

## It's Harvest Season in Tarka LGA, Benue State



As part of our efforts to strengthen vulnerable households and support caregivers of children and adolescents affected by or infected with HIV, we partnered with communities in Tarka LGA, Benue State to establish communal farms as a means of income generation for these households. In partnership with Association for Grassroot Counsellors on Health and Development (AGCOD), a local Community Based Organization (CBO), we engaged community leaders to provide communal farmlands which could be cultivated for this purpose.

APIN provided funds for transportation, equipment & other farm inputs such as the seedlings. The labour was provided by caregivers and adolescents enrolled into our Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) program within the community. The initiative was successful and this farming season, a harvest of over 10,000 tubers of Cassava was recorded.

## APIN at the Plateau State Health Sector Partners Forum



As part of APIN's effort to strengthen its partnership with other health sector actors in the state, APIN participated in the September 2022 Plateau State Health Sector Partners forum. The Plateau State Head of Office, Dr Solomon Wekpe made a presentation on APIN's achievements in the state and intimated the audience about the focus in the next grant cycle.

## In This Edition

**APIN Commissions  
One-Stop Shops in  
Ogun and Osun States**

**APIN talks TB-CLICQ!  
at the ASLM Lab  
Community of  
Practice ECHO  
session**

**NASCP & APIN Host  
NCMP Retreat in  
Abuja**

**Courtesy Visit to the  
National Coordinator,  
National Malaria  
Elimination  
Programme**

**APIN's Dr Oluseye  
Ajayi Wins Gold at the  
2022 NISA  
Conference in Abuja**



## APIN's and MIED's Dynamic Approach to Ending Food Insecurity and Malnutrition in Benue State

*Using an integrated strategy of economic empowerment and healthy nutritional methods, APIN and its partner Community-Based Organization, MIED are taking the bull by the horns to reverse malnutrition especially among Under-5 Children Living With HIV (CLHIV) in Benue State.*



For vulnerable households in Benue State who live below the poverty line, balanced diets and three square meals a day are luxuries that they can only dream of. This infrequent food supply coupled with an existing HIV infection accelerates the onset of malnutrition especially in children under the age of 5.

In response, APIN and its partner Community-Based Organization, Mimidoo Initiative and Empowerment Development (MIED) designed a self-sustaining strategy to help vulnerable households earn incomes to support their basic needs such as food, and reverse malnutrition in HIV-infected and HIV-affected children.

With funding from the U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the iCARES project, APIN and MIED launched a Communal farm initiative which involved providing agricultural education, extension services, and farming inputs to vulnerable households to increase food production, generate income and ensure that food banks have a year-round food supply. To ensure sustainability and ownership, APIN and MIED advocated to community leaders to contribute a piece of land and donate food items which would be stored in a community food bank.

The community donated a 200 feet by 400 feet piece of land which was used by project participants (caregivers and adolescents from HIV-affected and infected households) to cultivate groundnuts and soya beans. **At harvest, 3.5 bags of groundnut and 2.5 bags of soya beans were reaped.**

A portion of the produce was sold and the money realized was used to purchase goats for rearing while the balance was used to produce a soya supplement which would be distributed to caregivers with identified malnourished children. The other ingredients for the supplement (corn and millet) were obtained from the supply in the community food bank.

Within 4 weeks of the soya supplement intake, the malnourished children had gained considerable weight. MIED's Executive Director, Mrs. Dooshima Age explained that the vision behind the creation of the supplement was to provide a cost-effective means of improving the nutritional status of the project beneficiaries.

“Through food demonstrations, we educate our beneficiaries on the need for balanced. The soya supplement was intended to complement their household nutrition, however, it has worked wonders and has averted hopeless situations within a very short time.

- Mrs Dooshima Age  
Executive Director, MIED

For Thomas and Movhinga, whose malnourished daughter, Nguemo, had been at the point of death before the soya supplement was administered to her, the soya supplement was nothing short of a miracle.



## APIN's and MIED's Dynamic Approach to Ending Food Insecurity and Malnutrition in Benue State (continued)



“This soya powder should be named the magic milk, because of the magic it worked on my baby within twenty-one (21) days of administration. I gave up on my baby since I didn't know what else to do but God, APIN and MIED didn't give up. Their intervention has opened my eyes to always use soya beans and other grains to make this milk for my (entire) household always”

- Sandra, Caregiver

“We were helpless as we watched our daughter dying slowly, until your intervention with this miraculous powder which brought her back to life, Nguemo's recovery is a miracle to us”

- Movhinga, Caregiver

Sandra, another caregiver whose baby had benefitted from the supplement insists that the “magic milk” is of immense nutritional benefits not only to children but adults alike.

Following the testimonies of the beneficiaries, the demand for the soya supplement in the implementing communities has skyrocketed. It has become a household staple in the implementing communities and even non-beneficiary households are eager to try the “miracle milk”. APIN and MIED continue to provide food demonstration and nutrition counseling sessions to ensure that malnutrition especially among Under- 5 Children Living with HIV (CLHIV) is completely eradicated.

## APIN Commissions Key Populations One-Stop Shops in Ogun and Osun States



OSS Commissioning in Ogun State



OSS Commissioning in Osun State

This quarter, we officially opened the doors of our Key Populations (KP) One-Stop Shops in Osun and Ogun States! The OSS is a specialized health facility where key populations who are most at risk of getting infected with HIV can access comprehensive, specialised treatment for HIV and other related health conditions in a safe, friendly and conducive environment and manner that is tailored to their specific needs.

The event was attended by key officials from the Ogun State and Osun State Ministries of Health, Ogun & Osun State Agencies for the Control of AIDS (SACA), representatives of key population groups and various networks of People Living with HIV/AIDS.



## APIN SI Team Conducts Refresher Training on Revised HIV Treatment Guidelines and M&E Tools



As Nigeria strives to ensure that new infections of HIV are not transmitted, our strategies to prevent HIV transmission and ensure the delivery of quality care and treatment to People Living with HIV (PLHIV) continue to evolve. These changes lead to updates and revisions in the National HIV treatment guidelines and M & E tools for tracking the impact of these changes.

Our Strategic Information (SI) Directorate team conducted refresher trainings for Monitoring & Evaluation Focal persons, health workers providing HIV services at all our supported facilities and sites and APIN technical staff across all our project states. The training built the participants' capacities to effectively use the revised national tools to report and validate data on services provided to clients. Additionally, APIN's technical staff are better able now to supervise and provide technical guidance to the state teams as we ensure that all clients enrolled into care at our supported facilities achieve viral suppression.

## APIN Hosts Third Quarter Gender Community of Practice Meeting in Benue State

APIN hosted the third quarter Gender Community of Practice (CoP) meeting which brought together 66 participants to deliberate and share experiences & best practices in the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) response, build synergies, strengthen community-level GBV response and clients' access to justice.

Participants at this meeting were drawn from a wide range of stakeholders in the gender and GBV response and social justice system within the state including relevant government ministries, department and agencies, traditional institutions, health facilities, security operatives, legal practitioners, implementing partners and civil society networks and organizations. Other participants were from Traditional institutions and Health facilities/ health care providers including One Stop Shop (OSS), Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and Key Populations (KP) Partners.

## APIN Talks TB-CLICQ! at the ASLM Laboratory Community of Practice ECHO Session



The Tuberculosis Clinic-Laboratory Interface Continuous Quality Improvement (TB CLICQ!) is a mentorship-based programme that uses a Diagnostic Cascade Evaluation (DiCE) toolkit to identify, quantify and target gaps in TB diagnostic and treatment services (from specimen collection and transport, to diagnostic testing and result reporting) in order to ensure service continuity and maximize patient retention across the TB care cascade.

The African Society for Laboratory Medicine (ASLM) has been working with the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to update and finalize the Clinic-Laboratory Interface Continuous Quality Improvement (CLICQ!) training programme package for launch and dissemination.

One of such activities was a Laboratory Community of Practice (CoP) ECHO virtual session for the which took place in September 2022. APIN, having piloted the CLICQ! implementation successfully in Nigeria, was invited to share on the implementation of the programme in Nigeria. Mr Eke Ofuche, APIN's Associate Director, Laboratory Services, represented APIN and Nigeria.



## **NASCP and APIN Host National Clinical Mentorship Programme Retreat in Abuja**



The National AIDS, STIs and Viral Hepatitis Control Programme (NASCP) with support from APIN and the U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) held the National Clinical Mentorship Programme (NCMP) Retreat in Abuja.

The 5-day retreat was presided over by the National Coordinator, NASCP, Dr Akudo Ikpeazu and brought together the National and State Clinical Mentors, State HIV/AIDS Programme Coordinators and CDC Implementing partners from all the 19 implementing states, to review the activities and successes recorded since NCMP was launched last year. To aid learning, representatives from the Clinical Mentorship Programmes in Namibia and Zambia were invited to share experiences, strategies and lessons that could aid the clinical mentors as they continue to build the capacity of frontline health workers to deliver quality HIV clinical services as part of a comprehensive package of care. Also in attendance was the CDC Nigeria Country Director, Dr Mary Boyd.

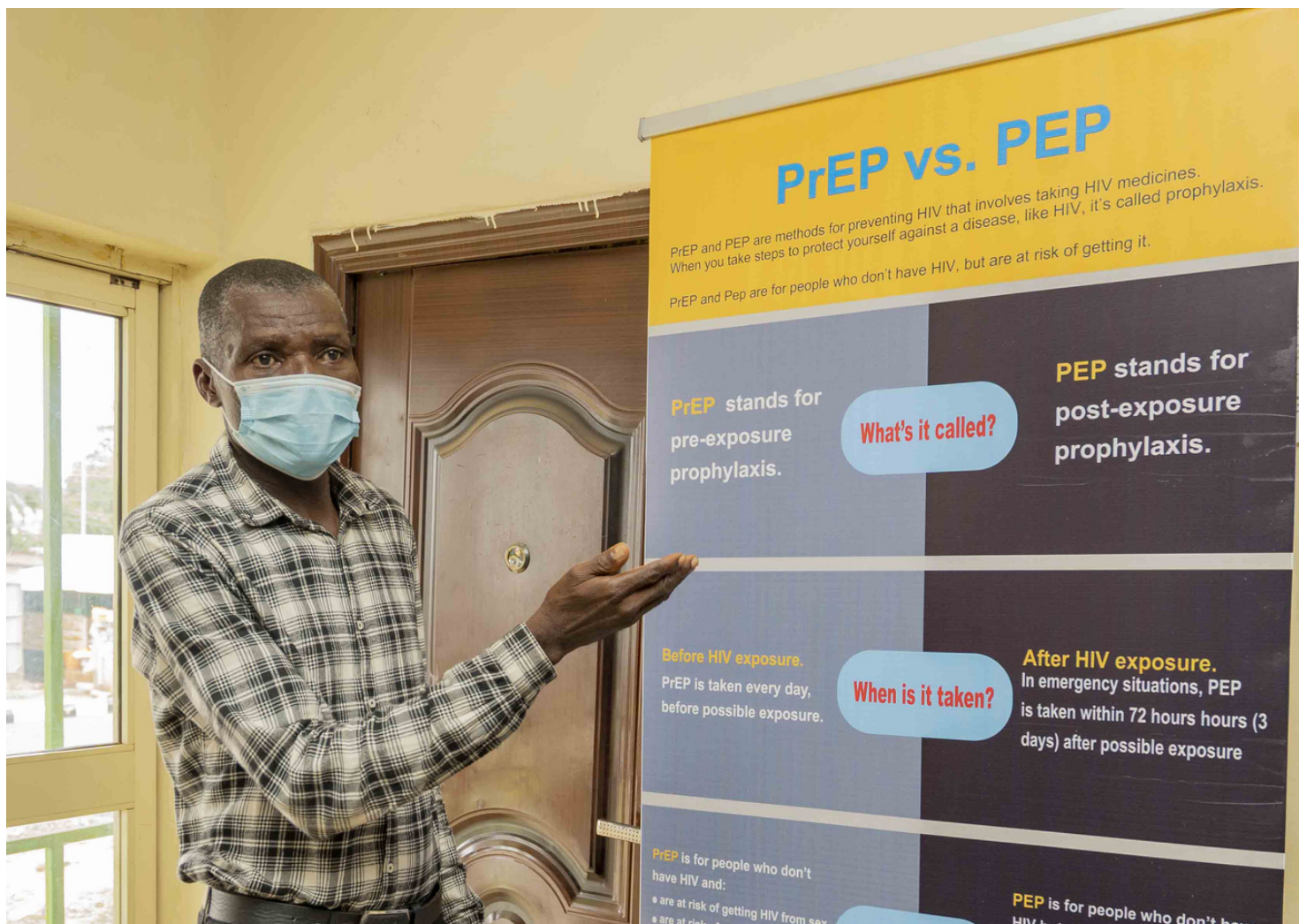
### **Courtesy Visit to the National Coordinator, National Malaria Elimination Programme (NMEP)**



Our leadership team paid a courtesy visit to the National Coordinator of the National Malaria Elimination Programme (NMEP), Dr Perpetua Uhomoibhi and her key officials to strengthen our partnership in the battle to eradicate malaria in the country. Our Associate Director of Prevention & Community Services, Dr Olabanjo Ogunsola shared findings and updates from the implementation of our ANC-Fever project which was implemented in 90 health facilities across four states. The project increased the uptake of Antenatal care & care for fever-related illnesses among pregnant women and caregivers of children under 5 years old, respectively.



## PrEP Implementation across APIN-Supported Facilities in Benue State



Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is the use of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs by HIV-negative persons to prevent the acquisition of HIV before exposure to the virus, especially in persons who are at substantial risk of acquiring HIV or who present and request for PrEP, even for reasons they do not wish to disclose.

The PrEP programme in Benue State officially kicked off in October 2020 and is currently being implemented in 60 APIN-supported facilities. A total of 242 health providers, spanning all cadres across Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV (PMTCT), Sexually Transmitted Infections and HIV Testing

clinics, were trained to support different elements of PrEP provision. The rationale behind this was that potential PrEP users may find peers and other lay providers more accessible and easier to confide in than medical professionals. Shifting this task to them with some monthly incentives for follow-up calls to PrEP clients has helped to reduce the burden on the facility-based health workforce, freeing them to focus on the clinical aspects of prescribing and dispensing PrEP medication. This strategy reduced the service delivery waiting time; and drastically improved PrEP uptake. Between July and September alone, 2299 clients were initiated on PrEP in Benue State.

## APIN at the 2022 NISA Conference in Abuja



**APIN** was a co-sponsor of the 2022 Nigeria Implementation Science Alliance (NISA) conference which held in Abuja, Nigeria. Our staff attended and participated in several capacities.

A key highlight was Dr Oluseye Ajayi, the Project Manager for our ANC-Fever project receiving the prestigious Best Abstract Gold Award for his abstract presentation on our experience implementing the project.



## Connect with Us on All Platforms



**APIN Public Health Initiatives**



**@APINNigeria**



**@APINNigeria**



**APIN Public Health Initiatives**



**[www.apin.org.ng](http://www.apin.org.ng)**