

HIV/AIDS, STDs and STIs

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Internally displaced persons (IDP) and HIV in Nigeria: Outcome of HCT outreach to IDP camps in Northeast Nigeria

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The recent insurgence in the Nigeria has contributed to the upsurge in the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) particularly in the Northeast zone. It is estimated that about 2 million persons are internally displaced. Most of these IDPs are sheltered in formal and informal camps in the affected areas. Among other diseases, IDPs are vulnerable to HIV infection. Factors such as sexual and gender-based violence, exploitation, social instability and poverty predispose IDPs to HIV infection. Despite their vulnerability, access to HIV prevention, treatment and care services remains a major gap in many camps. The National Agency for the Control AIDS coordinated the implementation of HCT outreach in three states in the Northeast zone of Nigeria. The 4-day outreach was held simultaneously in 14 camps across the three States (5 in Adamawa, 4 in Borno and 5 in Yobe). The outreach was a single disease approach with focus only on HIV. Incentives such as clothes, food items and toiletries were provided in some camps to enhance uptake. The HCT was done by trained counsellors and testers and services were provided in line with the Nigerian national testing algorithm. All the positive clients were referred for HIV care and treatment. A total of 14,403 IDPs were tested out of which 5,041 (36%) were males and 9002 (64%) were females. Sixty-two (0.4%) IDPs tested positive (Male: 18; Female: 44). The positivity rate among females (0.5%) was higher than males (0.4%). The positivity rates in the camps were lower in comparison with the prevalence rate in the general population (Adamawa: 0.2% vs. 1.9%; Borno: 1% vs. 2.4%; Yobe: 0.3% vs. 5.3%). However these may not be representative of the entire IDP population as these were IDPs that had access to formal camps. There is a need to promote HIV prevention in IDP camps through the minimum prevention package intervention (combination prevention approach) and also ensure linkages to treatment and care for HIV positive IDPs. Enumeration and mapping of locations of IDP camps is imperative to facilitate the smooth provision of these services.

Biography

Babayemi Oluwaseun Olakunde is an Assistant Chief Program Officer in the programs coordination department of the National Agency for the Control AIDS, Nigeria. He is a graduate of Medicine and Surgery from Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria and holds a Master's degree in Public Health from the University of Sheffield. His research interests are in health policy, planning and financing.

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