

# AKAIS BULLETIN



The Honorable Commissioner for Health, Dr. Dominic Ukpong

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## OVERVIEW OF AKAIS

Akwa Ibom was chosen by the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in conjunction with the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) and Akwa Ibom State authorities as one of its focus states for scaling up HIV prevention and control strategies. However, data that could be used to guide this scale up had significant gaps and was limited for planning purposes. To address this gap, the Akwa Ibom State Government in partnership with FHI 360 under the Strengthening Integrated Delivery of HIV/AIDS Services (SIDHAS) project is conducting the first ever Akwa Ibom State AIDS Indicator Survey (AKAIS). This survey, which is funded by the United States Agency for International Development

(USAID), is a unique initiative that will generate precise data to describe the HIV epidemic in Akwa Ibom and also estimate the unmet need for HIV interventions in the state.

### Primary objectives of AKAIS

- To estimate HIV prevalence among children aged 0 months – 14 years
- To estimate HIV prevalence among adults aged  $\geq 15$  years
- To determine the coverage of; and unmet need for HIV intervention services

### Secondary objectives of AKAIS

- To estimate the incidence of HIV
- To describe the demographic, socio-economic, and behavioral risk factors associated with the HIV epidemic

“The Akwa Ibom State Ministry of Health (SMoH) remains committed to partnering with reputable organizations in the provision of quality health interventions, research and services for the people of the state. SMoH acknowledges the funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through FHI 360 in the implementation of the Akwa Ibom AIDS indicator survey”  
 – The Honorable Commissioner for Health, Dr. Dominic Ukpong, during the second stakeholder forum for the survey. He reiterated that AKAIS presents an opportunity for the state to know the current HIV/AIDS prevalence that will guide the HIV/AIDS response. He emphasized that the state government is particularly concerned about the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Akwa Ibom and is committed to working to reduce

## Strengthening Integrated Delivery of HIV/AIDS Services



# AKAIS METHODOLOGY

AKAIS is a population based cross-sectional survey that will be carried out across the 31 LGAs in Akwa Ibom State. 3,257 households with 7,791 children aged 0 to 14 years and 9,145 adults aged 15 to 64 years will be sampled. The survey will be divided into two (2) components:

- **Behavioral component:** Electronic-based household, adult and adolescent questionnaires will be administered to all selected households and their members
- **Biological component:** HIV screening, viral load testing, early infant diagnosis, incidence testing and quality control testing will be carried out

the HIV burden in the state. On this note, he officially launched the Akwa Ibom AIDS Indicator Survey in the state.

“The AKAIS bulletin is a welcome initiative and it is expected that the bulletin will provide useful updates on progress made during the survey”.

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## Actualizing the Survey

The Akwa Ibom AIDS Indicator Survey has gained momentum since the first stakeholders meeting in September, 2015. Since then, substantial preparations and pre-survey activities were carried out and culminated in the pilot survey that took place from December 8th to 22nd 2016. The pilot set the stage for an extended phase of preparedness for the main survey in collaboration with the Akwa Ibom State Government. This included engagement of relevant stakeholders, community sensitization and mobilization activities in all the 31 local government areas (LGAs). Finally, the survey questionnaires have been uploaded on tablets and are undergoing final review. With “all hands on deck,” the survey is now poised for take-off.

# UPDATE ON MAJOR MILESTONES

## Capacity Building for the Field Survey

- A training of trainers (TOT) for the facilitators who will train the field workers was held from March 6 - 13, 2017. In attendance were GoN participants from both the federal and state levels and FHI 360 staff.
- 14 counsellor trainers were identified from both government of Akwa Ibom State and FHI 360 and provided with a TOT to facilitate HTS counsellor trainings for the survey.

## Laboratory Services

- Preventive maintenance carried out on BD FACSCount machines in all of the 11 selected satellite laboratories across the state.

## Data and Survey Management

- Institutional Review Board approval was obtained in July 2015.
- 1st and 2nd stakeholder meetings were held in September 2015 and August 2016 respectively, and had state government, civil society organizations and religious and traditional rulers in attendance.
- Household mapping and listing for the entire state was completed in September 2016.
- Pilot survey was conducted in December 2016.
- Debrief meeting of pilot survey findings was held at EEMJM Hotels & Suites, Uyo on February 9th, 2017. In attendance was Akwa Ibom State Commissioner for Health, Dr. Dominic Ukpong and other key stakeholders.

## Human Resource Management

- Shortlisting and recruitment of field workers was jointly carried out by the Akwa Ibom State Government (AKSG) and FHI 360 with support from an external recruitment agency from February 13 – 17, 2017 at Daaty Hotel, Uyo.
- Accreditation and vetting of candidates for the field survey was successfully completed from March 7 – 11, 2017 in Uyo at EEMJM Hotels & Suites.
- To achieve a seamless collaboration on the management of AKAIS, and ensure improved ownership and stewardship of the HIV/ AIDs response in the state, an MoU was signed between FHI 360 and AKSG that defined roles and responsibilities of the two parties during the survey.

## Communication and Social Mobilization

- LGA mobilization teams have commenced mobilization activities across the 31 LGAs in the state.

## OWNERSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY

- The Akwa Ibom State government continues to set the standard with regard to ownership of AKAIS. In the coming weeks, there are a few areas where this level of ownership will be expected. This will include but not be limited to:
- Support the engagement, training and management of field staff responsible for the conduct of the survey.
- Coordinate and manage communities, LGA and state level stakeholders to ensure safety and security of survey workers as well as successful survey implementation.
- Ensure close monitoring and supportive supervision of the field work and field workers including oversight and management of AKAIS assets

## NEXT STEPS

- Conduct central level training for all field workers
- Roll out of AKAIS Field Exercise
- Finalize microplanning with state government for field support