlights the administration's commitment to leveraging external expertise and resources. Such collaborations are vital for accelerating progress, adopting global best practices, and ensuring that interventions are both effective and sustainable.

Under Governor Francis Nwifuru's leadership, Ebonyi State is undeniably experiencing a healthcare renaissance. The strategic investments in primary healthcare infrastructure, including the procurement of advanced MRI machines for General Hospitals and enhanced medical supplies, coupled with the acquisition of a large fleet of ambulances, are fundamentally transforming the physical and logistical landscape of healthcare delivery.

More profoundly, the administration's commitment to human capital development, exemplified by the recruitment of 195 new medical personnel and their significant salary increment, alongside the innovative LDHF clinical training programme, is building a highly competent, motivated, and dedicated healthcare workforce. This holistic approach ensures that the state is not just building structures but is cultivating a culture of quality care and professional excellence.

Governor Nwifuru's "Salt of the Nation" vision is clearly manifesting in the health sector, where every policy and investment is geared towards creating a healthier, more resilient, and prosperous Ebonyi. The achievements under his tenure are setting a new benchmark for healthcare development in the region, promising a future where quality healthcare is a tangible reality for every Deltan, laying a robust foundation for enduring growth and well-being. The legacy being forged is one of profound care, strategic progress, and an unwavering commitment to the health of the people.



Gov Otti's Pragmatic Approach to Primary Health Care

In the south-eastern heartland of Nigeria, Abia State is currently undergoing a significant and meticulously planned transformation in its primary healthcare (PHC) delivery system. Under the astute leadership of Governor Alex Otti, the state government has embarked on a series of ambitious and pragmatic projects, fundamentally reshaping access to quality health services for its citizens. This comprehensive overhaul, underpinned by a clear vision and strategic implementation, aims to ensure that robust and accessible healthcare is no longer a distant aspiration but a tangible reality for every Abian, particularly in the state's 17 Local Government Areas.

The cornerstone of this healthcare renaissance is a flagship initiative aptly named "Project Ekwueme." This ambitious undertaking, whose name translates to "one who keeps promises," symbolises Governor Otti's solemn commitment to fulfilling his pledges to the people of Abia and restoring public trust in the state's health system. It is a direct response to decades of systemic challenges in primary healthcare provision, aiming to fortify the very foundations of the state's health infrastructure through targeted, sustainable interventions.

"Project Ekwueme": A Three-Phase Blueprint for PHC Revitalisation

"Project Ekwueme" is structured around a pragmatic three-phase approach: Build, Equip, and Employ (BEE). This comprehensive framework addresses the multifaceted challenges of healthcare delivery, from dilapidated infrastructure to inadequate staffing and lack of essential resources.

The 'Build' phase of Project Ekwueme involves the rapid renovation and retrofitting of 200 Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) across all 17 Local Government Areas. This ambitious target ensures that at least one functional PHC is available in each of the state's 184 political wards, with an additional 16 centres strategically established in previously underserved communities. The commitment to completing this phase within an initial 100-day timeframe underscores the administration's urgency and determination to deliver tangible results swiftly. This rapid infrastructural upgrade is crucial for creating welcoming and functional environments where basic health services can be effectively rendered.

Following the structural improvements, the 'Equip' phase focuses on furnishing these newly renovated facilities with essential medical equipment, diagnostic tools, appropriate furniture, and a consistent supply of necessary consumables. This goes beyond mere aesthetics, ensuring that healthcare professionals have the requisite instruments to provide effective



This transition is a critical, research based step towards addressing the perennial human resource gap in the health sector, ensuring a steady supply of well-trained nurses and midwives for the revitalised PHCs and other healthcare facilities



diagnoses and treatments. The provision of modern diagnostic tools at the primary level is a particularly pragmatic step, as it reduces the need for patients to travel to higher-level facilities for basic tests, thereby improving efficiency and reducing healthcare costs for individuals. This phase is critical for optimising the functionality of each PHC, transforming them from mere structures into fully operational healthcare units.

The third, and arguably most vital, component is the 'Employ' phase. This centres on the systematic recruitment and deployment of qualified healthcare personnel, including doctors, nurses, midwives, and community health workers. Addressing the human resource gap has been a persistent challenge in primary healthcare across Nigeria. By prioritising the staffing of these centres, Governor Otti's administration ensures that the revitalised facilities are not just aesthetically pleasing or well-equipped, but are also adequately manned by competent professionals. This strategic deployment aims to enhance the quality of care, reduce patient waiting times, and foster stronger patient-provider relationships at the grassroots level. The emphasis on community health workers, in particular, highlights a research-based understanding of their role in outreach, health education, and early detection of health issues within communities.

Comprehensive Healthcare Services and Targeted Free Provision

Beyond the physical revitalisation of PHCs, Governor Otti's administration is deeply committed to ensuring that these centres deliver a comprehensive range of essential services. The renovations are specifically designed to optimise PHCs for the provision of crucial primary healthcare interventions, from immunisation programmes to maternal and child health services, basic curative care, and health education.

A particularly impactful project under this administration is the commitment to providing free healthcare to vulnerable groups under the state's healthcare insurance scheme. This includes individuals over 70 years of age, children under five, and pregnant women. This policy is a direct response

to the socio-economic realities of many Abians, aiming to remove financial barriers that often prevent the most susceptible segments of the population from accessing vital medical attention. By ensuring free services for these groups, the government is not only improving health outcomes but also reducing the burden of out-of-pocket expenses, which can be catastrophic for low-income households.

The practical implementation of this commitment is evident in initiatives such as the three-day free medical outreach launched by the Governor's wife, Mrs. Priscilla Chidinma Otti, in collaboration with the State Ministry of Health. Held at the SDG Multi-Purpose Hospital in Etitila Autonomous Community, Ugwuagbo Local Government Area, this outreach provided a broad spectrum of services, including eye care, prenatal care, paediatrics, laboratory tests, medication, and even surgical procedures. Such outreaches serve as critical access points for communities, demonstrating the government's resolve to bring healthcare directly to the people while simultaneously raising awareness about available services at the revitalised PHCs. Mrs. Otti's call for community safeguarding of hospital facilities further underscores the pragmatic approach to sustainability, recognising local ownership as key to protecting public assets.

Strategic Collaborations and Institutional Reforms

The success of Abia's primary healthcare projects is not solely an internal state effort but is significantly bolstered by strategic collaborations and institutional reforms. The state government actively engages with the federal government and international partners, leveraging expertise and resources to amplify its healthcare goals.

The establishment of the 100-bed SDG Multi-Purpose Hospital in Ugwuagbo, for instance, is a direct product of collaboration between the Otti administration and the federal government. This aligns seamlessly with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3, which focuses on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages. Such partnerships are vital



for mobilising the necessary funding, technical assistance, and best practices required for large-scale healthcare transformation. The involvement of entities like the United Nations provides a global framework and additional support for the state's health programmes.

Beyond external partnerships, Governor Otti's administration is implementing crucial institutional reforms to strengthen the healthcare workforce. A significant development embedded within "Project Ekwueme" is the transitioning of the Abia State School of Nursing into the Abia State College of Nursing Sciences. This elevation aims to enhance the quality and scope of nursing education in the state, ensuring that the institution meets national accreditation standards, expands its academic offerings, and increases the intake and training of nursing professionals. This transition is a critical, researched-based step towards addressing the perennial human resource gap in the health sector, ensuring a steady supply of well-trained nurses and midwives for the revitalised PHCs and other healthcare facilities.

Furthermore, the state is actively engaged in training community health workers. These frontline healthcare providers are indispensable for extending the reach of PHC services, particularly in rural and remote areas. They serve as crucial links between the community and the PHCs, providing outreach services, conducting health education, and facilitating early detection and referral of health issues. This investment in community health workers reflects a pragmatic understanding of the need for a decentralised and community-embedded healthcare approach.

Robust Monitoring, Evaluation, and a Vision for the Future

A hallmark of a pragmatic and researched-based approach to development is a strong emphasis on monitoring and evaluation. The Abia State Government is actively developing a comprehensive framework to monitor and evaluate the progress of the PHC renovations

and service delivery. This data-driven planning approach, explicitly mentioned as a focus for "Project Ekwueme," ensures accountability, identifies bottlenecks, and allows for continuous improvement based on real-time feedback from the ground. Such a framework is essential for ensuring that investments yield the desired health outcomes and that resources are utilised efficiently.

"Project Ekwueme" serves as the foundational phase of a much grander, long-term vision: the Abia Medical City initiative. This ambitious project envisions the establishment of a world-class quaternary and biomedical research hub in the region. While the primary focus of "Project Ekwueme" remains PHC, it is intricately linked to this broader vision. The project also includes the upgrade of three general hospitals—one per senatorial district—to serve as regional referral centres. These hospitals are being equipped and remodelled to support emergency services, maternal and child health, and surgical procedures. This strengthening of secondary care facilities directly complements the PHC revitalisation by ensuring a seamless continuum of care, where patients requiring more specialised interventions can be effectively referred from the primary level. The Abia Medical City is also intended as a "Proof of Concept," demonstrating the state's capacity for high-level medical innovation.

The historic nature of these projects is underscored by the planned official flag-off of the Abia Medical City by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, which was initially scheduled for May 23, 2025. This national endorsement highlights the significance of Abia's healthcare initiatives on a broader scale.

In conclusion, Governor Alex Otti's administration in Abia State is orchestrating a remarkable healthcare renaissance through a series of well-conceived and pragmatically executed primary healthcare projects. From the rapid renovation and equipping of 200 PHCs under "Project Ekwueme" to the provision of free healthcare for vulnerable groups, strategic collaborations, and vital institutional reforms in nursing education and community health, the state is building a resilient, accessible, and high-quality healthcare system. This unprecedented commitment, particularly at the subnational level, to invest so significantly within such a short timeframe, positions Abia State as a compelling model for integrated health reform. It is a crucial step towards achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and ensuring improved health outcomes for all residents, setting a benchmark not just for other Nigerian states but potentially for other countries seeking to accelerate primary healthcare revitalisation.

HEALTHCARE AT EVERY DOORSTEP:

How Gov Mbah is Crashing Maternal Mortality



Across the gentle hills and red earth of Enugu State, a quiet but revolutionary transformation is unfolding, one that's touching the lives of mothers, children, and entire communities. It's not wrapped in political bluster or veiled in bureaucracy. It is tactile. It is visible. And it is saving lives.

Enugu is taking responsibility for its people's health and in doing so, it is redefining the meaning of governance, of community, and of what it means to care.

At the heart of this transformation is a bold, ambitious initiative: the roll-out of 260 fully equipped, self-sustaining Type-2 Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs), one for every ward in the state. This is not healthcare as charity or afterthought. This is healthcare as justice. As a legacy. As life itself.

Imagine this: Each of these 260 PHCs is a 13-room marvel, complete with consulting rooms, maternity wards, pharmacies, diagnostic laboratories, staff quarters, and round-the-clock power supply driven by solar energy. These aren't token projects or patched-up sheds with faded paint. They are modern sanctuaries of care—equipped with digital medical records, ECG machines, oxygen concentrators, and patient monitors.

They are designed not only to treat illness but to affirm the dignity of every Enugu resident—urban or rural, rich or poor.

With this bold push, Enugu has set out to crash maternal mortality, improve childhood health, and advance toward universal healthcare coverage. Already, maternal deaths have dropped by an astonishing 400%, according to early implementation assessments. And the best part? This is just the beginning.

Built to Last: A New Health Architecture

The design of these PHCs reflects a futuristic mindset grounded in grassroots realities. Each centre runs on solar-

powered boreholes and energy systems to guarantee 24/7 operations, ensuring that no woman is turned away during labour and no child denied care at night due to power outages.

Beyond infrastructure, they boast comprehensive services—antenatal care, skilled delivery, immunization, HIV testing, laboratory diagnostics, and family planning. Whether it's a malaria test or a thyroid function screening, Enugu's PHCs are prepared.

Staffing is being scaled with the same intensity. Midwives, nurses, medical records officers, and lab technicians are being recruited and deployed. For once, buildings won't outnumber caregivers.

A Digital Health Renaissance

But what truly sets Enugu's PHC strategy apart is its embrace of digital healthcare. Each facility is powered by a fully integrated Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system. Patients' histories are logged, tracked, and shared in real-time across platforms—a dream in most Nigerian states.

This isn't just modern for show—it's smart. It allows for faster diagnosis, improved continuity of care, better data for planning, and a streamlined referral system between PHCs and secondary hospitals.

The recent onboarding of 500 residents onto the Enugu E-Health platform during the Emene PHC launch is proof that digital health access is no longer a theory—it's a reality being lived, one patient at a time.

From Vision to Reality: Mbah's Mission

Governor Peter Mbah, the visionary behind this health renaissance, has anchored his campaign promises on two pillars: human development and economic prosperity. But even he knows—there is no prosperity without health. No workforce without wellness.

At the commissioning of newly re-equipped Type-3 PHCs in Uzo Uwani, Awgu, and Nkanu East, Mbah made it clear:

this is not just a healthcare project; it is the backbone of the \$30 billion GDP ambition for the state.

“If we want to build a prosperous Enugu,” said Mbah, through the Secretary to the State Government Prof. Chidiebere Onyia, “we must first build a healthy Enugu. This healthcare infrastructure will power our economy, one healthy citizen at a time.”

These facilities are not built to serve some. They are built to serve all.

More Than Clinics: These Are Lifelines

The re-equipped PHCs go beyond the minimum. In Adani, Agbogugu, and Nara-Unateze, residents now have access to diagnostic tools once reserved for urban hospitals: blood group typing, liver and kidney function tests, hormonal assays, glycated hemoglobin, hepatitis panels, and more.

From nebulizers to suction machines, from sterilization units to oxygen cylinders, these clinics don't just stabilize—they save.

And they've been backed by those who know what real change looks like. The World Health Organization (WHO), in its endorsement, commended the Governor's prioritization of healthcare. At a recent event, WHO's Dr. Ugwu Adaeze called on mothers and families to “maximize the services being offered,” assuring continued partnership with the state.

Enugu's Smart Strategy: Health Meets Security, Economy

There's a synergy here that's often missing in other states: infrastructure meets strategy, strategy meets security, and security meets sustainability.

Local Government Chairmen from Awgu, Nkanu East, and Uzo Uwani didn't just show up for the cameras—they pledged ownership. They committed to protecting the PHCs, providing security for staff, and championing health-seeking behaviours within their communities.

ALGON Chairman Hon. Edeh summed it up best: “These aren't just government facilities. They're community assets.”

It's easy to celebrate these new successes. But one must never forget the pit from which Enugu rose.

As recently as five years ago, PHCs across the state were derelict. Crumbling walls. Broken beds. No light. No water. Pregnant women travelling over 10 kilometers to find a nurse, or settling for risky births at home with traditional birth attendants.

So how did Enugu become the second-best state in Nigeria for childhood immunisation in 2021 and second in overall PHC performance, according to the State of States PHC Delivery Report?

According to Dr. George Ugwu, Executive Secretary of the Enugu State Primary Health Care Development Agency (ESPHCDA), it began with a rare ingredient in Nigerian governance: political will.

The passage of the Enugu State Healthcare Reform

Law in 2018 created a legal backbone for action. By 2019, the agency had developed a roadmap, set up six operational units, and began a thorough overhaul of the system, focusing on both policy and people.

“His Excellency appointed me to lead this effort, and I've been committed to fulfilling that vision,” Dr. Ugwu said. And indeed, the results are rolling in like the dawn.

If Ekiti and Lagos have shown how focused healthcare reforms can transform lives, Enugu is now part of that vanguard, a model not only for Southeast Nigeria, but for the country.

By aligning infrastructure with human capital, fusing digital tools with grassroots realities, and embedding health within its economic development plan, Enugu is teaching us a profound



lesson: you don't need to wait for federal intervention to change lives. You just need focus, courage, and follow-through.

The benefits of this transformation ripple far beyond the walls of any PHC. Reduced maternal mortality means more women surviving childbirth. Healthier children mean a smarter, more productive future generation. Immunisation coverage ensures community immunity. And above all, families no longer have to choose between survival and

savings.

What Enugu has achieved is not just a feat of construction—it is a triumph of compassion-backed governance.

Yes, challenges remain. Full staffing for all 260 PHCs will take time. Logistics, maintenance, and funding continuity are always hurdles in Nigeria's public health system.

But the foundation is strong. The laws are in place. The data systems are working. And the people are seeing results.

With global partners like WHO and UNICEF on board, and a government that is walking its talk, the dream of universal health coverage in Enugu is no longer far-fetched. It is arriving, room by room, ward by ward, life by life.

The story of healthcare in Enugu is not about hospitals or politics. It is about a child who will grow up healthy. A mother who will live to raise her family. A farmer who can return to his field, pain-free. A teacher who can show up to school, whole and well.

It is a story of power—not the power to control, but the power to heal.

Governor Peter Mbah once said, “We want every citizen to join the prosperity agenda of our administration.” But prosperity is a seed. And healthcare is the soil.

And in Enugu State, that soil is rich. The rain has come. And already, the harvest of health is beginning.

ANAMBRA:

Consolidating on Winning the PHC Challenge



Anambra State, a beacon of progress in Nigeria's South-East, is currently witnessing a remarkable transformation in its primary healthcare (PHC) landscape. Under the visionary and meticulously pragmatic leadership of Governor Charles Chukwuma Soludo, the state has embarked on an ambitious journey to fundamentally overhaul its PHC system, ensuring that accessible, high-quality, and sustainable health services are not merely aspirational but a tangible reality for every citizen. This profound commitment has not only significantly elevated health outcomes across the state but has also garnered national recognition, firmly establishing Anambra as the pre-eminent model for PHC development in Nigeria.

The state's existing healthcare infrastructure, comprising a robust network of 575 Primary Health Care Centres (PHCs), alongside 37 secondary and 2 tertiary facilities spread across its 21 Local Government Areas, provides a formidable foundation. However, it is the strategic and evidence-based interventions of the current administration that have truly propelled Anambra to the zenith of primary health development, culminating in its prestigious recognition as the best-performing state in this critical sector. This accolade is not a mere symbolic gesture but a testament to a deep-seated commitment to pragmatic reforms, robust investment, and unwavering dedication to public well-being.

The Zenith of Achievement: Anambra's National Acclaim in PHC Development

Anambra State's ascendance to the pinnacle of primary healthcare development was unequivocally affirmed at the 2024 Primary Health Care Leadership Challenge Awards, held in Abuja. In a truly magnificent display of excellence, the state emerged as the overall best-performing state, securing a substantial prize of \$1.2 million. This impressive sum com-



prised \$700,000 as the overall winner and an additional \$500,000 as the South-East zonal champion. This victory was not arbitrary; it was the culmination of a rigorous evaluation process, part of a challenge launched in 2022 by the Federal Government, the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), and esteemed partners such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and UNICEF. The challenge meticulously assessed states against critical indicators including governance, financing, service delivery, and sustainability – areas where Anambra demonstrably excelled.

Vice President Kashim Shettima, representing the Federal Government, lauded the initiative for its role in advancing Nigeria's healthcare agenda, urging sustained efforts towards universal health coverage. His commendation underscored the national significance of Anambra's achievement. Professor AbdulRahman AbdulRazaq, Chairman of the NGF, highlighted the "Seattle Declaration's" instrumental role in driving PHC reforms, a declaration that Anambra has evidently taken to heart. Professor Ali Pate, the Minister of Health, further corroborated the tangible impact of such reforms, reporting a national investment of N46 billion in 8,000 health facilities, a commendable 16.7% drop in under-five mortality, and a discernible increase in public confidence in the health system. While challenges such as health expenditure and immunisation gaps persist nationally, Anambra's performance stands as a beacon of what is achievable through resolute leadership and strategic implementation.

Uche Amaonwu of the Gates Foundation commended the governor's leadership amidst fiscal challenges, while UNICEF's Cristian Munduate passionately re-emphasised healthcare as a fundamental human right. Dr. Muiy Aina, CEO of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), noted the challenge's success in spurring states to strengthen their PHC systems, with Anambra leading the charge. This national recognition is not merely a feather in the cap; it provides a research-based validation of Anambra's comprehensive and effective strategies, offering a blueprint for other states to emulate in their pursuit of health equity.

Revitalising Infrastructure: The Backbone of Accessible Care

At the heart of Anambra's PHC transformation lies a robust programme of infrastructural revitalisation. The state has moved decisively to upgrade its existing network of PHCs, ensuring that these vital community touchpoints are not just present on paper but are fully functional, well-equipped, and conducive to delivering high-quality care. A notable example of this commitment is the comprehensive overhaul of the Owerre-ekukala PHC in Orumba South LGA. This facility has undergone a profound transformation, now boasting a solar-powered borehole ensuring consistent water supply, a fully functional structure, and comfortable staff quarters – a critical incentive for attracting and retaining healthcare professionals in rural areas. These upgrades, facilitated through the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund (BHCPF), exemplify a pragmatic approach to leveraging national resources for local impact.

Beyond revitalising existing structures, the state government is also actively engaged in the construction of new PHC Centres. A prime example is the ongoing construction of a Type 1 PHC at Umerum in Ayamelum LGA, a project funded by the Federal Ministry of Health. These new builds are strategically located to address geographical access gaps, ensuring that even the most remote communities have a modern, well-designed facility

within reasonable reach. The emphasis on new construction, alongside renovation, demonstrates a dual strategy to both mend past neglects and proactively expand the healthcare footprint.

The impact of these infrastructural projects is profound. They transform previously dilapidated or underutilised facilities into vibrant centres of health, fostering community trust and encouraging greater uptake of services. The provision of essential amenities like reliable power and water, coupled with improved structural integrity, creates an environment where healthcare workers can perform optimally and patients can receive care in dignity. This tangible investment in physical infrastructure is a research-based necessity for improving service readiness, which directly correlates with better health outcomes.

Modernising Diagnostics: The ASLOP Initiative

A truly magnificent development in Anambra's PHC landscape is the concerted effort to modernise diagnostic services, a critical yet often overlooked component of primary healthcare. The state has embarked on the Anambra State Laboratory Optimization Project (ASLOP), a pioneering initiative in partnership with Bloom Public Health. This project is systematically upgrading and optimising diagnostic capabilities at key healthcare centres, including four General Hospitals and, significantly, one PHC in Onitsha.

The strategic importance of ASLOP cannot be overstated. Accurate and timely diagnostics are the bedrock of effective clinical decision-making. By enhancing laboratory services at the PHC level, Anambra is ensuring that common diseases can be promptly and accurately identified, leading to more effective treatment and reduced complications. This also has a pragmatic benefit: it alleviates the burden on secondary and tertiary hospitals, as fewer patients will require referral for basic diagnostic tests. The project encompasses the provision of modern laboratory equipment, training for laboratory personnel, and the implementation of robust quality assurance protocols. This investment reflects a deep understanding that without reliable diagnostics, even the best clinical care can be compromised, making ASLOP a truly research-based and impactful intervention.

Enhancing Service Delivery: Immunisation, Waste Management, and Quality Assurance

Anambra's commitment to PHC excellence is further demonstrated through its rigorous focus on enhancing service delivery across multiple fronts.

Immunisation Campaigns: The state actively participates in and champions national polio immunisation campaigns, leveraging innovative vaccines like nOPV2 to protect children against type two polio paralysis. These campaigns are meticulously planned and executed, often involving extensive community mobilisation to achieve high coverage rates. Beyond polio, the state maintains robust routine immunisation programmes, ensuring that children receive a full complement of vaccines against preventable diseases. The success in this area is vital for reducing child mortality and morbidity, contributing directly to the state's recognition as a top performer.

Addressing Medical Waste: A pragmatic yet often overlooked aspect of public health is proper medical waste management. The ASPHCDA has placed significant emphasis on the proper disposal of medical waste at PHCs. This initiative is crucial for maintaining a clean and healthy environment within and around health facilities, preventing the spread of infections, and protecting both healthcare workers and the community from hazardous materials. This commitment to environmental health within the healthcare context is a testament to a comprehensive and



responsible approach to public health.

Supportive Supervision Visits: To ensure quality service delivery and accountability, ASPHCDA officials conduct regular supportive supervision visits to PHCs across the state. These visits are not punitive but are designed to monitor activities, provide on-the-spot training, address challenges faced by health workers, and ensure adherence to established standards of care. This continuous quality improvement mechanism is a research-based strategy for strengthening health systems, fostering a culture of excellence, and ensuring that the investments in infrastructure and human resources translate into tangible improvements in patient care.

Strategic Partnerships and Funding Mechanisms: The Engine of Growth

The magnificent developments in Anambra's PHC sector are propelled by a robust framework of strategic partnerships and diversified funding mechanisms. The state government understands that achieving universal health coverage requires a collaborative ecosystem, bringing together expertise and resources from various sectors.

The Saving Lives and Livelihoods (SLL) Project, a collaboration between Sydani Group and ASPHCDA, exemplifies this partnership approach. This project is specifically designed to strengthen health systems and facilitate the integration of life course vaccines into routine immunisation programmes. Such targeted partnerships allow Anambra to leverage specialised technical expertise and innovative approaches to address specific public health challenges, ensuring that its immunisation programmes are not only widespread but also comprehensive and sustainable.

Furthermore, the state benefits significantly from the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund (BHCPF), a critical funding mechanism from the Federal Government aimed at improving access to essential health services. As demonstrated by the revitalisation of the Owerre-ekukala PHC, the BHCPF provides the necessary financial impetus for infrastructural upgrades, equipment procurement, and operational support at the primary level.

A particularly impactful partnership is with the World Bank, which has provided a substantial \$500 million loan facility to finance the Human Capital Opportunities for Prosperity and Equity (HOPE) project. This project, while broad in scope, specifically includes components aimed at improving healthcare services across the country, with Anambra being a key beneficiary. This significant international funding provides the necessary capital for large-scale, transformative health initiatives, demonstrating confidence in Anambra's leadership and its capacity for effective project implementation.

Finally, Community Engagement remains a vital component of Anambra's strategy. Organisations like COMEN are actively working to influence community development priorities, including healthcare, by engaging direct-



ly with community members and advocating for their needs. This bottom-up approach ensures that healthcare interventions are responsive to the actual needs and preferences of the populace, fostering a sense of ownership and increasing the likelihood of programme success and sustainability.

A Blueprint for Sustainable Health Equity

Anambra State's journey in primary healthcare development under Governor Charles Chukwuma Soludo's administration is nothing short of magnificent. The state has not merely undertaken projects; it has meticulously crafted and implemented a comprehensive strategy that addresses the multi-faceted dimensions of healthcare delivery. From its stellar performance in national PHC challenges and the strategic revitalisation of its extensive PHC network to the pioneering modernisation of diagnostic services through ASLOP, Anambra is setting new standards.

The commitment to enhancing service delivery through robust immunisation campaigns, responsible medical waste management, and continuous supportive supervision underscores a pragmatic and research-based approach to public health. Furthermore, the active cultivation of strategic partnerships with national and international bodies, coupled with the effective leveraging of diverse funding mechanisms, ensures the sustainability and scalability of these interventions.

Anambra's achievements are a testament to the power of visionary leadership combined with meticulous planning and dedicated execution. The state is not just improving health outcomes; it is building a resilient, equitable, and high-quality primary healthcare system that serves as a compelling blueprint for other subnational entities. This is a true healthcare renaissance, promising a healthier and more prosperous future for all residents of Anambra State.

The commitment to enhancing service delivery through robust immunisation campaigns, responsible medical waste management, and continuous supportive supervision underscores a pragmatic and research-based approach to public health

Hope Rising: Steadily Rebuilding PHC



Gov Uzodimma

Since January 15, 2020, when Governor Hope Uzodimma assumed leadership of Imo State, a new wind of reform has swept through the state's healthcare system—particularly at the grassroots level. Driven by the principle that access to quality healthcare should not be a privilege but a right, his administration has set in motion a series of transformative initiatives aimed at reviving primary healthcare, expanding insurance coverage, empowering communities, and strengthening the system's data backbone.

The effort is as ambitious as it is urgent, especially in a post-pandemic landscape where health systems must be resilient, inclusive, and responsive. In Imo State, the vision is becoming visible—from upgraded health centres and broader insurance coverage to increased community engagement and data-led decision-making.

Revitalizing Primary Health Facilities: Brick by Brick, Ward by Ward

At the heart of the reform is the revitalization of 55 public health centres strategically located across Imo's 27 Local Government Areas. These facilities are undergoing comprehensive upgrades—structurally, logistically, and clinically—to ensure they can serve as reliable access points for essential health services.

One such example is the Primary Health Care Centre at Ezinifite Mbaise, where ongoing renovations have transformed the once-neglected building into a modern hub of healthcare. It now offers services like immunization, antenatal care, maternal health interventions, and outpatient consultations, all closer to the doorstep of underserved communities.

For many rural dwellers who previously had to travel long distances or endure overcrowded tertiary hospitals, the revitalization of PHCs represents not just convenience, but dignity.

Health Insurance: Removing Financial Barriers

Yet bricks and mortar alone don't solve healthcare inaccessibility. Financial hardship remains one of the biggest barriers to care for many Nigerians. To this end, the Uzodimma administration is tackling the problem head-on by expanding health insurance coverage across both the formal and informal sectors.

In a pioneering move, the government has introduced community-based health insurance schemes, administered through committees in every LGA. These localized bodies are responsible for sensitizing residents, enrolling households, and liaising with the Imo State Health Insurance Agency (IMSHIA).

To deepen inclusivity, the state covers premiums for all state and local government workers, as well as pensioners—ensuring that those who have served the state are not left behind. This approach not only improves enrolment rates but also reflects the administration's moral compass.

Health insurance is no longer an abstract concept in Imo. It is becoming part of household conversations, local government strategies, and traditional council meetings.

Community Engagement: Building Ownership from the Bottom Up

Governor Uzodimma's healthcare approach recognizes a fundamental truth: no reform can succeed without the buy-in of the people. Community participation is not a side note in Imo—it is central to the design and delivery of healthcare.

Traditional rulers and community leaders across the state have been mobilized as advocates and custodians of the new health programs. Their influence has been instrumental in building trust, dispelling myths, and encouraging the uptake of services such as immunization and maternal health visits.

This bottom-up approach, which promotes shared responsibility, ensures that health interventions resonate with cultural realities and local needs. It also turns the community into a watchdog, ensuring



Hope Rising: Steadily Rebuilding PHC

The CBHW model not only increases the reach of healthcare but also creates jobs, enhances community resilience, and builds a bridge between formal health systems and local populations.

A Long-Term Vision: Health as a Legacy

What Imo State is doing today is more than governance—it's legacy-building. It is a coordinated effort to create a health system that is resilient, inclusive, and adaptable to future shocks.

The state's strategy is neither flashy nor experimental. It is methodical, people-centered, and rooted in the realities of rural and peri-urban life. By combining infrastructure

upgrades, expanded insurance, empowered communities, robust data systems, and external partnerships, Imo is building a healthcare ecosystem that could well become a model for other subnational governments.

Governor Uzodimma's administration is aware that health outcomes don't change overnight.

But what has been set in motion is a pipeline of reform whose results will be more evident with time—healthier mothers, better birth outcomes, reduced preventable diseases, and improved public trust in government services.

In a region where health challenges remain daunting—from poverty and migration to underfunded facilities and misinformation—Imo State stands out for its quiet but steady progress. Governor Uzodimma's administration has redefined what is possible when political will meets policy depth.

With every upgraded PHC, every health worker trained, and every rural

accountability in service delivery.

While many health programs falter due to poor data and weak monitoring, Imo is doing things differently. The state is investing in robust data management systems to drive evidence-based policymaking and service delivery.

A notable example is the Integrated Diabetes Awareness and Care (IDAC) project, which focuses on non-communicable diseases like Type 2 Diabetes and Hypertension. Through regular Performance and Data Review Meetings, healthcare officials review indicators, track progress, and make course corrections where necessary.

Simultaneously, the state has launched training programs to build the capacity of healthcare workers. These efforts target frontline workers in rural communities, equipping them with up-to-date knowledge on diabetes care, hypertension screening, and digital data recording.

Such initiatives are setting a precedent for data-driven healthcare in Nigeria's subnational systems—bridging the gap between research and real-world impact.

IMPACT Project: A Federal Push with Local Energy

Imo is not operating in isolation. The state is tapping into national and global partnerships to bolster its healthcare momentum. One of the most prominent is the IMPACT Project (Immunization Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services)—a Federal Government program supported by the World Bank.

The project is designed to improve the utilization and quality of key services such as immunization, maternal and neonatal care, and malaria prevention. In Imo, IMPACT is being implemented across multiple LGAs, providing both technical and financial support to primary healthcare centers.

Beyond funding, the project introduces innovations such as integrated outreach programs, real-time service tracking, and performance-based incentives for facilities. These tools enhance transparency and encourage a culture of excellence at the frontline.

In another forward-thinking move, the Uzodimma administration is supporting the Community-Based Health Workforce (CBHW) Strategy. This approach focuses on building a homegrown, grassroots health workforce—made up of trained community health workers embedded within local communities.

These workers are often the first point of contact for the sick, especially in hard-to-reach areas. Their responsibilities range from dispensing malaria drugs and monitoring pregnancies to providing family planning services and conducting routine health education.



PHC Impact:

When Vision Meets Investment in Ekiti

• Employs 250 health workers, renovates 103 PHCs

In the undulating hills and quiet courtyards of Ekiti State, a silent revolution is rewriting the health narrative of an entire people. It's not trumpeted with fanfare nor paraded with glossy billboards. Yet, in every renovated clinic, every vaccinated child, every safe delivery, and every health worker with renewed purpose, it speaks—loud and clear.

Under Governor Biodun Oyebanji, Ekiti is not just treating illness; it's building resilience, restoring dignity, and reclaiming hope. What's unfolding is a quiet, radical transformation of the primary healthcare (PHC) landscape—village by village, ward by ward, life by life.

From Neglect to Nurture: A New Dawn for PHCs

There was a time when many primary healthcare centres in Ekiti stood as relics of forgotten policy—buildings without medicine, nurses without tools, communities without care. Today, that memory is being replaced by one of healing and hope.

The state's ambitious plan to upgrade at least one PHC in each of the 177 wards has taken off in earnest. In its first phase, nine health facilities—including the one in Okeyinmi, Ado Ekiti—have been prioritized for overhaul. Backed by the COVID-19 Response Resource Mobilization Committee, this initiative is breathing life into long-neglected centers, making them functional, reliable, and fully equipped to serve their communities.

But the revolution isn't just infrastructural—it's philosophical. It is the belief that healthcare is a right, not a privilege. That rural lives matter just as much as urban ones. That public health must be proactive, preventive, and present.

Ikere as a Mirror: Stories of Impact

Nowhere is this transformation more vivid than in Ikere Local Government Area, where PHCs have shed their shadows and stepped into the light. The Basic Health Centre behind Sammy Hotel has not only been renovated but expanded—boasting a new maternity ward and a functional laboratory. Women who once feared childbirth now walk in with confidence and walk out with healthy babies in their arms.

At the Are/Araromi PHC, shiny new equipment hums with readiness. And in Ilutitun II, solar-powered lighting ensures that healthcare doesn't go dark when the sun sets. Even the Government Special School for the Blind now houses specialized medical tools—because inclusivity isn't a footnote, it's a principle.

These aren't isolated stories. They're part of a broader, coordinated effort—a blueprint for comprehensive grassroots healthcare.

Ulera Wa and the Insurance Lifeline

At the heart of Ekiti's healthcare revolution is its flagship program: Ulera Wa, a state-backed health insurance scheme designed to ensure that no Ekiti resident is left behind—regardless of income, status, or location.

"Ulera Wa" guarantees a basic package of primary healthcare services for one million residents by 2025—a staggering figure that reflects the boldness of the administration's human capital development agenda.

Through this program and the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHC PF), thousands of vulnerable residents—pregnant women, the elderly, children under five—can now access care without the fear of financial ruin. This is health equity in action. This is social justice with a stethoscope.

IMPACT: When Vision Meets Investment

Then came the IMPACT Program, "Immunization Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Service." With a World Bank-assisted injection of over N800 million into the health sector, Ekiti's transformation found new fuel.

At the official flag-off in Ado Ekiti, Governor Oyebanji presented a N4.6 million cheque to each of the 177 PHCs, a one-off investment fund to be used for purchasing essential drugs, renovating facilities, acquiring equipment, and implementing digital data management tools.

"We are not just investing in buildings; we are investing in people," said Governor Oyebanji. "The goal is simple yet profound—to reduce under-5 mortality and give every child in Ekiti a fighting chance at life."

This isn't just lip service.



Gov Oyebanji

When Vision Meets Investment in Ekiti

Governor Oyeibanji has framed healthcare not just as a political achievement, but as a moral responsibility. His tone is often pastoral, his strategy surgical. This blend of heart and head has given Ekiti a new model for subnational health governance: smart, sensitive, and scalable

Primary Health Care Centre, in Ijurun Ijoro Local Government, Ekiti State

It's strategy fused with empathy. Each health facility is required to draw up a work plan for using the funds. Oversight is strict. The expectations are clear: be catalytic, be accountable, be effective.

Empowering the Frontline: Building Human Capacity

But even the best policies need people to make them real. That's why Ekiti's reforms have gone deep into the engine room of human resources—retraining, retooling, and reenergizing the health workforce.

Thanks to the STRIPE project, implemented by the Sydani Group, over 75 health managers—from top-level administrators to mid-tier supervisors—

The Numbers Behind the Change

Let's talk numbers because progress should never be just poetic. Ekiti State invested N814 million in primary healthcare even before the IMPACT project came into play. Now, with additional World Bank support, the state is among the few in Nigeria with both components of the IMPACT initiative approved—a testament to its credibility and commitment.

Health indicators are on the rise. The state is reporting increased immunisation coverage, a reduction in maternal complications, and a noticeable decline in under-5 mortality. The Health Management Information System (HMIS) has been upgraded across facilities, enabling data-driven planning and faster response to disease outbreaks.

Ekiti employs 250 health workers, renovates 103 PHCs

The Ekiti State Commissioner for Health, Dr Oyeibanji Filani, has said that the state government is stepping up efforts to make the healthcare delivery attractive and accessible to people in all parts of the state particularly the grassroots.

Oyeibanji said that the state government have employed 250 nurses, midwives and community health officers.

The commissioner spoke at Otun Ekiti while rounding off a two-day community mobilisation and stakeholders' engagements for residents of Ikere, Ekiti Southwest, Moba and Ilejemeje local government areas, which held at Ikere Ekiti and Otun Ekiti.

The government he also said has offered free maternal health and childcare services and as well free laboratory test and malaria treatment for all residents at the 177 primary health centres across the state under the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund and Ulerawa programme if the state government. He urged the stakeholders to continue to encourage all health-seeking Ekiti residents to make use of health facilities in their communities for adequate and proper medical attention as well as reducing rates.

mortality

While responding to the residents' demands at the different health centres, Oyeibanji said that ongoing renovation of PHCs would cater for complaints about electricity, water and fence as all such had been incorporated.

He said that as part of efforts to ensure that the health facilities were attractive, "We are renovating 103 PHCs. They will all be equipped with necessary modern healthcare equipment and infrastructures. "We are also ensuring that when people get there, they meet with people who have the capacity, who are competent and who can treat them

"We have just employed 250 nurses, midwives and community health officers who are being distributed to the different PHCs to be able to serve and ensure that people have access to services.

have undergone comprehensive training. Through hands-on workshops and scenario-based learning, these managers were taught leadership, stakeholder engagement, project planning, and budget execution.

Mentorship programs have helped them translate classroom theory into field effectiveness. The result? Stronger health governance, better supervision, and more responsive service delivery.

Already, the results are visible. Health centres are better managed. Immunisation rates are climbing. Patients report shorter wait times and more reliable services. The engine is humming.



Leading the Charge: Lagos' Revolution in PHC Delivery

Lagos State, a dynamic megacity and Nigeria's economic powerhouse, is orchestrating a profound transformation in its primary healthcare (PHC) delivery. Under the strategic vision of Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu, the state is not only upgrading physical infrastructure but also spearheading a digital revolution, forging powerful partnerships with global entities like the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and fundamentally reshaping how its over 20 million residents access quality, affordable healthcare. This concerted effort is pragmatic, far-reaching, and sets a compelling benchmark for healthcare development in Nigeria.

Infrastructure Revitalization: The IMPACT Project and a Commitment to 24/7 Care

At the core of Lagos State's renewed focus on PHC is a significant investment in upgrading its healthcare facilities. The state government has embarked on a massive project to upgrade 27 Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) across Lagos under the IMPACT Project, with an ambitious completion timeline of just three to four months. This rapid execution demonstrates a tangible commitment to quick wins and immediate improvements in service delivery.

Professor Akin Abayomi, the Lagos State Commissioner for Health, during the official handover ceremony at Palm Avenue PHC in Mushin, underscored the collaborative nature of this initiative. He highlighted that the state government, in conjunction with the World Bank and other relevant stakeholders, will meticulously oversee the project to ensure its timely and efficient execution. The Immunization Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services (IMPACT) Project is a strategic national initiative aimed at enhancing healthcare service delivery, specifically focusing on improving the utilization and quality of immunization and malaria services, ultimately striving to reduce under-five mortality rates in program areas.

Commissioner Abayomi made a compelling appeal to Community Development Associations and other local stakeholders to lend their unwavering support to the contractors handling the upgrade, urging

residents to take full ownership of these vital initiatives. He stressed that these upgrades will significantly enhance the capacity of healthcare professionals to deliver essential services, reduce infant and maternal mortality rates, and improve overall public health outcomes. His call for residents to diligently utilize and maintain the upgraded facilities underscores a long-term vision for sustainability, ensuring that these investments serve future generations of Lagosians.

The Chairman of Mushin LGA, Hon. Emmanuel Bamigboye, lauded the initiative as a "historic milestone" in the collective effort to provide quality and accessible healthcare services. He commended Governor Sanwo-Olu's "dynamic leadership and dedication" to executing various social intervention programs and infrastructural projects across the state. Bamigboye eloquently articulated the fundamental principle driving these efforts: "Healthcare is the backbone of any thriving society. It is not just a necessity but a fundamental right of every citizen. The upgrading of these 27 Primary Healthcare Centres is a testament to our commitment to ensuring that every resident, irrespective of status or location, has access

to quality medical services." The strong attendance of key stakeholders, including Permanent Secretaries of various Health Districts, development partners, and health officials at the commissioning ceremony, further solidified the widespread support and collaborative spirit behind these transformative healthcare initiatives.

The Digital Frontier: Pioneering Electronic Medical Records (EMR) for Smarter Care

Beyond brick and mortar, Lagos State is leading a profound digital revolution in primary healthcare, embracing technology to fundamentally transform service delivery, data management, and patient care. This ambitious undertaking, the Lagos Primary Health Care (PHC) Digitization Project, is being spearheaded by the Lagos State Primary Health Care Board (LSPHCB) in collaboration with the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) and significant support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

A recent two-day Progress Review Workshop on May 22nd, 2025, served as a crucial strategic checkpoint, bringing together key stakeholders to evaluate the successful deployment of Electronic Medical Records (EMR) in 100 PHC facilities. The workshop also laid out an ambitious roadmap for full-scale implementation across all 326 PHCs in the state.

Dr. (Mrs.) Kemi Ogunyemi, Special Adviser to the Governor on Health, passionately articulated the vision: "The digitization of PHCs is not just about innovation, but about building a smarter, more sustainable health system that delivers better care to Lagosians. Today, we are defining the future of equitable and accessible healthcare for over 20 million residents of Lagos State. This is our opportunity to lead a digital revolution starting from the primary care level."

She further emphasized that the state's Digital-Enabled PHC Project is meticulously designed to support continuity of care, reduce duplication of efforts, and enhance data-driven public health interventions. EMRs are critical for improving diagnosis accuracy, diligently tracking patient outcomes, facilitating seamless referrals, and significantly strengthening the state's capacity for real-time disease surveillance. Dr. Ogunyemi also highlighted a critical aspect for sustainability: ensuring EMRs are no longer donor-dependent pilots but become co-financed, locally-owned solutions deeply embedded in the state's health system reform strategy, through initiatives like a dedicated digital health budget line and innovative public-private partnerships. Addressing challenges like fragmented systems, infrastructure



limitations, financial constraints, and human resource capacity, she noted the launch of the Digital Health Champions Program to equip healthcare providers with the necessary skills for a seamless transition.

Dr. Ibrahim Mustafa, Permanent Secretary of the Lagos State Primary Health Care Board, described the workshop as a "strategic checkpoint to consolidate the state's digital health gains and recalibrate for scale-up." He lauded the transformative impact of EMR platform deployment across 100 PHCs, observing "improved coordination, efficiency, and data integrity at the point of care." The ultimate goal, he affirmed, is to "institutionalize these gains and expand them across all 326 PHC facilities in Lagos." Dr. Mustafa also unveiled plans to operationalize the Lagos Smart Health Information Platform (SHIP), a centralized system designed to synchronize patient data across PHC, secondary, and tertiary facilities. "We're building a future where patient data follows the individual, not the location. This is the future of healthcare, and Lagos is ready to lead," he declared.

The impact of EMR is already being felt on the ground. The Medical Officer of Health (MOH) for Coker-Aguda LCDA, Dr. Duyile Akintomide, praised the positive impact of EMR on service delivery at Coker Aguda PHC, a fully digitized facility. He noted a significant reduction in patients' waiting time, with visits now completed within 15 to 20 minutes from reception to treatment. The digital system has also strengthened data collection and planning, enabling facilities to better prepare for daily patient turnout. While acknowledging initial staff adaptation challenges, Dr. Akintomide commended the impact of continuous training and community sensitization, ensuring staff comfort and public awareness of the technology's benefits.

The Chairman of Ojodu Local Council Development Area (LCDA), Hon. David Odunmbaku, reinforced this commitment, reaffirming his administration's dedication to smart governance through the implementation of a Local Electronic Medical Records (LEMR) system across PHCs in his area. He called the LEMR a "transformative step in modernizing healthcare delivery," emphasizing that "the manual system is outdated and inefficient. With the EMR, patient information becomes readily available at the touch of a button, facilitating faster and more accurate care."

Dr. Olumide Sojirin, Medical Director of Randle General Hospital, Surulere, also emphasized that EMR is now an indispensable global healthcare tool, enhancing





data accuracy, protecting patient confidentiality, and enabling real-time information sharing among healthcare providers. This ultimately leads to quicker decision-making, efficient service delivery, and more informed care, while also supporting the analysis of disease patterns.

Partnering for Health Outcomes: Focus on RMNCAH+N with the Gates Foundation

Lagos State's commitment to improving health outcomes is further amplified by strategic partnerships, notably with EngenderHealth and direct funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. On May 14th, 2025, the state government and EngenderHealth officially launched an advocacy project aimed at enhancing PHC delivery and boosting Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent Health and Nutrition (RMNCAH+N) across the state.

This initiative, aptly titled "Advocacy Solutions to Improve PHC and RMNCAH Delivery and Health Outcomes," is a collaborative effort with funding directly from the Gates Foundation, and strong support from the Lagos State Ministry of Health and other key health partners. Dr. (Mrs.) Kemi Ogunyemi described the project as a "timely intervention that would consolidate existing gains in health care delivery and further support the THEMES+ health transformation agenda of the current administration."

Dr. Ogunyemi acknowledged that while Lagos has made "remarkable progress," a lot still needs to be done. She emphasized that the partnership would help "identify and strengthen gaps in the system," built on existing systems with innovative advocacy tools, equity-



focused interventions, and community engagement to drive impact. "This is not just a ceremonial launch; it is a call to action," she stressed.

Dr. Kabiru Atta, Country Director for EngenderHealth, outlined the project's focus from October 2024 to April 2028, encompassing policy advocacy, gender-sensitive reforms, and robust accountability frameworks. The project aims to help the Lagos government prioritize pro-health RMNCAH and PHC agendas, strengthen gender-responsive health policies, and significantly increase budgetary support for these critical areas. A key focus is also ensuring every child receives proper nutrition, especially within the critical first 1,000 days of life. Progress will be measured by key metrics such as government health spending, workforce capacity, and policy accountability.

Mr. Olakunle Daramola, State Consultant representing the Gates Foundation, lauded Lagos State for its proactive collaboration with over 20 Gates-funded partner programs in the state. He affirmed the Foundation's deep commitment to maternal, newborn, and child health, stating, "Lagos continues to be a strategic partner in this vision. Nigeria is critical to Africa's success, and Lagos, as a leading state, is showing what is possible through innovation and collaboration." Daramola pledged continuous support for programs that prioritize equity, access, and accountability in healthcare delivery.

Dr. Ibrahim Mustafa, Permanent Secretary, Lagos State Primary Health Care Board, underscored the urgency of addressing maternal and child health outcomes, even with relatively better statistics in Lagos compared to other parts of the country. He emphasized that despite progress, "there was a considerable journey ahead to attain the standards expected of a subnational entity like Lagos."

In essence, Lagos State's impact on primary healthcare delivery is multifaceted and deeply compelling. From upgrading physical infrastructure and embracing cutting-edge digital solutions to forging powerful partnerships with global philanthropies, the state is meticulously constructing a resilient, equitable, and highly efficient healthcare system. Governor AbdulRazaq's administration is not just responding to healthcare needs; it is proactively shaping a healthier future for all Lagosians, demonstrating what pragmatic leadership combined with strategic collaboration can achieve in a densely populated urban environment.



Gov Adeleke's Strides in Osun's PHC

Since assuming office on November 27, 2022, Governor Ademola Adeleke of Osun State has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to revamping the state's healthcare sector, particularly focusing on the critical role of primary healthcare (PHC). Recognizing the dilapidated state of numerous health facilities upon his assumption, Governor Adeleke has launched an ambitious and comprehensive initiative to rehabilitate and upgrade all 332 focal primary healthcare centres across the state's wards. This monumental undertaking is not merely an infrastructural facelift; it represents a fundamental shift towards providing accessible, quality, and sustainable healthcare services to every citizen, especially those in rural and underserved communities.

From Dilapidation to Dignity: The 332 PHC Renovation Project

Upon his inauguration, Governor Adeleke, known for his "action Governor" approach, embarked on an on-the-spot assessment and needs analysis of various government facilities. His visit to a primary healthcare center in Osogbo, the state capital, starkly revealed the deep-seated decay and neglect within the health sector. The deteriorating structures and lack of basic amenities underscored a critical need for urgent intervention, a stark contrast to previous claims of significant investment in these centers. Indeed, a December 11, 2021, report by Sahara Reporters, titled "Osun Primary Health Centres In Shambles Despite \$20.5 Million Revitalisation Grants," had already exposed the dire situation, with staff lamenting the absence of electricity and clean water, forcing them to use kerosene lamps during night labors.

Bearing in mind his five-point thematic agenda, Governor Adeleke immediately prioritized the provision of

quality basic healthcare services as a core component of his government's welfare-centric approach. He understood that a robust PHC system is the bedrock of any successful healthcare strategy, as it serves as the most accessible and first-line medical facility for the populace. By strengthening PHCs, the administration aims to significantly reduce the burden on secondary and tertiary health institutions, allowing residents to receive proper healthcare at the community level.

This understanding spurred the creation of the Osun Primary Healthcare Renovation Project Committee, mandated to oversee the full-fledged rehabilitation and upgrades of all 332 focal health centers in the state's wards. The committee, led by Dr. Akindele Adekunle, the Project Coordinator and Special Adviser on Public Health to the Governor, embarked on meticulous field inspections and needs assessments. These assessments further exposed the extent of the infrastructural degradation, revealing instances where PHCs shared toilets with residential areas, had rodents and reptiles in labor wards, and where staff had to pool money for water in maternity centers. The pervasive lack of power supply was a constant challenge, hindering night-time operations crucial for 24-hour medical services.

The renovation efforts are proceeding in earnest and in phases. The project committee has recently completed the 2nd phase of inspection of the ongoing rehabilitation and upgrade, while the 3rd and 4th phases are simultaneously nearing 60% completion. This phased approach ensures systematic and comprehensive development. The team, led by Dr. Akindele Adekunle, has conducted visits to numerous PHCs across various Local Government Areas, witnessing the transformation firsthand. Specific examples of facilities that have seen this quality intervention include:

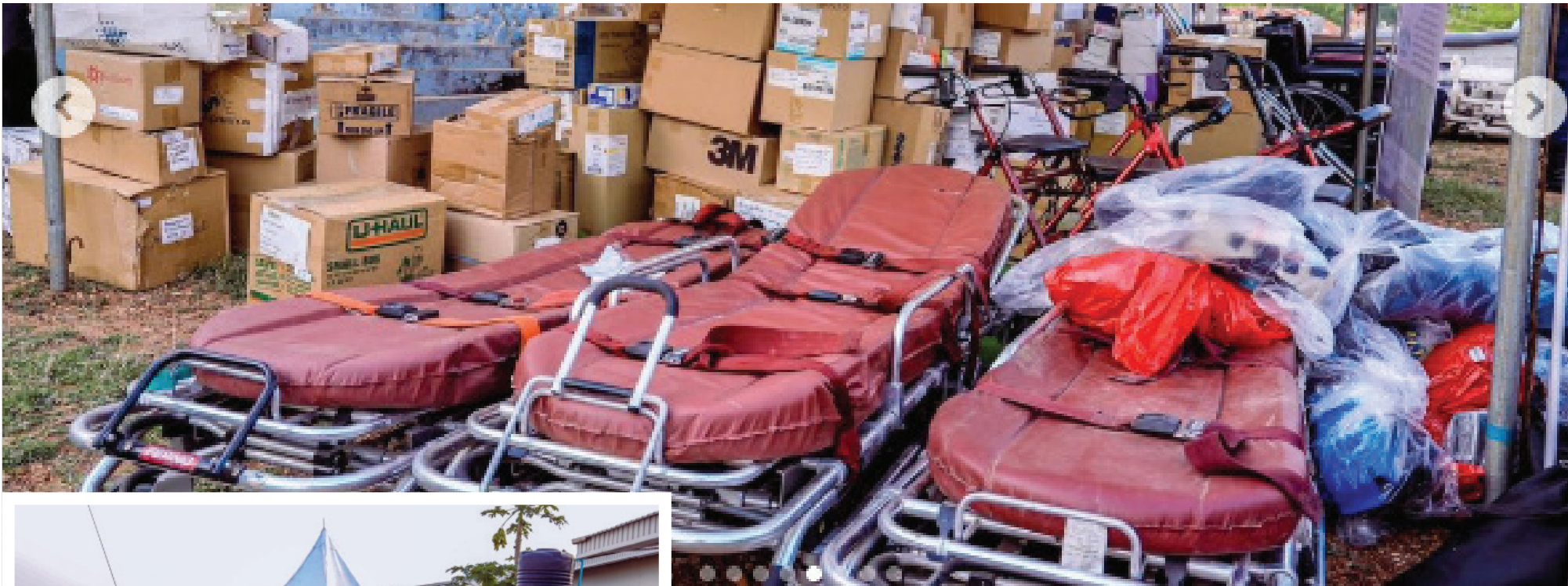
Odo-Otin LG: Oyan 1 PHC, Inisha PHC

Ejigbo LGA: Oke Ipadi MPH, Isale Isolo PHC

Isokan LG: Awala PHC

Atakumosa West LG: Ifewara PHC, Inisa/Isaobi PHC

The transformation of these centers is not merely cosmetic. A notable example is the Ifewara Primary Healthcare Centre in Atakumosa West



LG, which now boasts a newly installed solar-powered energy source, ensuring 24-hour electricity. This is a critical improvement, directly addressing the past challenges faced by healthcare workers who had to contend with darkness during night-time emergencies and child deliveries. The commitment to providing 24-hour water and power supply through alternative means like solar energy, along with the provision of essential drugs with the support of the Osun Primary Healthcare Board, aligns with the World Health Organization (WHO) standards for primary healthcare.

Beyond Infrastructure: A Holistic Approach to Healthcare Delivery

Governor Adeleke's commitment to primary healthcare extends far beyond physical renovations. His administration is implementing a multifaceted approach to address systemic issues and improve overall health outcomes.

i. "Imole Free Medical Outreach": Immediate Impact and Relief

Recognizing the urgent need to address immediate healthcare gaps, the administration launched the "Imole Free Medical Outreach" as a quick, short-term approach. This outreach program has been immensely successful, catering to over 50,000 residents and indigent citizens across the state. This initiative provides immediate medical relief, offering consultations, screenings, and treatments to those who might otherwise lack access to care. It serves as a vital bridge while the broader infrastructural reforms take root.

ii. Improved Staff Welfare and Morale:

The renovation projects have had a direct and positive impact on the morale and attitude of medical staff. With a "new lease of life being given these centres," the punctuality of workers is now commendable, as they "work with convenience and

comfortability at their workplace now." A conducive working environment, equipped with essential utilities and modern tools, significantly boosts job satisfaction and productivity, leading to better patient care. The Governor's focus on creating an enabling environment for healthcare workers demonstrates an understanding that human resources are as vital as physical infrastructure.

iii. Reduced Burden on Higher-Level Facilities:

A key strategic objective of the PHC revitalization is to reduce the workload on secondary health facilities, comprehensive, and tertiary health institutions in the state. By upgrading local and rural healthcare centers, residents can receive proper, prompt healthcare services closer to home, thereby reducing the need for unnecessary referrals and alleviating the pressure on higher-tier hospitals. This decentralized approach enhances efficiency across the entire healthcare spectrum.

iv. Data-Driven Progress and Accountability:

The Project Committee's initial on-the-spot assessment and facilities inspection for needs assessment were crucial in providing a clear picture of the challenges. This data-driven approach ensured that interventions were targeted and effective, rather than merely superficial. The continuous inspection of completion stages, as evidenced by the 2nd phase completion and the ongoing 3rd and 4th phase monitoring, ensures accountability

and progress tracking.

v. Anticipated Health Indices Improvement:

The long-term benefits of Governor Adeleke's intervention are expected to manifest in significant improvements in the state's health indices. With upgraded facilities, consistent power and water supply, availability of drugs, and a more motivated workforce, the rate of maternal mortality, malaria prevalence, and other health issues are projected to reduce drastically. This comprehensive approach is designed to create a healthier population, contributing to overall socio-economic development.

Specific Projects and Widespread Impact

The ongoing rehabilitation and upgrade project is truly statewide, impacting primary healthcare centers across Osun's diverse Local Government Areas. The comprehensive list of PHCs that have seen the quality intervention of Governor Ademola Adeleke administration includes:

- EDE-NORTH LG: Asunmo PHC, Sagba PHC, Olusokun PHC, Oke-Gada PHC, Aipola PHC, Apaso PHC, Oja-Timi PHC, Owode-Ede PHC;
- Ede South LG: Jagunjagun PHC, Babasanya PHC, Ededimeji PHC, Olodan PHC, Kuye PHC, Alajue PHC, Loogun-Egbeda PHC, Sekona PHC;
- EGBEDORE LG: Olorunsogo PHC, Ido Osun MPHC, Alasan PHC, Ara 1, Ojo PHC, Awo PHC, Iragberi PHC, Iwoye PHC, Ikotun PHC;
- Ejigbo LGA: Ilawo PHC, Ayegbogbo PHC, Oke Ipadi MPHC, Isale Isolo PHC,

- Popo PHC
- TWO LG: Mosinola PHC, Isale-Oba PHC, Moseru PHC, Yidi Oba PHC, Alaye PHC, Feesu PHC, Ogburo MPHC
- Aiyedire LG: Popo PHC, Oluponna, Olori PHC, Ilaji Parapo, Idi-Ogun PHC, Ileogbo, Ayitedo PHC, Ileogbo, Omisore PHC, Oluponna, Amobi PHC, Kuta, Isale-Oba PHC, Kuta Olaoluwa LG: Bode-Osi PHC, Asa MDG PHC, Algon PHC, Ikire-Ile, Telemu PHC, Ogbaagba PHC
- Ife-North LG: Edunabon 1 MPHC, Yakoooyo PHC, Oyere-Aborishade PHC, Onibambu PHC, Oyere 1, Akinlaalu PHC, Okooko PHC, Ipetumodu, Edunabon 2 PHC
- Ife East LG: Odo Iwara PHC, Iloro PHC, Okerewe 1, Omitoto PHC, Ilode 2, Ifelodun PHC, Yekemi PHC
- Ife South: Odesan PHC, Oke-Owena, Fayemi Ikija PHC, Ifetedo, Oke Amona PHC, Ifetedo, Garage Olode PHC, Onigbodogi PHC
- Area Office (Modakeke): Itaasin PHC, Adeowo PHC.
- Ife Central LG: Eleyele PHC, Sabo Olaolu PHC, Igboya PHC, Oja Tuntun PHC, Akarabata PHC, Enuwa PHC, Abagbooro PHC
- Atakunmosa West: Asawo PHC, Iyere PHC, Itagunmodi PHC, Ipoye PHC, Ifewara PHC, Inisa/Isaobi PHC, Oke-Oja PHC, Osu
- Atakunmosa East: Amuye-Faforiji PHC, Igangan PHC, Itaapa PHC, Iperindo PHC, Iwara PHC
- Obokun LG: Ajedan PHC, Imesi-Ile, Ilare PHC, Ilase PHC, Esa-Oke PHC, Ibokun PHC
- Oriade LG: Erin-Ijesha PHC, Erin-Oke PHC, Ira-Ikeji PHC, Ere-Ijesha PHC, Ikeji-Ile PHC, Iloko PHC, Ipetu-Ijesha PHC, Obalende PHC
- Ilesa East: Okesa PHC, Ilemo PHC, Anaye PHC Ido Ijesha PHC, Oke Iro PHC, Oke Ooye PHC, Imo PHC, Ijamo PHC
- Ilesa West: Igboji PHC, Orinkiran PHC, Idasa PHC, Ilaje PHC, Adeti PHC, Ikoti PHC, Ereja PHC, Oke-Iyin PHC
- Irewole LG: Omoda PHC, Moringbere PHC, Fidiwo MPHC, Ayedaade 2, Waasimi PHC, Ayedaade PHC, Atile PHC, Odeyinka MPHC
- Isokan LG: Oranran PHC, Ikoyi, Oke Alfa PHC, Apomu, Awala PHC, Total PHC, Ikoyi PHC
- Ayedaade LG: Wakajaye Town PHC, Wakajaye Junction PHC, Ijugbe, Oja Ale PHC, Ode-omu, Ile-Idi Asa PHC, Ode-omu, Akiriboto II PHC, Oke Odo MPHC, Orile-Owu, Oke-Elu PHC, Gbongan
- Osogbo LG: Ajenisuwa PHC, Oke-Osun, Olugunna PHC, Iludun PHC, Alekuwodo PHC, Oke Baale PHC, Mubarak PHC, Isale-Agbara PHC, Akede-Iyaloja PHC
- Olorunda LG: Oba Oke PHC, Oba Ile PHC, Atelewo PHC, Olude PHC, Kelebe PHC, Biiru Fagbemi PHC, Atiba PHC
- Orolu LGA: Bolounduro PHC, Ologele Ooye PHC, Asade PHC, Owoka Araromi PHC, Olufon PHC
- Irepodun LGA: Olobu PHC, Oke Eran PHC, Ilobu, Aromiwe PHC, Anwo PHC, Eyingbo PHC
- ODO-OTIN LG: Igbye PHC, Ekosin PHC, Agbeye PHC, Okuku 2 PHC, Oyan 1 PHC, Inisha PHC, Okuku PHC, Asaba PHC
- Ifedayo LGA: Temidire PHC, Ora MDG Akessin PHC, Ora, Oteu Village PHC, Oyi-Ayegunle PHC, Oke-Ila PHC, Oke Osun PHC, ORA PHC, Alagbede PHC.
- Ila LG: Ita Sapon PHC, Oke Ede PHC, Stadium PHC, Isedo, Dagbolu PHC, Iperin, Igbonnibi PHC, Adebisi Jaiyeola PHC, Adekunle PHC
- Boluwaduro LGA: Omi Eran PHC, Otan-Ayegbaju, Oke Omi PHC, Otan-Ayegbaju, Iresi PHC, Eripa PHC
- Ifelodun LGA: Ponjo PHC, Ikirun, Oke Amola PHC, Ikirun, Oke Afo PHC, Ikirun, Dagbolu PHC, Obaagun PHC, Eko-Ende PHC, Olonde PHC, Ikirun, and IBA PHC
- Boripe LGA: Araromi PHC, Iragbiji, Olokere PHC, Ada, Oja Oba PHC, Iragbiji, Aagba PHC, ORORUWO PHC
- The immense appreciation expressed by the beneficiary communities to Governor Adeleke underscores the direct and positive impact of these interventions on their daily lives. For these communities, what was once a "privileged medical service" has now become a norm, signifying a tangible improvement in their access to quality basic healthcare.
- Governor Ademola Adeleke's administration in Osun State is clearly making significant and measurable strides in primary healthcare development. By launching a comprehensive rehabilitation and upgrade program for 332 PHCs, implementing the "Imole Free Medical Outreach," fostering improved staff welfare, and ensuring sustainable infrastructure through solar power and water supply, the state is actively building a resilient and equitable healthcare system. The meticulous planning, phased implementation, and direct oversight by the Osun Primary Healthcare Renovation Project Committee are ensuring that the Governor's vision of quality basic healthcare for all Osun residents is not just a promise but a rapidly unfolding reality. These efforts are poised to leave a lasting legacy of improved health indices and enhanced well-being across the state.

OGUN'S STRATEGIC LEAP TOWARDS Primary Healthcare Excellence

Ogun State is actively embarking on a significant transformation of its primary healthcare (PHC) landscape, demonstrating a robust commitment to enhancing health outcomes for its citizens. Under the visionary leadership of Governor Dapo Abiodun, the state is leveraging strategic partnerships, comprehensive facility revitalization, and innovative outreach programs to ensure that quality, affordable, and accessible healthcare services are no longer a privilege but a fundamental right for every Ogun resident.



This concerted effort, particularly through the World Bank-assisted IMPACT project, is setting a new standard for grassroots healthcare delivery in the region.

The IMPACT Project and 75 PHC Upgrades

At the heart of Ogun State's PHC revitalization strategy is an ambitious collaboration with the World Bank-assisted Immunisation Plus and Malaria Progress by Accelerating Coverage and Transforming Services (IMPACT) project. This partnership has set in motion the machinery to revitalize 75 Primary Health Care Centres (PHCs) across the 20 Local Government Areas of the State. This represents a significant investment in the foundational infrastructure of healthcare delivery.

During the contract signing ceremony for the successful contractors of the five lots of the proposed 75 PHCs, Kofoworola Olajide, State Project Manager of IMPACT, articulated the project's core objective: to "upgrade 75 primary healthcare facilities as the First Phase of the IMPACT Revitalisation Project." The underlying idea, she emphasized, is to "create and ensure a conducive environment, and standard structural facilities to deliver quality healthcare services," which will ultimately help the health sector improve the health indices of the State.

Olajide further elaborated that the IMPACT project for Nigeria is broadly aimed at reducing the under-five mortality rate and

catalyzing overall improvements in health services at both national and selected state levels. This translates into tangible improvements in access to quality health services that are particularly beneficial to children and women in the selected states, including Ogun.

Elijah Ogunsola, the Executive Secretary of the Ogun State Primary Health Care Development Board (OGSPHCDB), underscored the anticipated profound impact of this project on the state's healthcare landscape. He noted that renovating and equipping these PHCs would significantly increase access to quality healthcare services, especially for rural and underserved communities. This directly aligns with Governor Dapo Abiodun's unwavering commitment to providing quality and accessible healthcare services, recognizing the critical role of strong PHC in the Governor's broader agenda to strengthen the State's healthcare system.

The "mobilisation training and briefing" held with the successful contractors marked the official kick-off of this transformative project. Dr. Ogunsola emphasized that this meeting served as a crucial platform to bring together all stakeholders and contractors, familiarizing them with the project's objectives, scope, and timelines. This meticulous planning ensures that all parties involved are "on the same page, working towards a common goal



of delivering top-notch healthcare services to the people of the State."

Arc. Bolaji Anjorin, the World Bank Consultant on the IMPACT Project, affirmed that the contractors were selected through a rigorous process based on documentation and budget adherence. He stressed that the training would ensure all stakeholders operate with a unified understanding. Furthermore, a dedicated monitoring team, comprising World Bank representatives, State IMPACT teams, contractors, and other monitoring officers, will work hand-in-hand to ensure proper oversight of the project, promising "another significant transformation in its Primary Health Care System which would lead to better healthcare for its citizens."

A Ward-by-Ward Commitment: Ensuring Universal Access

Beyond the initial 75 PHC revitalizations, Ogun State's vision extends to ensuring truly universal healthcare access at the grassroots level. The government's ambitious goal is to have at least one functional PHC in each of the state's 236 wards. This demonstrates a profound commitment to accessible healthcare that permeates every corner of the state, ensuring that no community is left behind due to geographical barriers.

This commitment goes beyond mere physical structures. The revitalization process involves overhauling existing infrastructure, but critically, it also includes providing essential equipment like delivery beds and ultrasound machines, and ensuring reliable water and power supply. This comprehensive



approach ensures that the revitalized PHCs are not just aesthetically pleasing but fully functional and equipped to deliver a broad range of quality services.

A tangible example of this revitalization is the PHC in Orile-Ifo, which has undergone a complete overhaul. According to a report on Nigeria Health Watch, this facility now boasts replaced broken windows, tiles, and a new roof. Crucially, it has a borehole for water supply, new beds, tables, chairs, and shelves. As a direct result of these improvements, the PHC can now conduct deliveries and admit patients, significantly expanding its service capacity and directly impacting maternal and child health outcomes in the community.

Community Involvement: Fostering Ownership and Sustainability

A critical element of Ogun State's PHC revitalization strategy is the strong emphasis on community involvement. The project actively engages residents in the planning and renovation process, fostering a profound sense of community ownership and participation. This approach recognizes that the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of these healthcare facilities depend heavily on the active engagement and support of the communities they serve. When communities feel a sense of ownership, they are more likely to protect, utilize, and advocate for their local health centres.

This collaborative model aligns with best practices in sustainable development, ensuring that the health interventions are not just top-down directives but rather responsive to the unique needs and priorities of the local populations.

Improved Health Outcomes and Strategic Outreach

The revitalized PHCs are expected to significantly improve access to quality healthcare services, reduce morbidity and mortality rates, and enhance overall well-being across the state. By making primary care more robust and accessible, the government aims to reduce the burden on secondary and tertiary healthcare

This strategic deployment aims to enable health workers to attend to various health needs and emergencies of students, where some health challenges could be discovered early. She urged the Commissioners of Health, as well as Education, Science and Technology, to jointly assess the data of healthcare needs and emergencies of various schools across the State to make adequate manpower placement of health care workers to the schools

facilities, ensuring that higher-level hospitals can focus on more complex cases while common ailments and preventative care are handled efficiently at the grassroots.

Beyond facility upgrades, Ogun State is actively looking to deepen healthcare coverage through innovative outreach initiatives. Prompted by a mission to extend healthcare coverage, especially effective immunization of young ones, Ogun State Deputy Governor, Noimot Salako-Oyedele, has pledged that health workers would be deployed to public primary schools across the 326 electoral wards in the State.

During the Second Quarterly Meeting of the State Taskforce on Primary Healthcare in Abeokuta, Salako-Oyedele emphasized that engaging healthcare providers in schools should be of utmost priority. This strategic deployment aims to enable health workers to attend to various health needs and emergencies of students, where some health challenges could be discovered early. She urged the Commissioners of Health, as well as Education, Science and Technology, to jointly assess the data of healthcare needs and emergencies of various schools across the State to make adequate manpower placement of health care workers to the schools. This proactive approach to school health is vital for early detection, prevention, and promotion of healthy habits among the younger generation, ultimately contributing to better long-term public health outcomes.



A Multi-Stakeholder Approach

Ogun State's success in PHC development is deeply rooted in its commitment to partnerships and collaboration. The active collaboration with the World Bank through the IMPACT project is a prime example of how leveraging international expertise and funding can accelerate local development. This synergy of resources and knowledge creates a more robust and resilient healthcare system.

The transparent selection process for contractors, overseen by the World Bank Consultant, also speaks to the state's commitment to good governance and accountability in project execution. The involvement of stakeholders, contractors, and monitoring officers ensures a multi-layered oversight that enhances project quality and delivery within set timelines. The positive remarks from Mrs. Delia Omatshola of Peculiar Peoples Management, representing the successful contractors, who appreciated the State government and the World Bank IMPACT Project for the contract award and promised to "deliver quality and good standard facility," further underscores the collaborative and professional environment fostered by the state government.

In essence, Ogun State is not just reacting to healthcare challenges; it is proactively building a resilient, accessible, and high-quality primary healthcare system. By strategically partnering with global institutions, investing significantly in infrastructure and equipment, fostering strong community involvement, and extending healthcare services to schools, Governor Dapo Abiodun's administration is laying a solid foundation for improved health outcomes and enhanced well-being for all its citizens. This holistic and pragmatic approach positions Ogun State as a leader in comprehensive primary healthcare development in Nigeria.



Ondo: PHC in Overdrive

Under the leadership of Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa, Ondo state is demonstrating a deep commitment to enhancing health outcomes for all citizens, particularly focusing on reducing maternal and newborn mortality. Through strategic infrastructure upgrades, a robust emphasis on human capital development, critical partnerships with global bodies like the World Bank, and a forward-looking approach to digital integration, Ondo State is building a resilient, accessible, and high-quality PHC system that aims for universal coverage.

A cornerstone of Ondo State's PHC transformation is the ongoing rehabilitation and upgrade of 102 primary health centres (PHCs). This massive infrastructure initiative is not merely cosmetic; it is designed to create truly functional and conducive environments for healthcare delivery. Governor Aiyedatiwa has personally approved this extensive rehabilitation, underscoring his administration's unwavering commitment to enhancing healthcare services across the state.

The scope of these upgrades is comprehensive, focusing on both service areas and staff accommodations. This integrated approach recognizes that a comfortable and functional living environment for healthcare professionals is crucial for attracting and retaining a skilled workforce, especially in remote areas. Improved staff quarters directly contribute to better staff morale, reduced burnout, and enhanced service delivery quality within the PHCs.

Furthermore, the state's ambition extends beyond these 102 facilities. The government is partnering with the World Bank to build facilities in 203 wards of the State, specifically to support primary healthcare delivery at the grassroots

level. This represents a significant expansion of the state's healthcare footprint, aiming to bring essential services even closer to rural dwellers and simultaneously reduce the undue pressure on secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities. Governor Aiyedatiwa confirmed that the necessary funds for this World Bank-sponsored project, which includes counterpart funding from the state government, have been deployed, and contractors are being assembled for the implementation stage. These new facilities in the 203 wards will effectively complement the existing primary health centers across the 18 local government areas, creating a truly integrated and far-reaching network of care.

A World Bank team from Abuja recently conducted a supervisory visit to these projects in Akure South, Akure North, and Ifedore Local Government Areas. Dr. Desmond Opara, the Senior Social Development Specialist at the World Bank, commended the "swift implementation" of the project in the state, noting that most of the projects visited were about 60 percent complete. He expressed a strong "level of assurance that supplies and civil works will be completed before the end of May," and that "the renovation of existing structures will progress rapidly given the pace at which the contractors are working." Dr. Opara specifically praised the state for the "proper and effective execution of civil works within just one month of the commencement of the revitalisation projects, especially when compared with other states," highlighting Ondo's exemplary efficiency.

The Project Manager for the IMPACT Immunisation Plus program, Dr. Paulinus Omode, detailed the comprehensive equipping of these upgraded PHCs. Upon completion, all 102 upgraded PHCs will feature staff quarters, tricycle ambulances, 5kVA solar systems for 24-hour electricity, borehole services, perimeter fencing, laboratory equipment, ramps for people with disabilities, and a supply of essential drugs. This meticulous planning ensures that the facilities are not only structurally sound but also fully functional and accessible, catering to a wide range of healthcare needs, including reliable power for critical medical equipment and improved



This commitment is translated into concrete action through ongoing programs like Basic Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (BEmONC) for PHCs and Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (CEmONC) for secondary facilities. These programs are designed to equip healthcare providers with the skills and resources necessary to manage complications during pregnancy and childbirth, thereby saving lives

sanitation through boreholes. Dr. Omode confidently assured that the project would be completed on or before June 2025, expressing gratitude to Governor Aiyedatiwa for creating the enabling environment for Ondo State to benefit from the IMPACT project. He expressed strong confidence that the project would significantly improve the PHCs, raising the standard of even the lowest level of primary healthcare in the state to Level 2.

Regarding the remaining 101 PHCs out of the 203 approved projects, Dr. Omode mentioned that their upgrading would fall under another federal government program titled "HOPE PHCs," based on the performance of the IMPACT project, signifying a phased and performance-driven approach to universal coverage.

Prioritizing Maternal and Child Health: A Battle Against Mortality

Ondo State is making the reduction of maternal and newborn mortality a paramount focus, understanding that the health of mothers and children is a critical indicator of societal well-being. Governor Aiyedatiwa himself emphasized his administration's commitment to drastically reducing these mortality rates through ongoing health sector reforms.

This commitment is translated into concrete action through ongoing programs like Basic Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (BEmONC) for PHCs and



Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (CEmONC) for secondary facilities. These programs are designed to equip healthcare providers with the skills and resources necessary to manage complications during pregnancy and childbirth, thereby saving lives. The Governor stressed that reducing maternal and newborn mortality requires intentional policy measures, responsive health systems, continuous community engagement, and crucially, a skilled and motivated workforce.

The Maternal and Newborn Mortality Reduction Innovation and Initiative Co-creation Workshop held in Akure exemplifies this focused approach. Governor Aiyedatiwa, represented by his Special Adviser on Health Matters, Simi Odimayo, described the initiative as transformative, reflecting the state's collective commitment to protecting the lives of women and children in all communities.

Complementing infrastructure and training, the IMPACT Malaria program, a key component of the World Bank collaboration, is directly addressing a major contributor to child morbidity and mortality. Dr. Waheed Afolayan, Project Manager for IMPACT Malaria, revealed that the program has engaged around 100 ad-hoc staff who have been deployed across all 18 LGAs to work as community mobilizers, effectively complementing existing health workers. This grassroots outreach ensures that vital malaria interventions reach the most vulnerable. Pregnant women and children under the age of five, who are most susceptible to malaria, are being consistently provided with Sulfadoxine Pyrimethamine (SP) and other malaria medications. Furthermore, the government has allocated 205,058 insecticide-treated nets for distribution to children under five during immunization, as well as to pregnant women registering for antenatal services, significantly enhancing preventative measures against malaria.

Empowering the Workforce: Welfare, Recruitment, and Training

Recognizing that quality healthcare hinges on a motivated and skilled workforce, Governor Aiyedatiwa's administration is making significant investments in human capital. The Governor explicitly stated, "We recognise that improving health outcomes requires



deliberate and sustained investment, not only in infrastructure but also in the welfare and well-being of our health workforce and the wider population."

In a bold and compassionate move, the administration has commenced the implementation of a new minimum wage, increasing it from N35,000 to N73,000 for civil servants. This substantial increase is a direct reflection of the government's dedication to enhancing the living standards of its hardworking public servants, including healthcare professionals.

Furthermore, the government has approved the entry level of Medical Officers as Grade Level 13 and nurses as Grade Level 10, aligning with best practices at the Federal level and in other progressive states. This strategic decision aims to attract and retain top-tier professionals who will drive excellence in the healthcare delivery system. Crucially, plans are well underway to recruit more health workers to fill critical gaps, and salaries have been adjusted upwards to be more competitive, making Ondo State an attractive destination for healthcare talent.

Digitalization and Data-Driven Governance: The Future of Health

Ondo State is embracing the future of healthcare by actively moving towards the digitalization of primary healthcare facilities. This forward-looking initiative is expected to significantly improve data management and enhance service delivery. Digital records facilitate more efficient patient management, reduce errors, improve continuity of care, and provide invaluable data for health planning, disease surveillance, and evidence-based decision-making. This move towards digitalization aligns with global trends and positions Ondo State at the forefront of health technology adoption in Nigeria.

The establishment of the Ondo State Primary Health Care Development Board (SPHCDA) in 2012, along with the appointment of an Executive Secretary, signifies a dedicated and institutionalized effort to coordinate and improve primary healthcare at the local government level. This structure provides the necessary governance framework to drive and sustain reforms.

Looking ahead, Ondo State is also committed to a

performance-backed health budget for 2025. This innovative approach ties financial allocations directly to measurable health outcomes and service delivery improvements, ensuring accountability and incentivizing efficiency across the health sector. This strategic financial planning promises to optimize resource utilization and maximize the impact of every naira invested in healthcare.

Strategic Partnerships and Community Engagement: A Unified Front

Ondo State's achievements in PHC are a testament to its proactive engagement with partners. The collaboration with the World Bank on the IMPACT project (Immunization Plus and Malaria Progress Accelerating Coverage and Transformation) is a prime example. This project not only involves upgrading PHCs but also includes crucial public health interventions like the distribution of insecticide-treated nets, demonstrating a holistic approach to disease prevention and control.

The State Ministry of Health is actively engaging with various partners to harmonize efforts and optimize health outcomes through effective collaboration and resource management. This unified front ensures that resources are not duplicated and that all stakeholders work towards common, clearly defined goals, maximizing the impact of every intervention.

Community engagement is also a vital element. The Ward Development Chairman for Oba-ile in Akure North LGA, Mr. Rotimi Johnson, expressed "gratitude to both the Ondo State Government and the World Bank for improving healthcare facilities in the state," indicating strong local buy-in and appreciation for the ongoing efforts. This community-level support is critical for the long-term success and sustainability of PHC initiatives.

Suffice to say that, Ondo State, under the resolute leadership of Governor Lucky Aiyedatiwa, is charting a clear and impactful course towards a robust and equitable primary healthcare system. By investing heavily in infrastructure, prioritizing maternal and child health with targeted interventions, empowering its healthcare workforce through improved welfare and competitive compensation, embracing digitalization, and fostering strong partnerships, Ondo State is not just reacting to health challenges but proactively building a healthier, more prosperous future for all its citizens. The state's multi-faceted approach and tangible progress position it as a leading example of effective PHC development in Nigeria.

Oyo's Resilient Primary Healthcare Provides Succour

Oyo State is actively charting a transformative course in its primary healthcare (PHC) delivery, demonstrating a robust commitment to providing accessible, efficient, and quality medical services to its citizens. Under the visionary leadership of Governor Seyi Makinde, the state has embarked on a series of ambitious initiatives encompassing infrastructure upgrades, strategic international partnerships, significant human resource development, and innovative funding mechanisms. These concerted efforts are designed to fortify the healthcare system from the ground up, ensuring that primary healthcare centres serve as truly effective first points of contact for medical care, ultimately improving health outcomes across the state.

A Foundation of Renewed Infrastructure: Upgrading 299 PHCs

At the core of Oyo State's healthcare revitalization strategy is a massive infrastructural overhaul of its primary healthcare centers. The state government initially announced plans to upgrade 66 PHCs, ensuring at least two facilities in each of the 33 Local Government Areas (LGAs) would receive significant attention. This initiative, however, is part of a much larger, ongoing project to renovate and equip a total of 299 Primary Healthcare Centres across the state. As of recent reports, 206 of these PHCs have already been completed, with the remaining 93 in various stages of completion. This widespread renovation demonstrates an unparalleled dedication to improving the physical environment of healthcare delivery at the grassroots.

Oluwaserimi Ajetunmobi, the Commissioner for Health, consistently emphasizes that the revitalization of PHCs is a fundamental step in improving healthcare delivery at the grassroots level. She highlights that this initiative is crucial for ensuring the provision of essential amenities needed for effective primary healthcare services.

The selection of PHCs for upgrade is a methodical process, driven by data and strategic



criteria to maximize impact. Professor Temitope Alonge, Managing Director of First Health Dynamic Synergy International Limited, a key partner in these upgrades, explained that three main criteria guide the selection:

- 1. Patient Load:** Prioritizing the two PHCs serving the largest populations in each LGA ensures that the upgrades benefit the maximum number of residents.
- 2. Category 2 or 3 PHCs:** This criterion targets facilities with existing operational capacity, allowing for an enhancement of already functioning centers.
- 3. Existing Borehole and Alternative Power Source:** This pragmatic approach identifies facilities with basic utilities, making comprehensive upgrades more efficient and sustainable.

Beyond mere renovation, the upgrade includes the provision of critical medical equipment and improved utility infrastructure. Each upgraded facility is slated to receive the installation of a 10KVA solar inverter system with hybrid inverters and lithium batteries to guarantee a 24-hour electricity supply, addressing a perennial challenge in healthcare delivery. Furthermore, boreholes are being installed to ensure uninterrupted water supply, a fundamental requirement for hygiene and sanitation in medical settings.

The supply of essential medical devices is also a priority, with equipment such as autoclave machines with gas cylinders, nebulizers, pulse oximeters, oxygen cylinders with accessories, and various point-of-care testing (POCT) kits (including HIV/Syphilis RDT, HBSAG RDT) being provided. The focus on equipping these centers with modern tools significantly enhances their diagnostic and treatment capabilities. Additionally, the upgrades encompass security enhancements for the facilities and the implementation of a Drug Revolving Fund (DRF). The DRF is a crucial mechanism designed to ensure a steady, sustainable supply of essential medicines, preventing stock-outs that can severely



Okeolola Primary Health Centre

cripple healthcare services.

This comprehensive approach to infrastructure development, from structural improvements to equipping with modern tools and ensuring essential utilities, underscores Oyo State's commitment to creating functional and high-quality primary healthcare environments.

Fortifying the Workforce: Recruitment, Welfare, and Training

The success of any healthcare system is inextricably linked to the quality and motivation of its human resources. Oyo State has made significant strides in addressing the critical issue of health workforce shortages and welfare, recognizing that personnel gaps are a major impediment to effective service delivery, especially in the face of the "Japa syndrome" (emigration of professionals).

Following the extensive renovation of PHCs, the Oyo State government has embarked on a massive recruitment drive, bringing in over 3,000 healthcare workers specifically for PHCs. This substantial influx of personnel directly addresses the long-standing deficit in frontline healthcare providers. Commissioner Ajetunmbi highlighted that as a result of these efforts, the state now has at least one Medical Officer in each of the 33 local government areas, a significant achievement that enhances medical supervision and care at the community level. The recruitment drive also includes various cadres of health professionals, such as nurses and other support staff, to ensure



Governor Makinde

comprehensive staffing of the PHCs.

Beyond recruitment, the state is committed to improving the welfare and working conditions of its healthcare professionals. While specific details on salary increments for PHC staff were not provided in the initial text, the broader context of the government's approach to human resources indicates a focus on competitive remuneration and improved allowances. The Commissioner for Health also mentioned that the state has engaged retired consultants and agile retired personnel to work on a part-time basis, leveraging their invaluable experience to bridge gaps and provide mentorship. This flexible approach helps to retain expertise within the system.

Furthermore, there is an emphasis on continuous professional development and capacity building. For instance, the Oyo State Health Insurance Agency (OYSHIA) has been actively sensitizing the public, and programs like the "Tomotiya" initiative are designed to reduce maternal, child,

and newborn morbidity and mortality through improved capacity of officers involved in maternal health, which includes mentoring and training. The state's commitment to building capacity extends to primary healthcare workers, ensuring they are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills.

Strategic Partnerships and Innovative Funding: A Multi-Stakeholder Approach

Oyo State's achievements in primary healthcare are significantly bolstered by strategic collaborations and innovative funding mechanisms, demonstrating a proactive approach to resource mobilization and efficient project execution.

A landmark development is the €55 million public health project financed by French authorities, to be implemented by Ellipse Projects. This significant funding, provided as a concessional loan from France to Nigeria through the French Treasury over 40 years, underscores international confidence in Oyo State's healthcare vision. This "Oyo Healthcare New Initiative Project" is deemed "key to the significant upgrade of the healthcare system in the whole of Oyo State, setting new standards in capacity, efficiency, and quality." The French Ambassador, Emmanuelle Blatmann, emphasized that this project is a "great example of mutually beneficial French-Nigerian cooperation," directly benefiting the people of the state and setting new standards in public healthcare. This partnership will undoubtedly contribute to further infrastructure development and system strengthening across primary and secondary healthcare levels.

Beyond international loans, Oyo State actively engages in counterpart funding for critical national and international health programs. For instance, the state has paid a sum of N250 million as its counterpart fund for the Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria (ANRIN) World Bank project, which commenced in March 2020. Similarly, the state provided N100 million as counterpart fund for the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF) project and N19 million for the Integrated Medical Outreach Program by the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA). These commitments ensure that Oyo State can fully participate in and benefit from national and global initiatives aimed at

strengthening primary healthcare and improving public health outcomes.

The Oyo State Health Insurance Agency (OYSHIA) plays a pivotal role in ensuring sustainable healthcare financing and access. The agency has been diligently sensitizing the public through various media, enrolling a significant number of residents into the scheme, including pensioners, public primary school pupils, and persons living with disabilities. The success of OYSHIA is evident in the tangible benefits to enrollees, with numerous medical and surgical interventions, including over 80 caesarean sections and various orthopedic and myomectomy surgeries, being conducted under the scheme. This robust health insurance scheme reduces the burden of out-of-pocket payments, making healthcare more affordable and accessible for a wider population.

The state's commitment to financial accountability and efficient resource allocation is further demonstrated by its adherence to the Primary Health Care Under One Roof (PHCUOR) policy, which involves the full redeployment of PHC staff into the Primary Health Care Board. This institutional reform is designed to reduce bureaucracy and ensure efficiency in resource management. The Ministry of Health also established a Public Private Partnership (PPP) Unit, and a coordinating mechanism for private and development partners, ensuring that efforts are harmonized and resources are optimally utilized across the health sector.

Proactive Health Interventions and Community Engagement

Oyo State's healthcare strategy extends beyond infrastructure and workforce to include direct, impactful health interventions and robust community engagement.

The Omituntun Free Health Mission, initiated in 2020 and continuing into 2025, has been a significant success, providing medical and surgical interventions to hundreds of thousands of residents across all 33 LGAs. This mission offers a wide range of services, including medical consultations, minor surgical procedures (like hernia repairs), oral and dental care, eye examinations and surgeries, physiotherapy, and cancer screenings, all offered free of charge. This outreach has not only improved the health status of residents but also provided significant economic relief. Cases requiring follow-up are appropriately referred or linked to OYSHIA for continued care, ensuring a continuum of treatment.

The state has also made remarkable progress in disease prevention and control. Through strategic interventions, Oyo State has achieved a significant reduction in the incidence of malaria from 80% in 2013 to 46% in 2019, and a reduction in the prevalence of HIV/AIDS from 1.9% in 2015 to 0.9% in 2019. The government actively contains epidemic-prone diseases like yellow fever, measles, Lassa fever, monkeypox, and cholera, demonstrating strong public health surveillance and response capabilities. Collaborations with organizations like GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, are crucial in supporting immunization efforts. The renovation of PHCs has directly contributed to reigniting routine immunization in the state, with more women bringing their children for vaccinations due to improved accessibility and services.

Community involvement is consistently highlighted as key to sustaining these facilities. Commissioner Ajetunmobi has repeatedly urged stakeholders to "take ownership and support this initiative for long-term success," fostering a sense of collective responsibility for the maintenance and protection of healthcare assets. The institutionalization of non-partisan Ward Development Committees

Oyo's Resilient Primary Healthcare Provides Succour



for PHCs and Facility Development Committees (FDCs) for Secondary Health Care ensures that communities are fully involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of health programs and services.

In conclusion, Oyo State is demonstrating a holistic and determined approach to strengthening its primary healthcare system. By investing heavily in modernizing facilities, developing a skilled and motivated workforce, forging strategic partnerships for funding and technical support, and actively engaging communities, Governor Makinde's administration is not merely upgrading health centers but building a more resilient, equitable, and accessible healthcare landscape that serves the needs of every citizen, from the remotest villages to the bustling urban centers.

These comprehensive strides position Oyo State as a beacon of progress in primary healthcare delivery within Nigeria.



Bayelsa's PHC Insured via BHIS Scheme

In the intricate tapestry of Nigeria's Niger Delta, Bayelsa State stands as a testament to the transformative power of focused governance in public health. Under the visionary leadership of Governor Douye Diri, the state has embarked upon an ambitious and meticulously executed programme of Primary Healthcare (PHC) projects, fundamentally reshaping the accessibility, quality, and resilience of its health services. This comprehensive drive, underpinned by strategic investments and innovative solutions, is not merely addressing historical deficits but is actively building a robust healthcare infrastructure designed to serve every citizen, particularly those residing in the challenging terrains of its remote and riverine communities.

The state's commitment to PHC is rooted in a pragmatic understanding that a strong primary health system is the bedrock of universal health coverage. The Bayelsa State Primary Healthcare Development Agency (BSPHCDA) is at the forefront of these efforts, charged with ensuring equitable access to affordable, high-quality PHC services for all residents. This feature delves into the multi-faceted initiatives and tangible projects that exemplify Bayelsa's journey towards a healthier future, highlighting the strategic thinking, collaborative spirit, and unwavering dedication that define this administration's approach to healthcare reform.

Infrastructural Renaissance – Bridging the Gap in Challenging Terrains

The geographical reality of Bayelsa State, with its vast network of rivers, creeks, and swamps, presents unique challenges to healthcare accessibility. Recognising this, Governor Diri's administration has prioritised an extensive infrastructural development programme for its PHC facilities, moving beyond mere rhetoric to deliver tangible improvements on the ground.

A cornerstone of this effort is the comprehensive renovation

and reconstruction of PHC centres across the state. These are not superficial upgrades but fundamental overhauls designed to transform dilapidated structures into modern, functional healthcare hubs. A compelling example is the recently completed reconstruction of the Ofoni 1 Primary Health Centre in Sagbama Local Government Area. This project, highlighted by Professor Seiyefa Brisibe, the Commissioner for Health, during a recent inspection, underscores the administration's commitment to enhancing healthcare infrastructure as a vital pillar for delivering accessible, quality, and efficient services. Professor Brisibe noted that a comprehensive facility assessment was undertaken upon assuming office, leading to targeted interventions like Ofoni 1, which is now fully reconstructed and operational. This systematic approach, driven by data from initial assessments, ensures that investments are directed where they are most needed, maximising impact.

Another significant achievement is the renovation and upgrading of the Ekeremor Primary Health Centre. This facility has been enhanced with crucial amenities, including dedicated staff quarters, a reliable portable water system, and an improved access road. The provision of staff quarters is a particularly pragmatic intervention, directly addressing the challenge of attracting and retaining skilled health workers in remote areas. By ensuring comfortable living conditions, the state makes these postings more appealing, thereby improving the consistent availability of medical personnel. The reliable water system is fundamental for hygiene and sanitation, while improved access roads facilitate patient transport and supply chain logistics.

Perhaps the most innovative and context-specific infrastructural project is the deployment of six new ambulance boats, generously donated by UNICEF. This initiative is a direct, research-based response to the unique challenges of healthcare access in Bayelsa's extensive riverine communities. For residents cut off by water bodies, traditional land-based ambulances are ineffective. These ambulance boats provide a rapid and efficient means of transporting patients, particularly those in

critical condition, from remote communities to better-equipped health facilities. This project significantly reduces emergency response times, directly contributing to improved patient outcomes and reducing preventable deaths in areas that were once virtually isolated from timely medical care.

Furthermore, the state has made significant strides in bolstering its cold chain infrastructure, critical for vaccine storage and efficacy. UNICEF has provided high-quality cold chain equipment to all PHC centres in Bayelsa. This ensures that vaccines, from routine immunisation doses to those for specific campaigns, are stored at optimal temperatures, maintaining their potency and effectiveness. This investment directly supports the state's immunisation programmes, a key public health priority. Complementing this, some PHC centres are also benefiting from the construction of solar-powered boreholes. These boreholes ensure a reliable and sustainable water supply, further enhancing hygiene, sanitation, and the overall operational efficiency of the facilities, especially in areas with erratic power supply. These tangible projects collectively demonstrate a profound commitment to building a resilient and accessible healthcare infrastructure tailored to Bayelsa's unique geographical and demographic realities.

Nurturing Human Capital – The Engine of Quality Care

While robust infrastructure provides the framework, it is the human element that truly drives quality healthcare delivery. Governor Diri's administration has placed a strong emphasis on Human Resources for Health, recognising that a well-trained and motivated workforce is indispensable for a thriving PHC system.

A key achievement in this area is the active recruitment of skilled health workers. The state has been diligently bringing in nurses, midwives, and community health extension workers (CHEWs) to address long-standing shortages of healthcare personnel in its PHC facilities. This recruitment drive is a direct response to the critical human resource gaps that have historically plagued the sector, ensuring that the revitalised facilities are adequately staffed to meet community needs. The presence of sufficient numbers of qualified professionals is fundamental for providing comprehensive and timely care.

Beyond recruitment, the state is equally focused on training and capacity building for its healthcare workforce. This involves continuous professional development programmes designed to enhance the skills, knowledge, and competencies of existing and newly recruited personnel. Such training covers a wide range of areas, from clinical best practices and emergency response protocols to data management and community engagement techniques. By investing in its human capital, Bayelsa ensures that its health workers are well-equipped to deliver high-quality services in line with national and international standards.



A pragmatic and often recommended solution to motivate health workers serving in remote communities is the introduction of a 'rural posting allowance'. While the provided material notes this as a recommendation, its proposal within the context of Bayelsa's PHC discussions indicates a progressive and research-based approach to addressing staff retention challenges in hard-to-reach areas. Such an allowance can significantly incentivise professionals to accept postings in rural PHCs, thereby ensuring consistent service availability where it is most needed.

Furthermore, the administration has urged local government chairmen to ensure the effective supervision of healthcare personnel in their jurisdictions. This decentralised oversight mechanism is crucial for accountability and performance management at the grassroots level. The directive for chairmen to include heads of health departments in their monthly Finance and General Purpose Committee (F&GPC) meetings, where council expenditures are approved, is a significant step towards improving financial transparency and ensuring that adequate funds are allocated and released for PHC activities. This institutional reform strengthens the governance framework for health at the local level, ensuring that resources are directly channeled to support frontline services. These concerted efforts in human resource development are vital for transforming Bayelsa's PHC system from merely having facilities to truly delivering quality care.

Expanding Access and Financial Protection – The BHIS and Outreach Model

Governor Diri's administration is not only building and staffing PHCs but is also implementing innovative programmes to significantly expand service delivery and access, particularly for vulnerable populations and those in remote areas. This includes robust financial protection mechanisms and proactive community

engagement.

A flagship initiative in this regard is the Bayelsa Health Insurance Scheme (BHIS). This scheme has undergone significant expansion, now covering both the formal and informal sectors of the state's economy. With over 300,000 people enrolled, the BHIS plays a crucial role in subsidising health services, thereby removing financial barriers that often prevent citizens from accessing necessary medical care. By ensuring that a substantial portion of the population has access to affordable health insurance, the state is making significant strides towards universal health coverage, reducing the burden of out-of-pocket expenses which can be catastrophic for many households. This expansion of health insurance is a direct, evidence-based strategy for improving healthcare utilisation and promoting equity.

Complementing the BHIS, the state is implementing Integrated Outreach Programs specifically designed to deliver essential primary healthcare services directly to remote communities. These programmes are vital for reaching populations that may face geographical barriers or other challenges in accessing fixed PHC facilities. The outreach services typically include crucial interventions such as immunisation, nutrition screening and supplementation, and birth registration. By bringing these services closer to the people, the state is proactively addressing gaps in access, ensuring that even the most underserved and rural communities receive vital healthcare interventions. This mobile and responsive approach is particularly effective in a state like Bayelsa, with its dispersed riverine settlements.

These initiatives collectively demonstrate a strategic focus on improving healthcare utilisation and outcomes. By making services more financially accessible through the BHIS and physically accessible through outreach programmes and ambulance boats, the government is systematically addressing the multi-faceted challenges of access. The emphasis on routine immunisation and nutrition within these outreach programmes reflects a commitment to preventive healthcare, which is the most cost-effective way to improve public health outcomes in the long run. The efforts are clearly aimed at ensuring that all residents, regardless of their location or economic status, can benefit from quality healthcare services.

Strategic Partnerships and Governance – The Engine of Sustainability

The impressive strides in Bayelsa's primary healthcare are not isolated government endeavours but are deeply ingrained in a philosophy of robust Partnerships and Collaboration and sound Governance. Governor Diri's administration recognises that achieving comprehensive and sustainable health transformation requires a multi-stakeholder approach, leveraging expertise and resources from various sectors.

A key achievement in this regard

is Bayelsa's enduring partnership with UNICEF and GAVI (the Vaccine Alliance). This collaboration has been instrumental in significantly improving routine immunisation coverage across the state, a critical public health indicator. Beyond immunisation, the partnership has strengthened the overall primary healthcare system and directly contributed to reducing mortality rates, particularly among women and children. The Commissioner for Health, Professor Seiyefa Brisibe, specifically commended the Deputy Governor, Dr. Sam Ode, for his central role in facilitating these vital partnerships with GAVI, UNICEF, and other international organisations. Such collaborations bring in not only financial support but also technical expertise, best practices, and quality assurance mechanisms that are crucial for elevating the standard of healthcare delivery.

Furthermore, the state has demonstrated a commitment to robust legal and policy frameworks. Professor Brisibe emphasised the importance of the Bayelsa Health Law, which is being championed by the Deputy Governor, Dr. Sam Ode. A well-articulated health law provides the necessary legal backing for health reforms, institutionalises best practices, and ensures accountability within the health sector. This legal framework is essential for creating a predictable and enabling environment for healthcare development.

In terms of strategic planning and resource allocation, the state has developed guidelines for consolidated work plans in both the education and health sectors. This initiative aims to align programmes and projects with broader strategic priorities, ensuring that interventions are coherent, synergistic, and contribute effectively to overarching developmental goals. Consolidated work planning minimises duplication of efforts, optimises resource utilisation, and fosters inter-sectoral coordination, which is vital for addressing the complex social determinants of health.

The commitment to good governance extends to financial oversight at the local government level. The directive for local government chairmen to include heads of health departments in their monthly Finance and General Purpose Committee (F&GPC) meetings is a significant institutional reform. This ensures that health-related expenditures receive proper scrutiny and approval, promoting transparency and accountability in the allocation and utilisation of funds for PHC activities. This measure directly addresses concerns about inadequate funding and ensures that resources are effectively channelled to support frontline health services.

Despite the significant progress, challenges persist, including human resource gaps (despite active recruitment), ongoing infrastructure deficiencies (requiring continuous upgrades), and persistent access issues, particularly in the most remote riverine areas. However, these are

viewed not as insurmountable obstacles but as areas for continuous focus and pragmatic problem-solving. The Special Adviser to the Governor on Primary Health, Dr. Churson Obosi, and the Executive Secretary of the Bayelsa Primary Healthcare Board, Dr. William Appah, have openly highlighted these issues, indicating a transparent approach to problem identification and a commitment to sustainable solutions. This open acknowledgment of challenges is a hallmark of a mature and research-based approach to development, allowing for targeted interventions and adaptive strategies.

A Resilient Health System for Bayelsa's Prosperity

Under the decisive leadership of Governor Douye Diri, Bayelsa State is forging a truly magnificent path in primary healthcare development. The administration's commitment is evident in a comprehensive suite of projects that are systematically transforming the state's health landscape. From the strategic reconstruction and renovation of PHC centres, tailored to the unique geographical challenges of its riverine communities, to the innovative deployment of ambulance boats and robust cold chain equipment, the infrastructural backbone of healthcare is being significantly strengthened.

Beyond physical structures, Governor Diri's focus on human capital development, through active recruitment and continuous training of health workers, is ensuring that these revitalised facilities are adequately staffed by competent professionals. The expansion of the Bayelsa Health Insurance Scheme (BHIS) and the implementation of Integrated Outreach Programs are pragmatic interventions that directly address issues of access and affordability, bringing essential services closer to the most vulnerable populations.

Crucially, Bayelsa's success is deeply rooted in its commitment to strong governance and strategic partnerships. Collaborations with international bodies like UNICEF and GAVI, coupled with robust financial oversight mechanisms and a clear legal framework, ensure the sustainability and scalability of these health initiatives. While challenges remain, the transparent identification of these obstacles and the continuous pursuit of solutions underscore a resilient and adaptive approach to public health.

Bayelsa State is not merely improving its healthcare; it is building a resilient, equitable, and high-quality primary healthcare system that is designed to serve its citizens for generations to come. Governor Diri's transformative agenda in primary healthcare stands as a compelling blueprint for other subnational entities, demonstrating how political will, innovative projects, and a pragmatic, research-based approach can lead to profound and lasting improvements in the well-being and prosperity of a state.



In the vibrant landscape of Nigeria's South-South, Akwa Ibom State is charting an ambitious course towards universal health coverage, driven by a profound commitment to primary healthcare (PHC) transformation. Under the visionary leadership of Governor Umo Eno, the state government has embarked on a series of meticulously planned and pragmatically executed projects, fundamentally reshaping the accessibility and quality of health services for its burgeoning population. This comprehensive overhaul, spearheaded by the Akwa Ibom State Primary Healthcare Development Agency (AKSPHCDA), is not merely about incremental improvements but a concerted effort to establish a robust, equitable, and sustainable healthcare system that truly serves its citizens.

The AKSPHCDA, as the pivotal body, is charged with ensuring that affordable and equitable primary healthcare services are within reach of all residents. Its mandate extends to making basic health services readily available, guaranteeing community access to modern facilities and comprehensive services, and delivering care strictly according to established national and international standards. This feature delves into the multi-faceted initiatives and tangible projects that underpin Akwa Ibom's journey towards a healthier future, highlighting the strategic thinking, collaborative spirit, and unwavering dedication that define this administration's approach.

Pillars of Progress: Reinforcing the "Primary Healthcare Under One Roof" Initiative Akwa Ibom's foundational strategy for PHC development is deeply rooted in the "Primary Healthcare Under One Roof" (PHCUOR) initiative, a policy launched nationally in 2018 but vigorously embraced and reinforced by the current state administration. This critical reform aims to streamline primary healthcare services under a single, unified management structure – the AKSPHCDA – thereby eliminating fragmentation, optimising resource allocation, and enhancing coordination across various PHC interventions. The Governor Eno administration has recognised PHCUOR not just as a policy to adopt, but as a framework to operationalise with tangible projects.

A central component of this strategy is the Strengthening Primary Healthcare Facilities project, which involves an extensive programme of upgrading existing infrastructure and developing new Model Primary Health Centres (PHCs). The objective is clear: to ensure that every local government area boasts at least one fully functional, well-equipped PHC. This commitment directly addresses long-standing infrastructural deficits that have historically hampered effective healthcare delivery at the grassroots.

Consider the stark realities faced by communities like Ikot Nkwo and Udot in Nsit Atai Local Government Area, as vividly recounted by residents. For years, healthcare access was a struggle, with a mere community town hall serving as a health post in Ikot Nkwo, and Udot residents enduring arduous journeys to distant, often equally dilapidated, PHCs. As one resident lamented, "there were times we had to travel long distances to other communities, just to find a functional PHC. Even then, the conditions were not much better." These narratives underscore a national challenge, echoed in reports such as the 2019–2022 State of Primary Healthcare Service Delivery in Nigeria and the 2024 BudGIT State of States report, which consistently highlight underfunding, poor infrastructure, and governance challenges across Nigeria's PHC system. Indeed, the latter report had previously ranked Akwa Ibom among the 16 states with the lowest PHC service delivery, indicating critical gaps in service readiness and accessibility.

However, the current administration's initiatives mark a remarkable turnaround. The construction and upgrading of Model PHCs, such as those in Ikot Nkwo, Uyo, Ikot Edibon, and Nsit Atai, are tangible manifestations of this commitment. Dr. Eno Angela Attah, the Executive Secretary of AKSPHCDA, affirms that this reform is being driven by prioritising



40-80%
Overall patient patronage according to Mrs. Udofia of the Ibesikpo Asutan Model PHC, this has led to over 150 emergency admissions since April 2024.



Gov Eno

infrastructure upgrades, bolstering healthcare workforce capacity, and ensuring the availability of functional medical equipment. The aim is to make these Model PHCs truly client-centred and fully operational for rural and underserved communities. The transformation in Ikot Nkwo and Udot, where dilapidated centres once plagued by neglect and flooding are now functional, is a testament to this focused effort. Mrs. Edet Afereke, a resident of Ikot Nkwo, shared her relief: "The facilities are better equipped, health workers are more present, and essential medicines are available. People say they no longer have to wait endlessly or travel far to get help. It shows that when the right support is provided, primary health care can truly serve the people it's meant for."

Beyond static infrastructure, these

Gov Eno's ARISECARE Boosts PHC in Akwa Ibom

Model PHCs are being equipped with motorbikes for emergency transport, a pragmatic solution addressing the critical challenge of patient mobility in hard-to-reach areas. This initiative, launched in June 2024, has already benefited over 200 patients, significantly reducing delays that could prove fatal. Furthermore, sections of the male wards have been ingeniously upgraded to serve as urgent care units, complete with essential medical supplies and basic life-saving equipment like oxygen cylinders. According to Mrs. Udofia of the Ibesikpo Asutan Model PHC, this has led to over 150 emergency admissions since April 2024, with overall patient patronage soaring from 40% to 80%. This demonstrates a clear, measurable impact on community trust and access to timely, quality healthcare.

Expanding Reach: The ARISE Agenda and Basic Health Care Provision Fund

The current administration's commitment to healthcare extends beyond infrastructural upgrades to encompass comprehensive strategies for Improving Access and Affordability for all Akwa Ibom residents. This is intricately woven into the broader

ARISE Agenda, Governor Eno's overarching blueprint for rural development and enhanced quality of life.

A flagship project under this agenda is ARISECare, an initiative designed to provide access to affordable, and often free, healthcare services for vulnerable segments of the population. This programme specifically targets children under five, pregnant women, and the elderly (individuals over 70 years of age), offering them free medical services. The impact of ARISECare is already substantial, with the AKSPHCDA reporting over 47,000 residents enrolled, a clear indication of the programme's reach and the pressing need it addresses within communities. By removing financial barriers, ARISECare ensures that essential preventive and curative services are accessible to those who need them most, thereby reducing preventable morbidity and mortality rates among these high-risk groups.

Complementing ARISECare is the robust implementation of the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF). This national fund, designed to provide a minimum package of health services to all Nigerians, is being effectively operationalised in Akwa Ibom State to ensure that communities have access to essential health services without undue financial burden. The BHCPF's effective deployment is critical for sustaining the operations of the revitalised PHCs, covering costs associated with essential drugs, consumables, and basic human resources. This dual approach of state-specific initiatives like ARISECare and effective utilisation of national funds like BHCPF showcases a pragmatic strategy to maximise available resources for public health benefit.

During the commissioning ceremony of a Model Primary Health Centre in Nsit Atai Local Government Area, Governor Eno, represented by the Deputy Governor, Senator (Dr.) Akon Eyakenyi, articulated the administration's philosophy. He emphasised that projects are not undertaken for political expediency but are "intentional about enhancing the standard of living of the people." The Governor underscored the inseparable link between health and development: "It is impossible to talk about other areas of progress when sickness ravages the body unchecked. As we build roads, schools, markets and initiate numerous empowerment programmes for our people, we are conscious of the fact that they can only enjoy these things if they are healthy. This is why we are intentional about making healthcare accessible to all Akwa Ibomites, including those in rural communities." This holistic perspective reinforces the strategic

importance of PHC as the bedrock upon which all other developmental aspirations must rest.

Furthermore, Governor Eno reiterated his administration's commitment to fairness and inclusivity in the allocation of government projects, ensuring that no part of the state is marginalised. This equitable distribution of healthcare infrastructure and services is crucial for fostering trust and ensuring that the benefits of development are felt across all communities.

Specialised Interventions and Workforce Empowerment

Akwa Ibom's primary healthcare development extends beyond general access to encompass targeted interventions addressing specific health needs and a robust focus on workforce development. The AKSPHCDA is at the forefront of various health campaigns and programmes, demonstrating a comprehensive approach to public health.

A key area of focus is Improved Immunisation Services. The agency conducts routine immunisation activities with remarkable vigour, including participation in national initiatives like the "Big Catch-Up (BCU)" campaign and

"National Immunisation Plus Days." These programmes are crucial for administering vaccines against prevalent diseases such as polio, pneumonia, and meningitis, thereby protecting children and preventing outbreaks. The emphasis on reaching every eligible child, even in hard-to-reach areas, reflects a commitment to achieving high immunisation coverage rates, a cornerstone of preventive public health.

Maternal and Child Health remains a high priority, with dedicated programmes in place to improve outcomes for pregnant women and young children. Initiatives like the Integrated Maternal Newborn and Child Health Week are regularly organised by the AKSPHCDA. These campaigns provide free vaccinations, nutritional supplements, deworming, and other essential health interventions for both mothers and children, directly contributing to reductions in infant and maternal mortality rates. The holistic nature of these weeks ensures that a range of services are delivered concurrently, maximising impact and efficiency.

Addressing a critical national healthcare gap, Akwa Ibom State has commissioned a state-of-the-art medical oxygen production plant. This project is a game-changer for healthcare facilities across the state, ensuring a reliable and affordable supply of medical oxygen – a life-saving commodity, particularly for respiratory illnesses, surgical procedures, and emergency care. The availability of locally produced oxygen reduces dependency on external sources, enhances emergency response capabilities, and significantly improves patient

outcomes in critical situations. This strategic investment demonstrates a pragmatic approach to strengthening the entire healthcare ecosystem, from primary to tertiary levels.

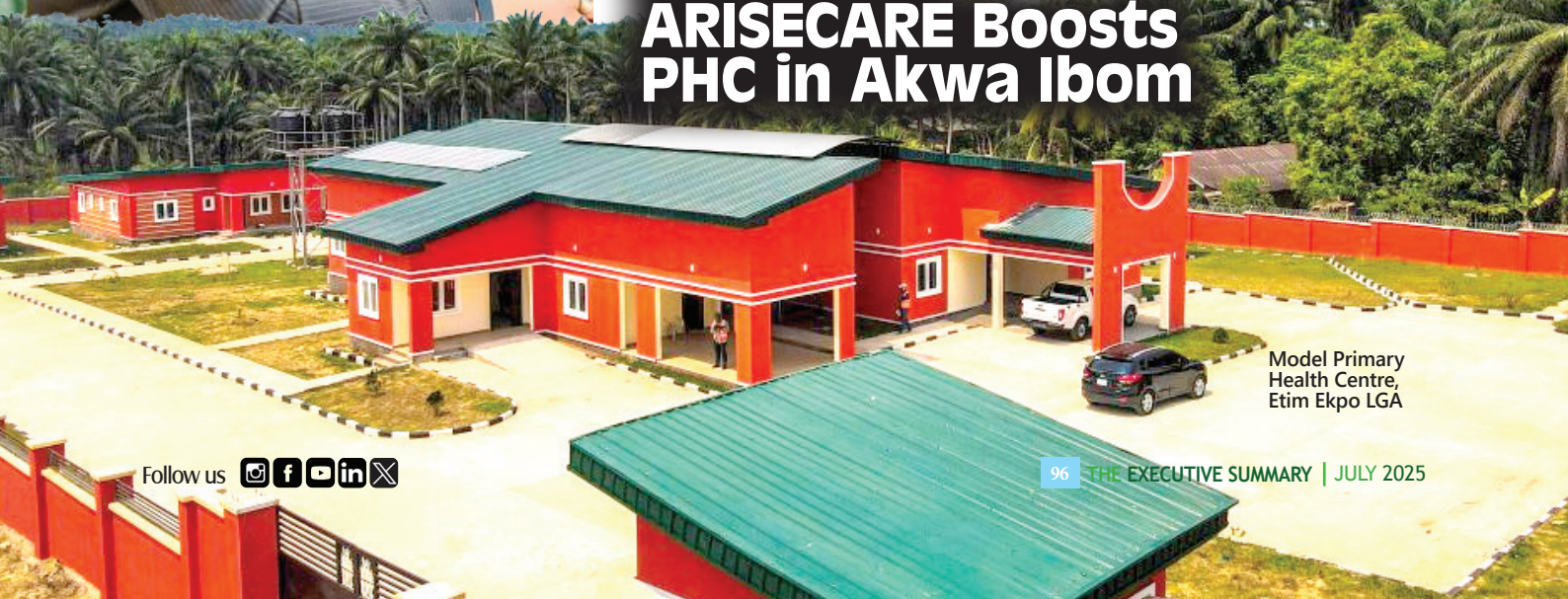
In a further move to bolster emergency response, the Akwa Ibom State Emergency Medical Service and Ambulance System is actively being developed. This project aims to establish a robust pre-hospital care system, ensuring timely and efficient emergency medical services, a vital component of a resilient health system.

Recognising that human capital is the most valuable asset in healthcare, the state is also heavily invested in Community Health Workers (CHWs). These dedicated individuals are undergoing continuous training to support the PHCs and provide crucial outreach services. CHWs are the eyes and ears of the healthcare system at the community level, facilitating health awareness, encouraging participation in health programmes, and ensuring that services are culturally sensitive and tailored to local needs. Their role in bridging the gap between formal health facilities and communities is indispensable for achieving widespread health improvements.

The leadership of key players such as Professor Augustine Vincent Umoh, the Honourable Commissioner for Health, and Dr. Eno Angela Attah, the Executive Secretary of AKSPHCDA, has been instrumental in driving these initiatives. Their strategic oversight and day-to-day operational leadership ensure that projects are implemented effectively and that the agency's goals are met.



Gov Eno's ARISECARE Boosts PHC in Akwa Ibom



Model Primary Health Centre, Etim Ekpo LGA

CROSS RIVER

PHC Upgrade One Centre at a Time

In the vibrant landscape of Nigeria's southern geopolitical zone, Cross River State is currently scripting a remarkable narrative of resilience and progress in its healthcare sector. Under the visionary leadership of Governor Bassey Otu, the state's Primary Health Care (PHC) system has undergone a profound and dramatic transformation, moving from a state of alarming dilapidation to one of national commendation. This comprehensive overhaul, spearheaded by Dr. Vivien Mesembe Otu, the dynamic Director-General of the Cross River State Primary Health Care Development Agency (CRSPHCDA), is not merely about renovating buildings; it is about rebuilding trust, restoring dignity, and ensuring equitable access to quality healthcare.

Dr. Otu recounted how "clients had turned to traditional birth attendants and chemists because our facilities were neither functional nor staffed." This reliance on informal and often unregulated healthcare providers posed significant risks, particularly for complex deliveries and the management of childhood illnesses, contributing to preventable morbidity and mortality. The grim reality was that the state's primary healthcare infrastructure, once a promise of accessible care, had become a symbol of neglect and despair. Indeed, reports from sources like CrossRiverWatch had highlighted a concerning

figure: 849 of the state's PHCs were deemed non-functional, a stark indicator of the monumental challenge that lay ahead. While the total number of PHC facilities in the state stands at 593, the higher figure of non-functional units underscores the historical depth of the problem, indicating many facilities had ceased to operate effectively or were beyond basic repair.

The Renovation Revolution: Rebuilding



Trust, One Centre at a Time

Recognising the urgency of the situation, Governor Bassey Otu's administration swiftly prioritised primary healthcare as a cornerstone of its "People-First" agenda. This commitment translated into tangible action, with significant investments channelled into the sector through a multi-pronged funding approach. Crucially, the state leveraged counterpart funding alongside allocations from the World Bank-supported IMPACT Project and the Basic Healthcare Provision Fund (BHC PF), supplemented by direct state government allocations. This diversified funding strategy has been instrumental in fuelling the ambitious renovation drive across all 18 local government areas.

The results are already impressive: 94 of the 196 ward-based PHC centres across the state have been fully renovated, expanded, and equipped with modern amenities. This is not merely cosmetic refurbishment; these are comprehensive upgrades designed to transform the functionality and appeal of these centres. Each renovated facility now boasts essential modern infrastructure, including the installation of solar-powered electricity, ensuring a consistent and reliable power supply, a critical improvement in a region often plagued by erratic grid electricity. Furthermore, solar boreholes have been installed, guaranteeing a 24/7 water supply – a fundamental requirement



for hygiene, sanitation, and the effective operation of any healthcare facility.

Beyond basic utilities, the renovated centres have been meticulously equipped with complete medical equipment, with a specific focus on maternal and child healthcare. This includes everything from delivery beds and examination couches to essential diagnostic tools and resuscitation equipment for newborns. Dr. Otu proudly highlighted the provision of a "Mama Kit" with each renovated centre – a fully stocked childbirth package containing all the essentials for both mother and baby. "All the mother needs to bring to the hospital is herself and the pregnancy," she declared, underscoring the administration's commitment to removing financial and logistical barriers to safe delivery.

The strategy behind these renovations is particularly noteworthy: "One facility per ward is being revitalised to serve as a model centre." This targeted approach ensures that each community has at least one fully functional, well-equipped PHC that can serve as a beacon of quality care. These model centres include five fully state-funded sites, 82 supported by the World Bank, and seven under the BHCPF scheme. This phased approach, with plans for a "phase two revitalisation in the nearest future," demonstrates a strategic, long-term vision for comprehensive healthcare coverage across the state. The World Bank's IMPACT Project, specifically, is funding the revitalisation of 82 PHCs, with a focus on infrastructure upgrades, equipment provision, and staff training. The transparent bidding process, conducted in accordance with World Bank procurement regulations, under the supervision of Engr. (Dr.) O. N. Otu and Mrs. Ajie Achu, further reinforces the commitment to accountability and efficiency in this massive undertaking. Simultaneously, seven other PHCs are undergoing revitalisation with funding from the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), showcasing a multi-agency collaborative effort.

Digitalising Healthcare: A Leap into the Future

In an increasingly interconnected world, the effective management of health data is paramount for informed

decision-making, efficient resource allocation, and targeted interventions. Recognising this, the Otu administration has achieved another landmark feat: the digitalisation of health data across the state's PHCs. Every one of the 196 PHC centres has received computer systems, a foundational step towards ensuring proper data collection, monitoring, and evaluation. This move is critical for tracking disease patterns, assessing the impact of interventions, and identifying areas requiring further attention.

This digital transformation is set to expand further through a new partnership with a private firm, the Elephant Project. This collaboration promises to enhance the digital infrastructure, potentially integrating more sophisticated data management systems, telehealth capabilities, and electronic health records. Such advancements are vital for creating a more responsive and data-driven healthcare system, moving away from fragmented, paper-based records to a unified, accessible digital platform. The ability to collect and analyse real-time data will empower health officials to make more agile and effective decisions, ultimately improving health outcomes for the population.

Addressing the Manpower Deficit: Investing in Human Capital

Infrastructure and equipment, no matter how advanced, are rendered ineffective without a competent and sufficient workforce. Cross River State had long grappled with a "massive understaffing" issue, a critical challenge that directly impacted service delivery. Governor Otu's administration has made significant strides in addressing this longstanding manpower deficit.

A crucial intervention has been the recruitment of 196 skilled birth attendants, ensuring that each ward in the state now has a dedicated professional capable of overseeing safe deliveries. This targeted recruitment directly addresses one of the most vulnerable points in primary healthcare: maternal and newborn care. Beyond this, over 380 newly employed healthcare workers have been brought into the system, significantly bolstering the overall workforce across various cadres. This influx of new talent is essential for staffing the newly renovated and constructed facilities and for providing a broader range of services.

Recognising that recruitment alone is insufficient, the administration has also intensified training and retraining programmes for its healthcare personnel. These programmes cover a wide array of essential topics, with a particular emphasis on maternal and neonatal care. This continuous professional development ensures that healthcare workers are equipped with the latest knowledge, skills, and best practices, thereby enhancing the quality of care they provide.

A particularly innovative and pragmatic approach has been the engagement with Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs). Instead of dismissing them, the state has chosen to integrate them into the formal healthcare system through training. Dr. Otu explained that TBAs are now being trained "to handle only safe, complication-free deliveries and refer high-risk cases to proper health facilities."

This strategy acknowledges the cultural significance and community reach of TBAs while simultaneously safeguarding the lives of mothers and babies by ensuring that complicated cases receive professional medical attention. This collaborative model bridges the gap between traditional practices and modern medicine, fostering a more inclusive and effective healthcare ecosystem.

Immunisation: A National Success Story

Perhaps one of the most remarkable achievements of Governor Otu's administration in the healthcare sector is Cross River State's meteoric rise to the very top of the national immunisation chart. According to the 2023–2024 National Demographic Health Survey, Cross River State recorded an astounding 95% immunisation coverage, making it the highest in Nigeria and surpassing even Lagos, which stood at 86%. This is a monumental feat, especially considering the challenges of geographical terrain and community engagement in many parts of the state.

This exceptional success was not accidental but the result of a meticulously planned and rigorously executed strategy. It involved a combination of intensive sensitisation campaigns, utilising various media channels such as radio and TV jingles to disseminate crucial information about the importance of vaccination. More importantly, the CRSPHCDA embarked on extensive community outreach programmes, particularly targeting "zero-dose" communities – areas where children had never received vaccinations. "We didn't just sit back. We went into the most remote areas with our health teams, ensuring no child is left behind," Dr. Otu affirmed. This proactive, ground-up approach, coupled with the renewed trust in functional PHCs, has been instrumental in achieving such high coverage rates, protecting countless children from preventable diseases. The recent sensitisation programme on June 2, 2025, for the introduction of Measles-Rubella (MR) and HPV vaccines, involving the First Lady, UNICEF, and traditional leaders, further underscores the state's ongoing commitment to robust immunisation efforts.

Community Ownership: The Cornerstone of Sustainability

The long-term success and sustainability of these healthcare reforms hinge on one critical factor: community ownership. The Otu administration has wisely recognised that for renovated facilities to remain functional and for services to be effectively utilised, the local communities must perceive them as their own, not merely as government property.

To foster this sense of responsibility, the CRSPHCDA employs a unique and highly effective strategy: town hall-style "community entry meetings" are held before renovation begins in any community. During these crucial engagements, local leaders, youth groups, and village development committees are actively involved in the planning process. This participatory approach ensures that the renovations meet the specific needs of the population they serve and, more importantly, instils a sense of responsibility for the upkeep and security of the facilities. "We want the people to see the facilities as theirs—not as government property. Security should come from within the community," Dr. Otu explained.

While this approach has largely been successful, challenges persist. Dr. Otu lamented

recent instances of vandalism in some areas, such as Bakassi, where newly renovated centres were burglarised. This underscores the ongoing need for sustained advocacy and community re-engagement. "We will intensify advocacy and return to these communities to re-engage the people. We can't afford to let a few setbacks derail our progress," she stated, demonstrating the administration's unwavering determination to overcome obstacles. This commitment to continuous dialogue and problem-solving with communities is vital for building resilient healthcare infrastructure that can withstand challenges.

The "People-First" Agenda: A Holistic Vision for Health

The comprehensive revitalisation of Cross River State's primary healthcare system is a direct manifestation of Governor Bassey Otu's overarching "People-First" agenda. This agenda is rooted in the fundamental belief that healthcare should be accessible, affordable, and accountable for all citizens, irrespective of their socioeconomic status or geographical location. The reforms are designed to dismantle barriers to care, empower communities, and ensure that every individual has the opportunity to lead a healthy and productive life.

While acknowledging that "Rome wasn't built in a day," Dr. Otu firmly asserted that "the trajectory is clear—we are on the path to restoring confidence in our health system." The transformation is not just about physical structures; it is about a paradigm shift in public perception and trust. "We're not just renovating buildings—We are rebuilding trust in public health," she concluded, encapsulating the profound impact of these reforms.

The future outlook for primary healthcare in Cross River State remains optimistic. The successful completion of Phase One of the revitalisation, encompassing 94 renovated facilities and the ongoing World Bank-funded project for 82 PHCs, lays a strong foundation. The state government's commitment to a "phase two revitalisation" signifies a sustained, long-term investment in the sector, aiming to cater for even more facilities and expand the reach of quality healthcare.

In essence, Cross River State is demonstrating that with dedicated leadership, strategic partnerships, diversified funding, and a deep commitment to community engagement, even a healthcare system in severe distress can be transformed into a model of efficiency and effectiveness. The breakthroughs in infrastructure, digitalisation, human capital development, and immunisation rates serve as a powerful testament to Governor Bassey Otu's "People-First" agenda, promising a healthier and more prosperous future for all residents of Cross River State. The journey continues, but the path to a robust and reliable primary healthcare system is now firmly established.



Ikot Nakanda PHC in Akpabuyo LGA, Cross River State

PHC: A Silent Revolution in Edo



In the quiet embrace of villages and the rhythmic bustle of towns, something extraordinary is unfolding across Edo State. It's not the clamour of elections or the fanfare of mega projects. It's not billboards shouting achievements or grandstanding in the media. No, this transformation is quieter—yet far more powerful. It is the silent but sweeping revolution of primary healthcare, unfolding in the smallest clinics, deepest communities, and simplest acts of care.

And in this revolution, lives are being saved, dignity restored, and the promise of a healthier tomorrow rooted deeply in the present.

At the core of Edo State's healthcare renaissance lies an audacious vision—to bring quality, accessible, and sustainable healthcare to the doorstep of every citizen, especially the rural poor who for decades were left in the shadows of development. With a revitalised Primary Health Care (PHC) strategy, the Edo State Government has redefined the meaning of governance by starting where it matters most: the grassroots.

The Edo State Primary Healthcare Development Agency (EDSPHCDA), under the guidance of a proactive government and visionary health administrators, has become the driving engine behind this transformation. From rehabilitating decaying health posts to re-training frontline health workers, the agency has ensured that the primary level of care is not just a placeholder, but a dependable foundation for lifelong wellness.

As one community health officer put it, "Before now, patients had to travel hours to receive injections or antenatal care. Today, we give immunisation under mango trees—but with dignity, with structure, and with hope."

One PHC, One Ward: The



Ekiadolor healthcare centre

Backbone of Rural Coverage

Perhaps the most iconic stride in this journey has been Edo's embrace of the "One Primary Health Centre per Ward" policy. A policy not just on paper, but seen in bricks, beds, medicines, and smiling nurses in over 192 wards of the state.

These upgraded PHCs are no longer the crumbling structures of yesteryear with leaking roofs and broken benches. They are modernised facilities equipped with solar power, potable water, maternal care units, and essential drugs. In places like Ugboko Niro, Ewatto, and Ogbona, communities now boast centres that can handle everything from routine child vaccinations to complicated deliveries.

Each ward's PHC now functions as a health anchor—serving as the first port of call for fevers, infections, prenatal care, postnatal follow-ups, nutrition counselling, and family planning. The burden on general hospitals is reduced. Morbidity is down. Trust is up.

But let's be clear—structures don't heal people. People heal people. And Edo knows this.

That's why the state has invested aggressively in the human engine of its healthcare system. Over the past few years, hundreds of community health extension workers (CHEWs), nurses, midwives, and pharmacy technicians have been recruited, retrained, and redistributed across the state's PHCs. With a performance-based approach and regular supervision, health workers are no longer ghost workers—they're real people, present, active, and accountable.

In Etsako West, for instance, young mothers no longer fear childbirth. "Nurse Amaka is always around, even at 2 am. She helped me deliver my twins," said Mrs. Isoken, a grateful mother from Jattu. In Esan South East, health extension workers now ride motorcycles to reach hard-to-access settlements, administering vaccines under the National Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI).

To support and retain this precious workforce, the Edo Government introduced housing incentives, hazard allowances, and on-the-job technical support. The culture of absenteeism has shifted into one of presence and performance.

A major distinguishing feature of Edo's PHC reform is its embrace of technology and data for decision-making. The state is piloting a Primary Health Care Under One Roof (PHCUOR) framework—harmonising different vertical





Ekiadolor healthcare centre

programmes (immunisation, HIV/AIDS, malaria control, TB surveillance) into a single management structure under the EDSPHCDA.

With this integration, data is king. Health facilities now conduct routine data capture on disease surveillance, maternal outcomes, and child immunisation using digital platforms like the DHIS-2 system. This real-time information helps the government spot disease outbreaks early, monitor resource use, and plan responses quickly.

Edo has also launched electronic medical records in select PHCs—an innovation that, though still evolving, hints at a future where rural health centres can be as smart as urban hospitals. This digitisation is crucial for continuity of care, especially in tracking maternal and child health indicators in hard-to-reach areas.

Health Insurance: Expanding the Net of Care

No healthcare reform is complete without the financial safety net for patients. Recognising this, Edo State is deepening its push for universal health coverage through the Edo State Health Insurance Commission (EDOHIS).

Through its Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF) allocation, Edo has enrolled thousands of vulnerable citizens—pregnant women, children under five, the elderly, and the indigent—into a state-backed health insurance scheme. This scheme covers essential services like antenatal care, childbirth, malaria treatment, and immunisations at designated PHCs at no cost to beneficiaries.

In communities like Akoko-Edo, these schemes are changing lives. “We don’t pay for malaria treatment anymore,” said one resident. “My mother, who is diabetic, now gets her checkups and drugs without us borrowing money.”

The idea is simple: prevent financial catastrophe from health crises. And so far, it’s working and the numbers are starting to speak.

According to recent state records, maternal and infant mortality rates have dropped significantly over the past three years. This is no small feat in a country where pregnant women still die needlessly every day from preventable causes. In Edo, interventions like routine antenatal monitoring, skilled birth attendants, emergency obstetric care, and robust community referral systems are turning the tide.

The state’s Safe Delivery Kits—locally known as Mama Packs—are being distributed free to pregnant women who register early and follow through with clinic visits. These kits, containing basic delivery supplies like gloves, antiseptics, and baby items, have incentivised more women to use PHCs rather than risky home births.

Add to that the new culture of Community Health Influencers, Promoters and Supporters (CHIPS)—volunteers trained to educate families on nutrition, sanitation, and health-seeking behaviour—and you see a whole ecosystem

blooming to protect mothers and children.

When COVID-19 hit, it was a test of systems, not slogans. And Edo’s PHCs, surprisingly, held their own. With government coordination and donor support, the state’s PHCs were repurposed as surveillance outposts, vaccination centres, and triage points. Health workers were trained in infection prevention, personal protective equipment was supplied, and vaccine rollout was synchronised through PHC channels.

In the face of a global pandemic, Edo’s grassroots health system stood tall.

To romanticise the journey would be to lie. The road is not smooth. There are still gaps in drug availability, especially in remote PHCs. Funding delays from the national level occasionally affect program implementation. And health worker attrition, particularly among skilled professionals, remains a thorn.

Moreover, insecurity in some rural border communities makes outreach work dangerous. The state still battles with myths and misinformation about vaccines, reproductive health, and even sanitation practices in certain areas.

Yet, what stands out is the political will—the rare blend of sincerity and continuity from government. A vision has been set, a system is being built, and most importantly, people are beginning to believe.

Edo is now being whispered in public health circles as a model of subnational success. Delegations from other states and even donor partners like the World Bank and UNICEF have visited to learn. The PHC system, once an afterthought in Nigeria’s health architecture, has been placed at the centre of policy and practice in Edo.



Gov Okpebholo

Rivers flowing in Primary Healthcare Delivery

Rivers State is scripting a remarkable narrative of transformation in its primary healthcare landscape. Underpinned by a resolute commitment from the state government and bolstered by strategic partnerships, a comprehensive overhaul of healthcare infrastructure, services, and outreach is underway. This ambitious undertaking, far exceeding mere incremental improvements, is delivering tangible results, demonstrably enhancing the well-being of its citizens, particularly mothers and children, and setting a precedent for effective, accessible, and resilient healthcare delivery across Nigeria.

The journey of Rivers State's primary healthcare renaissance is multifaceted, encompassing a spectrum of initiatives from robust immunization campaigns and enhanced disease control to the revitalization of health facilities and the empowerment of healthcare professionals. It is a testament to a holistic vision that acknowledges healthcare not merely as a service but as a fundamental pillar of human development and economic prosperity.

A Victorious Stance Against Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

At the forefront of Rivers State's primary healthcare achievements is its unwavering dedication to immunization. The echoes of "No child left behind" resonate through the state as it actively participates in and champions national immunization campaigns. The National Immunization Plus Days (NIPDS) and the Big Catch-Up immunization campaigns are not just abstract initiatives but vibrant, community-led movements that have seen healthcare workers fan out across the state, ensuring that every eligible child receives the life-saving vaccines against a litany of preventable diseases. This proactive approach has demonstrably reduced the burden of childhood illnesses, safeguarding the future of Rivers State's youngest generation. The commitment to maintaining a robust cold chain, as evidenced by the recent donation of immunization cold chain equipment by the Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS), further solidifies

the state's capacity to deliver effective and potent vaccines, even in remote areas.

The Saving One Million Lives Program for Results (SOML PforR)

The health of mothers and children forms the bedrock of a healthy society, and Rivers State has made this a central tenet of its healthcare agenda. The state is a dedicated implementer of the Saving One Million Lives Program for Results (SOML PforR), a transformative initiative aimed at improving health outcomes for these vulnerable populations. With crucial funding and technical support from the World Bank and the Federal Ministry of Health, SOML PforR focuses on key interventions such as improving maternal and child nutrition, increasing access to antenatal care, promoting skilled birth attendance, and expanding immunization coverage. This program embodies a results-oriented approach, ensuring that investments translate into tangible improvements in the lives of mothers and their offspring, laying the foundation for a healthier future generation.

Strengthening the Foundation: The Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHC PF)

The Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHC PF) represents a pivotal national initiative designed to strengthen primary healthcare at the grassroots level. Rivers State has wholeheartedly embraced its implementation, demonstrating a strong focus on improving data quality and supportive supervision at healthcare facilities. This meticulous attention to data ensures that interventions are evidence-based and resources are allocated effectively, while supportive supervision empowers healthcare workers and ensures adherence to best practices. The BHC PF's successful implementation in Rivers State is enhancing the quality and accessibility of services at the primary healthcare level, forming the backbone of the state's health system.

Bridges of Progress: Forging



Stronger Partnerships for Enhanced Healthcare

Rivers State understands that achieving universal health coverage requires a collaborative approach. The state government actively cultivates and strengthens partnerships with a diverse array of national and international organisations. Collaborations with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have resulted in the widespread availability of family planning and reproductive health commodities across all local government areas, empowering women with choices and promoting healthier families. The partnership with the Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS), evidenced by their donation of cold chain equipment, highlights the vital role of the private sector in supporting public health initiatives. Furthermore, the robust health partnerships with UNICEF, IHS Towers, and the Canadian Government have yielded tremendous fruits, including the recent handover of a 720,000 litres capacity oxygen plant to the Rivers State Government at Eleme General Hospital – a life-saving asset that will significantly enhance critical care capabilities. These strategic alliances amplify the state's capacity, bringing in essential resources, expertise, and innovative solutions to accelerate healthcare delivery.

Empowering Communities Through Engagement

True healthcare transformation is not solely about infrastructure



and medical supplies; it is deeply rooted in community participation. Rivers State places a strong emphasis on the importance of community engagement in healthcare through initiatives like the Ward Development Committees. These committees serve as vital conduits between healthcare providers and the communities they serve, fostering ownership, identifying local health needs, and facilitating the uptake of health services. By empowering communities to actively participate in their own health, the state is building a more resilient and responsive healthcare system from the ground up.

The Unsung Heroes: Celebrating Healthcare Workers

Behind every successful healthcare initiative stands a dedicated cadre of healthcare professionals. Rivers State recognizes and celebrates the invaluable contributions of its nurses and other healthcare professionals in strengthening the primary healthcare system. This appreciation is not merely symbolic; it translates into efforts to enhance their capacity, provide necessary resources, and foster an environment that supports their vital work. The Executive Secretary of the Rivers State Primary Healthcare Management Board (RSPHCMB) has consistently highlighted the crucial role women play in strengthening healthcare systems, particularly on occasions like International Women's Day, underscoring the state's commitment to gender equity within the healthcare workforce.

Revitalizing the Pillars: Upgrading Primary Health Centres

A tangible manifestation of Rivers State's commitment to primary healthcare is the extensive program of revitalization and upgrading of its primary healthcare centres. Over 135 primary healthcare centres have been rehabilitated and upgraded, transforming dilapidated structures into functional, well-equipped facilities. This includes improvements in infrastructure, the provision of modern medical equipment, and the creation of a more conducive environment for both patients and healthcare providers. These revitalized centres serve as the first point of contact for communities seeking healthcare, offering essential services such as maternal and child health care, immunizations, and basic curative care, thereby improving accessibility and quality of care at the grassroots.

A Holistic Vision: Beyond Primary Healthcare

While the focus remains squarely on strengthening primary healthcare, the Rivers State government's commitment extends to a holistic improvement of the entire health ecosystem. Governor Siminalayi Fubara's administration has demonstrated a clear prioritization of healthcare alongside other critical sectors, a promise he has steadfastly upheld.

Rivers flowing in Primary Healthcare Delivery

A significant stride in this regard is the approval and implementation of the state Contributory Health Protection Programme, including the state health insurance scheme. This groundbreaking initiative aims to enroll vulnerable populations, such as pregnant women, children under five, the elderly, the poor, and persons living with disabilities, ensuring they have access to essential healthcare services without financial barriers. This health insurance scheme is a game-changer, moving towards universal health coverage and alleviating the burden of out-of-pocket expenses for the most susceptible segments of the population.

Furthermore, the state's commitment to enhancing its medical referral system is evident in Governor Fubara's assurance of revamping and upgrading zonal hospitals at the three senatorial districts of the state. As articulated by the Commissioner for Health, Dr. Adaeze Oreh, this strategic investment will significantly boost the capacity of these hospitals to handle more complex cases, providing a crucial intermediate level of care and ensuring seamless patient pathways from primary to secondary and even tertiary facilities.

The state's achievements have not gone unnoticed, with Rivers being among the top three states to be celebrated at the 2024 Private Sector Health Alliance Nigeria Awards and Gala Night, alongside Kaduna and Lagos States, for its strides in improving health equity and access. This external validation underscores the impactful nature of the reforms being implemented.

At the tertiary level, the Rivers State University Teaching Hospital has witnessed remarkable progress, including the establishment of a Stroke Centre, a Burns Unit, and the expansion of its Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and bed space capacity. Accreditations in specialist areas of medical training, such as Paediatrics, Surgery, Orthopaedics, ENT, and Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, further solidify the hospital's position as a centre of excellence, ensuring that residents have access to highly specialized care within the state.

The current government has also taken innovative steps to introduce new services at the primary healthcare level, including mental health services, eye care, and obstetric imaging. This expansion of the primary healthcare scope demonstrates a comprehensive approach to addressing diverse health needs early on. The revival of state emergency medical services and the establishment of acute malnutrition management sites in the senatorial districts are critical interventions addressing immediate health crises and nutritional deficiencies.

Perhaps one of the most impactful initiatives for the future of healthcare in Rivers State is the employment of 2,000 health workers. This significant recruitment drive directly addresses the critical human resource gap in the health sector, ensuring that revitalized facilities are adequately staffed with skilled professionals capable of delivering quality care. Coupled with the massive upgrading of the Neuropsychiatric Hospital and the construction of a Drug Rehabilitation Centre, these initiatives reflect a deep understanding of the multifaceted health challenges facing the population and a proactive approach to addressing them.

A Legacy of Health and Well-being

The Rivers State government's relentless pursuit of excellence in primary



healthcare is not merely a series of isolated projects but a cohesive, strategically planned transformation. From robust immunization campaigns that protect the youngest citizens to the unwavering supply of life-saving drugs for HIV/AIDS patients, and from the sophisticated coordination of outbreak responses to the fundamental strengthening of grassroots healthcare facilities through the BHCPF, the state is building a resilient, accessible, and high-quality health system.

The commitment to partnerships, community engagement, and the welfare of healthcare workers underscores a holistic approach that places the well-being of the Rivers people at its core. With its ongoing investments in infrastructure, human resources, and innovative programmes, Rivers State is not only achieving significant milestones in primary healthcare but is also laying the groundwork for a future where every resident has equitable access to the quality healthcare they deserve, truly establishing a legacy of health and well-being for generations to come. The "Rivers Rising" narrative is a testament to the power of committed leadership, strategic vision, and collaborative effort in transforming the health landscape of an entire state.



A New Dawn for PHC in Delta

Delta State, a pivotal region in Nigeria's South-South, is currently witnessing a remarkable transformation in its healthcare landscape, driven by the unwavering commitment of Governor Sheriff Oborevwo. Since assuming office, Governor Oborevwo has placed the accessibility of quality healthcare at the forefront of his administration's agenda, ensuring that every Deltan, irrespective of their socio-economic standing, can access essential medical services. This profound commitment is intricately woven into the fabric of his overarching "MORE Agenda," an acronym encapsulating his vision for Meaningful Development, Opportunities for All, Realistic Reforms, and Enhanced Peace and Security. Within this comprehensive framework, quality healthcare stands as a pivotal pillar, recognised by the Governor as the indisputable foundation for sustainable societal stability and enduring economic prosperity. The bold and far-reaching reforms being implemented across the health sector reflect a profound understanding of its inherent challenges and the urgent imperative for effective, long-lasting solutions. This feature delves into the multifaceted strategies and tangible achievements that are collectively ushering in a new era of health and well-being for the people of Delta State.

Strengthening the Bedrock: Primary Healthcare Revitalisation

The cornerstone of any resilient health system is a robust primary healthcare network, and Governor Oborevwo's administration has unequivocally prioritised its strengthening. Recognising that primary healthcare centres (PHCs) are often the first, and sometimes only, point of contact for many citizens, substantial investments have been channelled into their comprehensive renovation and equipping across Delta's 25 local government areas. This concerted effort has brought functional healthcare facilities significantly closer to previously underserved communities, ensuring that basic medical services are not just available, but readily accessible.

The transformation of these PHCs extends far beyond mere cosmetic upgrades. The administration has meticulously equipped these centres with essential medications, ensuring a consistent supply of vital drugs to treat common illnesses and manage chronic conditions. Crucially, a significant emphasis has been placed on deploying qualified healthcare personnel to these facilities. This strategic staffing ensures that the renovated centres are not just well-stocked, but also competently managed, providing the professional care that communities desperately need. The services now readily available include critical interventions such as antenatal care, vital immunisation programmes for children, and effective treatment for prevalent ailments.

A particularly poignant area of focus has been maternal and child healthcare. The



administration has recorded a marked increase in access to skilled birth attendants and antenatal services, a critical development in a region where maternal and infant mortality rates have historically been a concern. By enhancing the availability of trained professionals and well-equipped facilities for childbirth, these initiatives have demonstrably reduced the maternal mortality rate and significantly improved health outcomes for both women and children. This tangible improvement has, in turn, fostered renewed trust in the state's public health systems, encouraging more community members to seek professional medical care rather than resorting to

informal alternatives.

The scale of this revitalisation is impressive. Reports indicate that 150 primary health centres are currently undergoing renovation, a substantial undertaking that aims to modernise and upgrade a significant portion of the state's PHC infrastructure. As part of this ambitious first phase, the administration is also constructing two-bedroom accommodation units for healthcare workers at these centres. This thoughtful provision addresses a critical challenge in rural healthcare: attracting and retaining skilled personnel. By providing comfortable and secure housing, the state is creating an enabling environment for healthcare professionals, encouraging them to serve in remote areas and ensuring continuous service delivery. Furthermore, 107 primary health facilities have already received new equipment, a vital upgrade that enhances diagnostic capabilities and treatment options at the grassroots level. With a total of 447 Primary Health Centres across the state, and an ongoing commitment to the rehabilitation and construction of new facilities, Governor Oborevwo's administration is systematically working towards a future where every Deltan has access to a functional and well-resourced PHC. The "Delta State Access to Finance program" further exemplifies this commitment, aiming to have 50 facilities operational under its framework, and has already successfully resuscitated 15 defunct facilities, breathing new life into previously abandoned healthcare points.

Taking the commitment to medical education to a higher echelon, the College of Health Sciences at Southern Delta University, Ozoro, Isoko North Local Government Area, stands as a centre for advanced medical education and cutting-edge research. This institution offers comprehensive degree programmes in critical disciplines such as Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, and Medical Laboratory Science. Its primary objective is to produce highly qualified healthcare professionals who are not only equipped to address local health challenges but are also capable of contributing to global health advancements.

This initiative is a direct response to the pervasive challenge of "brain drain," a phenomenon where skilled professionals migrate abroad in search of better opportunities. By providing high-quality medical education within the state, Governor Oborevwo's administration aims to retain its brightest talents and



foster a robust local pool of medical experts. The presence of a premier medical college also significantly enhances the quality of care in tertiary hospitals and specialist centres across the state, as graduates filter into these institutions, bringing with them contemporary knowledge and practices. Furthermore, the college is poised to attract students, researchers, and funding from across the country, solidifying Delta State's reputation as a leader in healthcare and education innovation. This academic excellence creates a virtuous cycle, drawing in more talent, fostering research, and ultimately elevating the overall standard of healthcare services available to Deltans.

The Delta State Contributory Health Commission (DSCHC)

A cornerstone of Governor Oborevwo's health policy, and perhaps one of its most impactful reforms, is the Delta State Contributory Health Commission (DSCHC). This visionary initiative is meticulously designed to ensure that every Deltan has easier access to affordable healthcare, thereby moving closer to the elusive goal of universal health coverage. The DSCHC provides comprehensive coverage for a wide spectrum of medical needs, ranging from routine check-ups and primary care consultations to major



medical procedures, alleviating the financial burden that often prevents individuals from seeking necessary treatment.

A key strength of the DSCHC is its explicit focus on vulnerable groups. Children under five, pregnant women, and the elderly are provided with dedicated care and coverage, recognising their heightened susceptibility to health challenges and their often-limited financial capacity. This targeted approach ensures that those who need healthcare the most are not left behind.

The success of the DSCHC has been nothing short of remarkable. By December 2024, over 2.4 million residents – more than 40 per cent of Delta State's population – had successfully enrolled in the DSCHC. This impressive enrolment figure positions Delta State as a leading force in health insurance in Nigeria, setting a benchmark for other states to emulate. The scheme's success is further bolstered by a combination of strategic interventions: substantial subsidies from the state government make premiums affordable, while robust partnerships with donor agencies provide additional financial and technical support. The introduction of specialised plans, such as the Equity Health Plan, which offers free care to vulnerable populations, underscores the administration's deep commitment to social equity and inclusive healthcare access. The DSCHC is not just an insurance scheme; it is a powerful tool for social justice, ensuring that financial constraints do not dictate access to life-saving medical care.

Tackling Public Health Challenges and Emergency Preparedness

Beyond infrastructural development and health insurance, Governor Oborevwo's administration has demonstrated a proactive and comprehensive approach to addressing pressing public health issues that significantly impact the well-being of Deltans. Diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) continue to pose significant public health burdens, and the administration has implemented targeted interventions to combat them.

Through widespread awareness campaigns, the government has educated communities on preventive measures, early detection, and the importance of seeking timely medical attention. These campaigns are complemented by free testing and treatment programmes, making it easier for individuals to access diagnostic services and receive necessary medication without financial barriers. The strategic distribution of insecticide-treated nets has been a key component in the fight against malaria, significantly reducing vector-borne transmission. These multifaceted efforts have yielded significant progress in controlling and mitigating the impact of these diseases across the state.

Furthermore, Governor Oborevwo has demonstrated exceptional leadership in managing health emergencies. In times of crisis, his administration has consistently mobilised resources swiftly, established crucial isolation centres, and deployed rapid

response teams to contain outbreaks and provide immediate medical attention. This proactive and decisive approach underscores a steadfast commitment to protecting lives and safeguarding public health, showcasing a government that is not only focused on long-term development but also capable of agile and effective crisis management. This preparedness builds community confidence and ensures that the state can effectively respond to unforeseen health challenges.

A Legacy of Health and Development

The transformation of Delta State's healthcare system under Governor Sheriff Oborevwo's leadership is a testament to his administration's unwavering dedication to the "MORE Agenda." From the foundational strengthening of primary healthcare centres through extensive renovations and equipment upgrades, to the visionary establishment of pioneering health education institutions, and the ground-breaking success of the Delta State Contributory Health Commission, the state is carving a path towards universal, quality healthcare.

The strategic investments in infrastructure, human capital, and health financing mechanisms are systematically dismantling barriers to access and elevating the standard of medical care available to all Deltans. The remarkable achievement in immunisation coverage, the proactive approach to public health challenges, and the demonstrated capability in emergency response collectively paint a picture of a health system that is not only recovering from past challenges but is actively evolving into a robust, resilient, and responsive entity.

Governor Oborevwo's commitment is fostering a healthier population, which, as he rightly recognises, is the bedrock of sustainable societal stability and economic prosperity. The ongoing work on the rehabilitation and construction of new primary health centres, alongside the ambitious targets for the Access to Finance program, signals a continuous and forward-looking commitment. The journey towards a fully optimised healthcare system is an ongoing one, but the significant strides made thus far in Delta State offer a compelling blueprint for meaningful development and a brighter, healthier future for all its citizens. The legacy being built is one of dignity, access, and a profound commitment to the well-being of every Deltan.



UNICEF is committed to realizing the rights of all children to help them build a strong foundation and have the best chance of fulfilling their potential. We believe that ensuring a happy and healthy child begins before birth: from ensuring his/her mother has access to good neonatal care and delivering in a clean, safe environment to reaching adulthood as a responsible, healthy and informed parent to the next generation. This journey relies on a child having access to shelter, good nutrition, clean water and sanitation, healthcare and education.



UNICEF works in over 190 countries and territories to save children's lives, to defend their rights, and to help them fulfil their potential, from early childhood through adolescence. And we never give up.

Discover UNICEF's work for every child, everywhere.

<https://www.unicef.org/what-we-do>