



### 3rd IRCE Scientific Symposium 2025: Combating Viral Threats through Public Health Response and Research

**Monday 8th September 2025**

**Venue: IHVN Symposium hall**

**Plenary talks /Parallel sessions/ Round table:**

8:30-9:00 AM	Arrival and Registration	
	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
	<b>Chair: Prof. Alash'le Abimiku (ED IRCE)</b>	
9:15-9:20 AM	<b>Welcoming address</b> Dr. Patrick Dakum (CEO IHVN)	
9:20 - 9:25AM	<b>Opening remarks</b> Prof. Alash'le Abimiku (ED IRCE)	
9:25 - 9:30AM	<b>Goodwill messages</b>	FMoH, Dr Jide Idris (DG NCDC), Dr Temitope Ilori (DG NACA), Dr Muyi Aina (DG NPHCDA), Prof Charles Anosike (DG NiMET), Dr. Zubaida Umar Abubakar (DG NEMA), Dr Farah Hussain (US CDC), Prof Patricia Lar (Past Acting VC of UoAbuja), Dr Adebola Bashorun (DG NASCP)
<b>Plenary Chair: Prof Alash'le Abimiku</b>		
9:30- 9:50 AM	Plenary Talk 1: Viruses of pandemic and public health importance in Nigeria	Dr. Tosin Afowowe (NCDC)
9:50- 10:10 AM	Plenary Talk 2: State governments' efforts towards combating Lassa fever & Dengue fever in Edo state	Dr Cyril Adam Oshomole (Hon. Commissioner for Health, Edo state)
10:10- 10:30 AM	Plenary Talk 3: Surveillance: an important early warning tool for pandemic preparedness	Dr Farah Husain (US CDC)



10:30-11:00 AM	Tea Break & Poster viewing		
11:00-11:30 AM	Key note Address: Threats to Global collaborations on pandemics in the new dispensation	Prof Manhattan Charurat (UMB, USA. Ciheb)	
Parallel sessions			
11:30-13:00 PM	Chair: Prof Rosemary Audu (NIMR)	Chair: Dr. Sylvia Adebajo	
	Mpox Parallel session (Room 1)	HPV/Hepatitis/SARS-CoV-2/Other diseases Parallel session (Room 2)	
11:30-11:45	Prof. Dimie Ogoina: History, and epidemiology of mpox in Nigeria.	11:30-11:40	Dr Nanma Tongnan Cosmas (University of Jos): HPV Prevalence and risk factors among adolescent girls, women living with HIV, and sexual abuse survivors in Jos, Nigeria
11:45-12:00	Dr. Adeyinka Adedeji: Monkeypox virus animal reservoir surveillance in Nigeria. Lessons learned so far.	11:40-11:50	Dr Victoria Igbinomwanhia (IHVN): Cervical Cancer Screening Uptake Among Women in Rural Communities in FCT Abuja, Nigeria- A Community-based Cross-sectional Study (ISS044)
12:00-12:07	Dr. Christine Navarro: Effectiveness of modified vaccinia Ankara-Bavarian Nordic vaccine against mpox infection: emulation of a target trial	11:50-12:00	Dr. Amadou Kodio (USTTB-Mali): Diagnosis of HPV using GeneXpert in MSM using anal swab samples
12:07-12:14	Dr Adam Abdullahi (IHVN-IRCE): Silent Mpox Transmission and Residual Smallpox Immunity in a Nigerian population (ISS015)	12:00-12:10	Dr. Nifarta Andrew (IHVN-IRCE): Burden of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) and Associated Mortality among Under-Five Children in Sub-Saharan Africa: Implications for Vaccination Policy and Public Health Planning (ISS066)
12:14-12:21	Dr. Joseph Shaibu: Detection and phylogenetic analysis of circulating clades of mpox among human and environmental samples in Nigeria.	12:10-12:20	Ambi Ibrahim (: Predictors of COVID 19 vaccine uptake among students of a tertiary institution in north central Nigeria (ISS075)



12:21-12:28	<b>Chinye Osa-Afiana (IHVN-IRCE)</b> Beyond Diagnosis: Lived Experiences, Stigma, and Naming of Mpox – Findings from the VERDI Nigeria Qualitative Study	12:20-13:00	Q&A session
12:28-13:00	<b>Q&amp;A session/Panel discussion:</b> Dr. Oluwadara Asaolu, Dr. Adejoke Kolawole, Dr. Maren Damala - Barriers and gaps in mpox public health response and research		
13:00- 14:00 PM	<b>Lunch</b>		
	<b>Moderator: Dr Evaezi Okpokoro</b>		
14:00- 15:00 PM	<b>Early Career Investigators presentations</b>		
	<b>Presentation #1 Onyeka Uchejim:</b> Awareness of HPV Vaccination among Adolescent Girls Living with HIV in Benue State, Nigeria ( <b>ISS001</b> ) <b>Presentation #2 Dr Idrissa Dieng (IPD, Dakar):</b> Silent Signals-Unearthing Arbovirus Molecular Secrets and Diagnostic Challenges in Senegal and West Africa <b>Presentation #3 Anzaku Mark:</b> Seroprevalence and Molecular Characterization of Dengue Virus Among Febrile Patients Attending Federal Medical Center Keffi, Nigeria ( <b>ISS007</b> )		
	<b>Chair: Dr. Muiy Aina (DG NPHCDA)</b>		
15:00- 16:00 PM	<b>Round table panel discussion on Vaccines, Vaccine uptake, Vaccine Hesitancy</b>		
	<b>Panellists:</b> Prof Morenike Ukpong (IVI), Dr Joseph Urang (Rivers SIO), Dr. Okoli Nicholas (FCT SIO), Sophia Osawe (IHVN-IRCE), Dr. Uzodinma Adirieje (Community rep)		
16:00- 17:00 PM	<b>Poster viewing and Exhibitions</b>		



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	<b>Tuesday 9th September 2025</b>	
	<b>Venue: IHVN Symposium hall</b>	
	<b>Plenary talks /Parallel sessions/ Round table:</b>	
8:30-9:00 AM	Arrival and Registration	
	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
9:00 - 9:10AM	<b>Opening remarks</b> Dr Patrick Dakum (CEO, IHVN)	
	<b>Plenary Chair: Dr. Patrick Dakum (CEO, IHVN)</b>	
9:10- 9:20 AM	Plenary Talk 1: Strengthening State-Level Surveillance Systems for Lassa Fever: Lessons from Ondo, Nigeria	Prof. Michael Simidele Odimayo (Ondo state)
9:20- 9:40 AM	Plenary Talk 2: Importance of the President Initiative for Unlocking Healthcare Value Chain (PVAC) in preparing for the next pandemic	Dr Saidu Sa'adu (PVAC)
9:40- 10:00 AM	Plenary Talk 3: Role of data science in pandemic preparedness: Lessons from the COVID pandemic.	Prof Alash'le Abimiku (ED IRCE)



10:00- 10:30 AM	<b>Keynote note address: Emerging viruses: Is Dengue becoming a public health concern in Nigeria?</b>	Prof Oyewale Tomori	
10:30-11:30 AM	<b>Tea Break &amp; Poster viewing and exhibition</b>		
<b>Parallel sessions</b>			
11:30-13:00 AM	<b>Chair: Dr. Tosin Afowowe (NCDC)</b>	<b>Chair: Dr Banji Ipadeola (US CDC)</b>	
	<b>Disease Surveillance/Wastewater Surveillance (Room 1)</b>	<b>One Health/AMR parallel session (Room 2)</b>	
11:40-11:50	<b>Dr Emelda Chukwu (NIMR):</b> Tracking Public Health Threats through Wastewater: Lessons from surveillance of wastewater canals in Lagos State.	11:30-11:40	<b>Dr Sati Ngulukun (NVRI):</b> The One Health approach to address public health issues
11:50-12:00	<b>Chinedu Ude (IHVN-IRCE):</b> Implementing a wastewater surveillance strategy within the FCT region: The IHVN-IRCE strategy.	11:40-11:50	<b>Dr Callista Osuocha (MSH):</b> Antimicrobial Resistance: Surveillance & Stewardship Across Humans, Animals, and the Environment in Nigeria: MSH/Flemming Fund Support
12:00-12:10	<b>Idowu Peter Adewumi:</b> Trends, Public Health Implications, and Emerging Concerns of Lassa Fever in Ondo State, Nigeria ( <b>ISS009</b> )	11:50-12:00	<b>Mrs Niniola Williams (DRASA):</b> From People to Policy: DRASA’s Approach to Driving AMR Innovation
12:10-12:20	<b>John Noah:</b> Climate-Sensitive Predictors of Lassa Fever Outbreaks in Kogi State, Nigeria: A Retrospective Analysis (2019–2024) ( <b>ISS029</b> )	12:00-12:10	<b>Yusuf Amuda Tajudeen:</b> Investigating the risk of zoonotic pathogen spillover at the human-animal interface in a biodiversity hotspot in Ibarapa District of South-Western Nigeria: A Mixed-Method Study (ISS063)



12:20-13:00	<b>Q&amp;A session</b>	12:10-12:21	<b>Q&amp;A session</b>
13:00- 14:00 PM	<b>Lunch &amp; Poster viewing and exhibition</b>		
	<b>Moderator: Dr James Onyemata</b>		
14:00- 15:00 PM	<b>Early Career Investigators presentations</b> <b>Presentation #1 Daniel Van Zyl, Stellenbosch Univeristy:</b> Using Machine Learning to Classify Viral Lineages <b>Presentation #2 Victoria Etuk, IHVN-IRCE:</b> Vaccine Coverage Mapping: A Proactive Tool to Plan and Prepare for Future Epidemics and Pandemics in Nigeria. <b>Presentation #3 Abisola Babatope:</b> Spatiotemporal and Trend Analysis of Monkeypox Incidence in Eight African Countries using Surveillance Data from 2022 to 2024 ( <b>ISS065</b> )		
	<b>Chair: Mrs. Zubaida Umar (DG NEMA)</b>		
15:00- 16:00 PM	<b>Round tabel panel discussion on Data Science &amp; Genomic Tools (Geospatial, ML/AI approaches, Mobile apps)</b>		
	<b>Panelists:</b> Prof Lanre Lawal (UoPortHarcourt), Dr Vincent Meurrens (EPCON), Christina Riley (AKROS Inc), Prof Alash'le Abimiku (IHVN-IRCE)		
16:00- 16:10 PM	<b>Closing remarks by Dr. Charles Mensah, IHVN COO/MD</b>		
16:10- 17:00 PM	<b>Poster viewing and Exhibitions</b>		

## PLENARY TALK 1: VIRUSES OF PANDEMIC AND PUBLIC HEALTH IMPORTANCE IN NIGERIA



**Dr. Tosin Afowowe** is a Senior Veterinary Officer and Virologist at the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC). He holds a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (2010) and MSc in Virology (2016) from the University of Ibadan, and a PhD in Virology (2023) from Nagasaki University, Japan. His research focuses on antiviral discovery, including his recent work identifying Topoisomerase II as a novel antiviral target against panarenaviral diseases.

Dr. Afowowe is the first Nigerian beneficiary of the JICA PREPARE Program and the first Nigerian virologist to present at the Global Virology Symposium. He has received international recognition, including a travel grant to the 43rd Annual Meeting of the American Society for Virology in Ohio, USA. At this conference, he will serve as Session Chair for the parallel session on *Disease Surveillance/Wastewater Surveillance*.



## PLENARY TALK 2: STATE GOVERNMENTS' EFFORTS TOWARDS COMBATING LASSA FEVER & DENGUE FEVER IN EDO STATE



**Dr. Cyril Adams Oshiomhole** is the **Honourable Commissioner for Health, Edo State, Nigeria**, a physician and public health specialist with extensive training in environmental health, toxicology, and disaster management. He holds an MBBS from Ahmadu Bello University, an MSPH from Tulane University, a Postgraduate Certificate in Clinical Research from Harvard Medical School, and a Postgraduate Certificate in Gastroenterology from Queen Mary University of London. Dr. Oshiomhole has broad experience in healthcare delivery, research, and policy advocacy. He has also advanced training, leadership, crisis management, and civic engagement, with a strong focus on improving health outcomes for underserved populations. His leadership reflects a deep commitment to equity, innovation, and evidence-based public health practice.



## PLENARY TALK 3: SURVEILLANCE: AN IMPORTANT EARLY WARNING TOOL FOR PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS



**Dr. Farah Husain** is the Program Director for the U.S. CDC's Division of Global Health Protection. She joined CDC in 2008 as an Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) Officer with the Emergency Response and Recovery Branch. Her expertise spans communicable disease surveillance and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in emergency and humanitarian settings.

Over the past decade, Dr. Husain has led and supported emergency disease surveillance and outbreak response efforts in more than a dozen countries, including Iraq, Syria, Cameroon, Uganda, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Haiti, Nepal, Mozambique, Jordan, Turkey, and Kenya. She has collaborated closely with the World Health Organization to develop standardized guidelines for evaluating emergency disease surveillance systems and advancing epidemiological methods among WASH partners in crises.

Before joining CDC, Dr. Husain worked with International Medical Corps and the Pan American Health Organization. She earned her BS from McGill University, a Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD) from Tufts University School of Dental Medicine, and a Master of Public Health (MPH) from Harvard University.

# PRESENTATION #1 : AWARENESS OF HPV VACCINATION AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS LIVING WITH HIV IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA (ISS001)



**Uchejim Onyeka Eva** is a public health professional with over ten years of experience in monitoring and evaluation of PEPFAR, Global Fund, and other donor-funded programs across HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria. She holds a B.Sc. in Human Physiology and an MPH in Epidemiology at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Skilled in data quality assurance, program evaluation, and scientific writing, she has expertise in platforms such as DHIS2, NMRS, NDR, and DATIM.

Eva has coordinated large-scale projects, including UNICEF's Independent Verification Assessment and APIN's ART Surge, where she ensured timely reporting and strengthened program monitoring systems. Her research focuses on cervical cancer prevention among women and adolescents living with HIV, with several abstracts presented at national conferences. She has co-authored peer-reviewed publications and is committed to advancing evidence-based interventions to improve public health outcomes in Nigeria and beyond.

## PRESENTATION #2: SILENT SIGNALS-UNEARTHING ARBOVIRUS MOLECULAR SECRETS AND DIAGNOSTIC CHALLENGES IN SENEGAL AND WEST AFRICA



**Dr. Idrissa Dieng** is a dedicated academic researcher at the Institute Pasteur de Dakar, specializing in medicine and dengue virus research. With an h-index of 4 and 10 peer-reviewed publications, his work focuses on dengue genomics, molecular epidemiology, and emerging arboviruses

Mr. Dieng is affiliated with the Arboviruses and Hemorrhagic Fever Viruses Unit within the Virology Department of the institute, where he applies systems biology and bioinformatics methods to understand dengue evolution and spread in West Africa.

Notable work includes: Detailed investigation of circulating dengue virus serotypes and genotypes in Senegal during 2017–2018, mapping spatial-temporal virus spread. Full-genome phylogenetic analysis of Dengue Virus 2 (DENV-2) in Senegal, revealing regional diversification and clade-specific mutations

His expertise in dengue virus surveillance and molecular epidemiology makes him a valuable contributor to regional arbovirus research and public health strategy.

## PRESENTATION #3: AWARENESS OF HPV VACCINATION AMONG ADOLESCENT GIRLS LIVING WITH HIV IN BENUE STATE, NIGERIA



**Anzaku Mark** is a dedicated Medical Microbiologist with a strong focus on infectious disease epidemiology and virology. He is committed to driving significant public health impact through rigorous research, evidence-based practices, and science communication.

Mr. Mark holds a Bachelor of Applied Science in Microbiology from Nasarawa State University Keffi, where he built a robust foundation in microbial pathogenesis, immunology, and molecular diagnostics. His academic background ignited a passion for addressing public health challenges, particularly in the areas of outbreak investigation and pathogen surveillance.

# ROUND TABLE PANEL DISCUSSION: VACCINES, VACCINE UPTAKE, VACCINE HESITANCY



**Professor Morenike Oluwatoyin Folayan Ukpung** is a Professor at the Obafemi Awolowo University and a clinician at the Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, where she trains undergraduate and postgraduate students in child and adolescent oral health. She serves as Deputy Director of the College of Health Sciences Research & Partnership Advancement (CoRPA) Unit and Head of the Research and Innovation Support Unit, focusing on grants, partnerships, and research capacity building.

Her research spans the epidemiology of early childhood caries, adolescent oral health integration, and management of dental anxiety in children. With over 25 years of experience in HIV research, prevention, advocacy, and bioethics across Nigeria and Africa, she has led multiple community engagement initiatives, national HIV strategic plans, and evaluations for global partners such as WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF, and USAID.

Professor Folayan Ukpung serves on several international scientific committees, including WHO/UNAIDS advisory groups, CROI, IAS, and ICASA, and holds editorial roles with BMC Oral Health, Global Bioethics, Community Dental Health Journal, and the Nigeria Journal of Health Sciences.



# ROUND TABLE PANEL DISCUSSION: VACCINES, VACCINE UPTAKE, VACCINE HESITANCY



**Dr. Hadley Ikwe** is a Senior Immunization Specialist with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US-CDC). A dedicated public health physician and epidemiologist, he is a transformative leader with a profound passion for improving health outcomes for underserved populations, particularly women and children.

His expertise spans health systems strengthening, vaccines, reproductive health rights, and humanitarian response. With a career dedicated to equity, Dr. Ikwe specializes in strategic program management, technical writing, and developing impactful public health interventions.

He champions an integrated approach to strengthen Nigeria's health systems, combining primary healthcare with immunisation, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria programs.

# ROUND TABLE PANEL DISCUSSION: VACCINES, VACCINE UPTAKE, VACCINE HESITANCY



**Dr. Uzodinma Adirieje** is a Nigerian health economist, evaluator, researcher, and a prominent figure in the field of sustainable development and public health. He is known for his work in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and his leadership of the Afrihealth Optonet Association. As the Chief Executive Officer, Afrihealth Optonet Association (AHOA): Dr Adirieje heads AHOA, a global network and think tank for civil society organizations (CSOs) focused on health and sustainable development.

With over 15 years of expertise, he specializes in designing and implementing large-scale M&E systems, program reviews, and surveys across health and development sectors, particularly focusing on HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria, COVID-19, immunization, and primary healthcare in Africa and the Global South.

Dr. Adirieje has served as an M&E consultant for prestigious organizations including UNICEF, the British Council, the Global Fund, GAVI, the World Bank, and the Federal Ministries of Health and Finance in Nigeria. He led the development of Nigeria's National Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (2020).



# ROUND TABLE PANEL DISCUSSION: VACCINES, VACCINE UPTAKE, VACCINE HESITANCY



**Dr. Sophia Osawe** is the Head of Research Operations at the International Research Centre of Excellence (IRCE), IHVN, where she leads the Clinical Trial Unit, Quality Assurance Unit, and Field Operations Unit. With over 17 years of expertise, she specializes in infectious diseases, immunology, vaccine research (particularly prenatal vaccine hesitancy and uptake), maternal and neonatal health, and laboratory systems strengthening.

A accomplished leader in global health research, Dr. Osawe has directed 10 medical laboratories in Nigeria and Malawi to ISO 15189 accreditation and managed large-scale studies, including SARS-CoV-2 serosurveys and NIH-funded clinical trials. She holds a PhD in Medical Microbiology and Immunology, an MPH, an Executive MBA in Clinical Research Administration, and specialized training in virology.

Dr. Osawe has co-authored over 20 peer-reviewed publications and continues to advance research ethics, quality management, and equitable vaccine access through her work at IHVN.

# PLENARY TALK 1: STRENGTHENING STATE-LEVEL SURVEILLANCE SYSTEMS FOR LASSA FEVER: LESSONS FROM ONDO, NIGERIA



**Professor Odimayo Michael Simidele** is a distinguished microbiologist and public health leader, currently serving as the Special Adviser on Health Matters to the Government of Ondo State, Nigeria. Prior to this appointment, he was a Professor in the Department of Medical Microbiology at Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, where he dedicated his career to research and education.

His research expertise spans antibiotic resistance, microbial molecular biology, infectious diseases (particularly tuberculosis), and antimicrobials. With a strong foundation in bacteriology, molecular microbiology, and advanced laboratory techniques such as PCR, Prof. Simidele has contributed significantly to understanding microbial pathogenesis and treatment challenges. His recent investigative work also includes the study of male infertility patterns and associated factors, demonstrating the breadth of his scientific inquiry.

An active contributor to the global scientific community, Prof. Simidele has authored, reviewed, and edited for several international journals. He has published 10 influential articles, receiving notable citations for his work. His ongoing commitment to research, policy, and public health

## PLENARY TALK 2: IMPORTANCE OF THE PRESIDENT INITIATIVE FOR UNLOCKING HEALTHCARE VALUE CHAIN (PVAC) IN PREPARING FOR THE NEXT PANDEMIC



**Dr. Saidu Saadu Ishaq**, is a physician–public health specialist with more than two decades of clinical and program leadership experience. Dr. Ishaq has held senior roles advancing HIV prevention, treatment, and health systems strengthening. He was Medical Director at Friends in Global Health/Vanderbilt Institute for Global Health (FGH/VIGH) and later Director, Clinical Services at Friends for Global Health Initiative in Nigeria (FGHiN). He served as HIV Technical Lead/Linkage to Care Coordinator for the Nigeria AIDS Indicator and Impact Survey (NAIIS) and, Technical Adviser for HIV Epidemic Control and Sustainability with the Global Fund/NACA.

Currently he is the Technical Adviser to the Presidential Initiative for Unlocking the Health Care Value Chain (PVAC). His expertise centers on epidemic control, linkage-to-care innovations, and building resilient service delivery systems.

## PLENARY TALK 3: ROLE OF DATA SCIENCE IN PANDEMIC PREPAREDNESS: LESSONS FROM THE COVID PANDEMIC.



**Prof. Alash'le Abimiku** is the Co-founder of IHV-Nigeria and Executive Director of the International Research Center of Excellence at the Institute of Human Virology-Nigeria. She is also a Professor at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Institute of Human Virology.

Her research focuses on HIV subtypes and drug resistance, HIV pathogenesis and immunity using Nigerian birth cohorts, multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, laboratory system strengthening, and global health security.

Prof. Abimiku's career spanning over 30 years has distinguished her as an academic, scientist, and researcher. She first documented the unique HIV strain prevalent in Nigeria, HIV subtype G, which differs from the subtype B circulating in Europe and the USA. She co-founded IHV-Nigeria and continues to play a pivotal role in establishing long-term collaborations between institutions in Nigeria and research institutions in the USA and the north. She has also worked extensively to build infrastructure and mentor young scientists to support research in Nigeria and other African countries.



## PRESENTATION #1 : STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY: USING MACHINE LEARNING TO CLASSIFY VIRAL LINEAGES



**Daniel Van Zyl** is a Computer Science PhD student at Stellenbosch University and a researcher at the Centre for Epidemic Response and Innovation (CERI). His work focuses on machine learning and artificial intelligence, with published research in both bioinformatics and astronomy. Passionate about AI-driven innovation, he won the Rhodes Forum Innovation Challenge at the University of Oxford in 2024. He will be presenting his latest research on applying machine learning to model viral genomic sequences.”

## PRESENTATION #2: VACCINE COVERAGE MAPPING: A PROACTIVE TOOL TO PLAN AND PREPARE FOR FUTURE EPIDEMICS AND PANDEMICS IN NIGERIA.



**Victoria Etuk** is an infectious disease epidemiologist and data scientist with research interests at the intersection of epidemiology, disease surveillance and data systems. She is particularly interested in population level vaccination data, epidemic and pandemic prone diseases (emerging and re-emerging diseases), vaccine preventable diseases and HIV/TB. She is an RSTMH Early Career Grant Awardee, GSK Africa Open Lab Awardee and currently co-leads the Vaccine Coverage Mapping Pilot Project under the INFORM-Africa Research Hub of the DSI-Africa Consortium, and multiple travel grants. She holds a Bachelor of Pharmacy and Master's in Epidemiology from the University of Nigeria and University of Ibadan respectively.

## PRESENTATION #3: SPATIOTEMPORAL AND TREND ANALYSIS OF MONKEYPOX INCIDENCE IN EIGHT AFRICAN COUNTRIES USING SURVEILLANCE DATA FROM 2022 TO 2024 (ISS065)



**Abisola Esther Babatope** is a researcher and lecturer whose work focuses on infectious disease surveillance, digital health, and public health, with a particular interest in spatiotemporal modelling of epidemic trends in Africa.

She has contributed to multi-country analyses of zoonotic diseases through a recent study on monkeypox incidence and forecasting. Beyond research, she is passionate about strengthening health information systems, integrating One Health approaches, and applying data-driven methods to inform evidence-based public health decision-making.



## ROUND TABLE PANEL DISCUSSION : DATA SCIENCE & GENOMIC TOOLS (GEOSPATIAL, ML/AI APPROACHES, MOBILE APPS)



**Vincent Meurrens** is the founder of EPCON, a company dedicated to leveraging data-driven solutions to improve patient access to care. Based in the Brussels Region of Belgium, he leads initiatives that harness the power of data analytics to address systemic barriers and optimize healthcare pathways.

With a passion for transforming complex data into actionable insights, Mr. Meurrens focuses on developing innovative strategies that enhance the efficiency and equity of healthcare delivery. His work at EPCON is centered on creating tangible improvements in how patients navigate and receive care, ensuring that data serves as a catalyst for meaningful change in the health sector.

## ROUND TABLE PANEL DISCUSSION : DATA SCIENCE & GENOMIC TOOLS (GEOSPATIAL, ML/AI APPROACHES, MOBILE APPS)



**Christina Riley** is the Portfolio Lead at Akros and a Research Consultant for Namvela Consulting. She is also currently pursuing a Ph.D. as a candidate at Wageningen University & Research. Her work is focused on leveraging geospatial data and technology to improve public health in disadvantaged communities. She oversees the design, management, and technical implementation of targeted health interventions.

## ROUND TABLE PANEL DISCUSSION: DATA SCIENCE & GENOMIC TOOLS (GEOSPATIAL, ML/AI APPROACHES, MOBILE APPS)



**Prof. Alash'le Abimiku** is the Co-founder of IHV-Nigeria and Executive Director of the International Research Center of Excellence at the Institute of Human Virology-Nigeria. She is also a Professor at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Institute of Human Virology.

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Prof. Abimiku's career spanning over 30 years has distinguished her as an academic, scientist, and researcher. She first documented the unique HIV strain prevalent in Nigeria, HIV subtype G, which differs from the subtype B circulating in Europe and the USA. She co-founded IHV-Nigeria and continues to play a pivotal role in establishing long-term collaborations between institutions in Nigeria and research institutions in the USA and the north. She has also worked extensively to build infrastructure and mentor young scientists to support research in Nigeria and other African countries

## ROUND TABLE PANEL DISCUSSION: DATA SCIENCE & GENOMIC TOOLS (GEOSPATIAL, ML/AI APPROACHES, MOBILE APPS)



**Professor Olanrewaju Lawal** is an expert in Geocomputation and Integrated Geographic Analysis, specializing in the application of AI and advanced statistical methods to analyze complex social, economic, and environmental data. His work focuses on generating actionable insights for sustainable development and resource management, particularly through multidimensional vulnerability assessments.

He has led pioneering research initiatives, including the development of social vulnerability indices at regional and national scales, climate change vulnerability modeling, flood risk assessments, and analyses of facility accessibility. Currently, he leads a team within the INFORM Africa project, creating sub-Saharan Africa's social vulnerability indices and examining their linkages to health outcomes.

A Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and member of the Association of Nigerian Geographers and Nigerian Environmental Society, Prof. Lawal brings deep interdisciplinary expertise to the intersection of geospatial science, sustainability, and public policy.