



IHAVN NEWS

A NEWS PUBLICATION OF THE INSTITUTE OF HUMAN VIROLOGY, NIGERIA



IHAVN Supports Nigeria's Landmark Launch of Lenacapavir for HIV Prevention

by Blessing Ukpabi

As Nigeria officially launches the Long-Lasting Injectable Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, Lenacapavir (LEN PrEP) for HIV prevention, the Chief Executive Officer of Institute of Human Virology, Nigeria (IHVN), Dr. Patrick Dakum has expressed the Institute's commitment to supporting the government to make the injectable accessible to key populations, vulnerable groups and individuals at high risk of HIV infection.

Dr. Dakum stated this during a ceremony to unveil LEN PrEP in Abuja.

“As the Principal Recipient of the Global

Fund in Nigeria, we are committed to translating government policies into actionable points at the community. Our goal is to ensure that there is speed and efficiency implementing programs and we are grateful to work with the government to make this happen. We thank the Global Fund to Fight HIV, Malaria and Tuberculosis. They are a reliable partner in fighting HIV and TB. We will continue to work with local and international partners to succeed.”

At the flag-off ceremony, the Honourable Coordinating Minister for Health and Social Welfare, Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate said that with the changing global

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financing landscape for public health programs, innovation and domestic resource mobilization are essential. He stressed the importance of a sector-wide, integrated approach that ensures that government and partners work together for the sustainability of TB, HIV and malaria programmes.

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Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN) Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Patrick Dakum speaking at the official launch of Long-Lasting Injectable Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, Lenacapavir (LEN PrEP) for HIV prevention in Abuja.

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IHVN Supports Nigeria's Landmark Launch of Lenacapavir for HIV Prevention



IHVN Staff join stakeholders to create awareness about injectable Lenacapavir at the event.



Dignitaries at the dual launch event of LEN PrEP injectable and the Tuberculosis Multi-Sectoral Accountability Framework (MAT-TB) in Abuja, Nigeria.

"While we have had tremendous success in dealing with HIV, TB and malaria over the past five years with support of international partners, the changing global landscape forces us to think differently. Innovative tools like Lenacapavir gives us another instrument to help us finish the work that we know we can do," he said.

Nigeria was selected by the Global Fund as one of the nine early adopter countries for the introduction of Lenacapavir with 52,000 doses to be deployed to Anambra, Ebonyi, Gombe, Kwara, Akwa Ibom, Cross River and Benue States under a pilot scheme.

At the ceremony, Global Fund Representative, Jean-Thomas Nouboussi said the launch is a demonstration of the effectiveness of partnerships with government, civil society, private sector, communities to fight HIV, tuberculosis and malaria.

"Lenacapavir represents a game changer. It is a major advance to the prevention of HIV. It addresses one of the key challenges in the prevention of HIV which was the difficulty of adherence to daily HIV pills. It offers hope for reaching a population that we have not been able to reach because of challenges."

Mr. Nouboussi stated that, "For the first time, since the beginning of HIV pandemic, a new tool will be rolled out at the same time in developing countries and in the Western countries. We need to recognize this. The Global Fund's ambition is to reach 2 million people with Lenacapavir by the end of 2028, working with partners. Nigeria will receive by 2028, 179,700 doses. We expect that the government will step in and accelerate the deployment in the whole country."

Earlier, IHVN participated in a media parley organized by the National AIDS and

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From the Chief Executive Officer

The launch of Lenacapavir for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (Len PrEP) is a significant milestone in Nigeria's HIV prevention response. It expands the range of prevention options available to people at risk of HIV infection. While existing methods like daily oral PrEP are effective, they can be difficult for some individuals to use consistently due to challenges such as adherence, stigma, and access.

Len PrEP introduces a long-acting injectable option administered twice a year, which offers a more convenient and discreet alternative. This has the potential to improve uptake and

adherence, particularly among key and vulnerable populations who may struggle with daily medication.

It is important to note that Len PrEP is not a replacement for existing options but an additional choice within a combination prevention approach. By expanding choice and tailoring prevention to individual needs, Nigeria is better positioned to reduce new infections and move closer to ending HIV as a public health threat.

The launch was supported by IHVN with funding from the Global Fund to Fight HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria. This

milestone is a story of collaboration, planning, and commitment under the leadership of the Federal Ministry of Health and her agencies (NASCP, NACA, NTBLCP).

Our lead story in this edition features the launch and other activities to address HIV, TB, promote maternal health and empower adolescents. Enjoy your reading!

Yours truly,

Dr. Patrick Dakum

Chief Executive Officer
Institute of Human Virology, Nigeria



**EDITORIAL
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IHVN Commemorates World TB Day 2026

by Ritnen Gomwalk

As Nigeria joined the global community to commemorate World Tuberculosis Day 2026 under the theme “Yes! We Can End TB - Led by the Federal Ministry of Health, Powered by Communities,” the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN) has reaffirmed its commitment to ending tuberculosis (TB) at the national and state levels.

At the launch of The Multisectoral Accountability Framework for Tuberculosis (MAF-TB) on 24th March, 2026, the Chief Executive Officer of the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN), Dr. Patrick Dakum said that the Institute is partnering with the government to address tuberculosis in the country.

“Our goal is to ensure that there is speed and efficiency in government's strategic plans”

MAF-TB is a strategic initiative aimed at uniting stakeholders, resources, and interventions to eliminate tuberculosis (TB) as a public health threat by 2030.

IHVN also participated in the ministerial press briefing and a road walk in Abuja alongside the Federal Ministry of Health,

Nigeria, and other partners.

Senior Manager and TB Program Lead for the Global Fund Grant, Dr Temitope Adetiba noted that Nigeria has recorded significant gains, with over 300,000 TB cases detected, thousands of drug-resistant cases linked to care, and millions of people screened.

“Between 2024 and 2025, the Global Fund program implemented by IHVN has notified more than 237,000 tuberculosis cases across the country reflecting intensified pediatric screening and strengthened contact investigation.”

He emphasized that sustained collaboration, innovation, and grassroots engagement remain critical to ending TB.

Beyond the national spotlight, activities in Oyo State reflected the power of community-driven action. IHVN teams, alongside local partners, marked the day with a series of impactful grassroots initiatives to bring TB awareness and services directly to people.

In Molete Market and Afijio Local Government Area, community members benefited from sensitization campaigns and free TB screening services. A road



Senior Manager and TB Program Lead for the Global Fund Grant addressing the press during the World TB Day 2026 Press Briefing



IHVN Staff participating in the 2026 World TB Day Roadwalk in Abuja

walk further amplified awareness messages, drawing attention to the need for collective action in tackling the disease.

As World TB Day 2026 was marked across Nigeria, the message remains clear: ending TB is possible.

Through early testing, community support, and sustained partnerships, every action brings the country one step closer to a TB-free future.

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IHVN Supports Nigeria's Landmark Launch of Lenacapavir for HIV Prevention

STIs Control Programme (NASCP) ahead of the official launch of LEN PrEP, IHVN Director of Special Projects, Dr. Aderonke Agbaje said that the injectable has the potential to improve uptake and adherence of HIV prevention options particularly among key and vulnerable populations who may struggle with daily medications.

“LEN PrEP is not a replacement for

existing options but an additional choice within a combination prevention approach. By expanding choice and tailoring prevention to individual needs, Nigeria is better positioned to reduce new infections and move closer to ending HIV as a public health threat,” she said.

She explained that IHVN is supporting the roll-out through a comprehensive system-integrated approach aligned with national leadership under the Federal

Ministry of Health and NASCP. This support includes service delivery for access and sustainability, capacity building of health workers, community engagement and demand creation, commodity management through national systems and strengthening data systems and real-time feedback mechanisms.

AYP Innovation Hub Commissioned in Rivers State to Empower Youths

by Uzoma Nwofor

The Adolescents and Young People (AYP) Innovation Hub in Fimie, Abuloma, Rivers State was officially commissioned and transitioned by the Honourable Commissioner of Health, Rivers State Ministry of Health, Dr Mrs Adaeze Oreh, in a ceremony celebrating youth empowerment and innovation.

The event drew government officials, development partners, community leaders, and hub participants, underscoring the collective effort to foster a generation of skilled, resilient, and socially responsible young Nigerians.

Speaking at the event, the Commissioner emphasized that equipping young people with skills, confidence, and access to opportunities remains a top priority for the administration. She noted that initiatives such as this strongly align with the state's development agenda, HIV response priorities, and the broader vision of building a resilient, skilled, and productive youth population capable of driving long-term progress.

"The establishment of this Hub is a testament to what can be achieved through strong partnerships and shared commitment. By leveraging years of experience in HIV prevention, care, and treatment to create a safe, stigma-free, and youth-friendly innovation space, this hub goes beyond skills training — it creates opportunity, restores dignity, and nurtures hope, she said."

The Hub, supported by the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (US-CDC) through the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN), was conceptualized in 2018 to provide a safe and supportive

space for adolescents and young people. Its mission is to equip the youth with entrepreneurial, digital, and life skills, addressing vulnerabilities such as unemployment, limited social support, and lack of access to development opportunities.

Through structured training programs, mentorship, and holistic support services, the AYP Tech Hub helps participants build confidence, develop practical skills, and transition successfully into adulthood. The commissioning signifies a renewed commitment by the Rivers State Ministry of Health and partners to invest in sustainable youth development and create avenues for social and economic empowerment.

The Institute of Human Virology, Nigeria (IHVN), Chief Operating Officer/ Managing Director, Dr Charles Olalekan Mensah described the commissioning as a milestone in transforming the facility into a dynamic space for opportunity, creativity, and empowerment for youth.

"IHVN remains committed to working closely with the Rivers State Government, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (US-CDC), Project Hope, and the host community to ensure the long-term sustainability and impact of the AYP Innovation Hub," Dr. Mensah said.

As part of the commissioning, the Commissioner was taken on a guided tour of the Hub, showcasing its training facilities, vocational spaces, ICT labs, and wellness support areas, giving her firsthand insight into the programs and services available to adolescents and young people.



IHVN Chief Operating Officer and Managing Director, Dr. Charles Olalekan Mensah welcoming Rivers State Hon. Commissioner of Health Dr. Mrs Adaeze Oreh to the Adolescents and Young Persons Tech Hub in Port Harcourt.



Rivers State Hon. Commissioner of Health, Dr. Mrs. Adaeze Oreh commissions the tech hub to empower adolescents with entrepreneurial, digital, and life skills.



Rivers State Hon. Commissioner of Health, Dr. Mrs. Adaeze Oreh tours the tech hub in Fimie, Abuloma, Rivers State.

Photo Gallery



(4th and 5th Left) The Honorable Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Dr. Bernard Doro and IHVN Chief Executive Officer, Dr Patrick Dakum flanked by a team from Institute of Human Virology Nigeria and the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation.



IHVN Chief Operating Officer and Managing Director, Dr. Charles Olalekan Mensah discussing with a visiting team from BMZ to discuss progress on the Food Security and Malaria Prevention project funded by BMZ through Gesundes Afrika and implemented by IHVN.



IHVN, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA), and the Community of People who Use Drugs, have officially flagged off Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) services. The provision of MAT services in Anambra, Ebonyi and Kwara States is supported by the Global Fund GC7 Grant.



IHVN Chief Executive Officer, Dr Patrick Dakum, the Executive Director of the International Research Center of Excellence (IRCE), Professor Alash'le Abimiku and IHVN Director of Special Projects Dr Aderonke Vivian Agbaje at CROI 2026 conference in California, USA.



IHVN Director Special Projects, Dr. Aderonke Agbaje and IHVN Assistant Director, Health Product Management, Mrs. Chiagozie Mgbemena at the launch of Lenacapavir for HIV prevention in Abuja.

EQUAL Project Unveils Research Findings on Community Midwifery in Conflict-Affected Areas in Nigeria

by Blessing Ukpabi



(L-R) EQUAL Nigeria Project Co-Principal Investigator, Dr. Charity Maina, Provost of Shehu Sule College of Nursing Sciences in Damaturu, Hadiza Sabo, and EQUAL Nigeria Principal Investigator, Prof. Emilia Iwu, discussing with participants at the research dissemination and close-out event in Abuja.



Attendees of the EQUAL Nigeria closeout ceremony at the IHVN Campus in Abuja pose for a group picture.

Researchers at the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN) have said that Nigeria's community midwifery program is effective in addressing maternal, neonatal health challenges in conflict-affected areas in North-East, Nigeria.

They revealed this while unveiling research findings of the Ensuring Quality Access and Learning for Mothers and Newborns in Conflict-Affected Contexts (EQUAL) project at the IHVN Campus in Abuja.

At the close-out meeting, EQUAL Nigeria Principal Investigator, Prof. Emilia Iwu said that the research was conducted in Yobe State from 2021 to 2026.

"28.5% of global maternal deaths occur in Nigeria. What we see is that there is a lifetime risk of maternal death among one in 19 pregnant women in the country. This is unlike developed countries where the risk is one in 4,900 women.

Nigeria has made significant investments in midwifery training and their deployment to underserved and hard-to-reach areas. This initiative was piloted first in Yobe State which is also affected by conflict.

The data shows the community midwives are there working, and communities are being served. Community midwifery graduates are nearly twice as likely to originate from rural areas than basic

midwifery graduates, 67% of them are employed by six months with 79% of them providing skilled maternal and newborn care at primary health center level.

The evidence is that 98.4% of the community midwives are performing deliveries, 90.2% are providing antenatal care and 69.9% are offering family planning services."

Prof. Iwu explained that though the community midwifery program is working to address maternal, neonatal health gaps in conflict-affected areas, sustainability threats must be attended to.

"The financing architecture for funding the community midwives' salaries is fragile and program survival depends on political will. There is also the challenge of attrition to more lucrative positions after approximately five years. These midwives are exposed to insecurity and poor working conditions in remote areas.

Nigeria needs to hold up its side of the bargain in supporting sustainability for this initiative," she emphasized.

At the event, the Acting Registrar of the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (NMCN), Mr. Alhassan Ndagi praised the researchers for their painstaking research which was done in collaboration with the council. Mr. Ndagi who was represented by the Council's Head of Education Department, Dr. Emmanuel Udonre, assured stakeholders present that steps are already being taken to ensure sustainability of the community midwifery program in the country.

Provost of Shehu Sule College of Nursing Sciences in Damaturu, Hadiza Sabo said the project revealed key findings to guide decisions concerning maternal, neonatal and child health in the state.

Also at the dissemination, EQUAL Nigeria Project Co-Principal Investigator, Dr. Charity Maina, called the attention of policy makers to other key project findings which are, "the Boko Haram insurgency in Yobe State has disrupted maternal, neonatal health (MNH) services and increased the risk faced by pregnant women and health care workers. In addition, gender, cultural and religious beliefs in the state impact care seeking, MNH prioritization and diversity of the health force."

Dr. Maina called on the government to build accountability measures to make sure MNH funding is protected and not diverted to other competing priorities.

EQUAL is a multi-country research consortium generating evidence on effective approaches to deliver lifesaving MNH care in countries affected by conflict. It is being implemented in DRC, Nigeria, Somalia, and South Sudan – countries with the highest burden of maternal and neonatal deaths worldwide. The project is implemented with funding from the UK Aid from the UK government and implemented by the International Rescue Committee, Institute of Human Virology Nigeria, John Hopkins Center for Humanitarian Health, Somali Research and Development Institute and the Catholic University of Bukavu.

The AIM 250 Technology Powers Smarter Data Use for TB/HIV Programs in Nigeria

To bridge the gap between data abundance and prompt evidence-based actions, Institute of Human Virology, Nigeria (IHVN) has adopted AIM 250, a technological solution which leverages AI-powered analytics and seamless integration with national systems like DHIS2.

This integration allows program teams and executives to visualize performance, identify bottlenecks, and implement next-best actions for health care workers, policy makers and implementers across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory.

AIM 250 facilitates monthly data review sessions enabling targeted decision-making and improved coordination. It also shifts focus from static reporting to AI-driven, actionable intelligence thereby enhancing efficiency and data alignment across TB and HIV programs.

AIM 250 has been utilized since January 2024 and is powered by Vantage Technologies and the Network for Health Equity and Development (NHED).

Vantage Health Technologies Client Director Annika Krugel says that as the technology is customized to meet program needs within Nigeria, “one of our biggest

lessons has been the power of staying flexible; priorities shifted, teams evolved, and new challenges emerged, but by working closely with users and continuously iterating, we built solutions that respond to what people actually need.”

AIM 250 is utilized in the implementation of the Global Fund Nigeria TB/HIV Reach, Integration and Impact Project (GF-NTHRIP) by IHVN sub-recipients across the country to drive improved service delivery.

Mercy Chukwu, a public health professional who works with KNCV Nigeria, a sub-recipient of the GF-NTHRIP programs says that AIM 250 has strengthened tuberculosis service delivery across several states through supportive supervision, digital reporting systems and capacity building. She integrates the AIM250 platform into her routine monitoring and evaluation activities to track program performance across states, LGAs, and health facilities.

“If I were to describe AIM250, I would say it is like having a smart assistant that never sleeps and always keeps you one step ahead. It brings every piece of performance information together in one

36 STATES+

FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY

35,000+

HEALTH FACILITIES

11

IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATIONS

100+

EXECUTIVES

46

STATE TECHNICAL OFFICERS

OVER 100+

CLUSTER COORDINATORS

THOUSANDS

OF FACILITY/COMMUNITY LEVEL STAFF

Spread of AIM 250 use in the country

place—clean, timely, and easy to understand. For me, AIM250 turns data into clarity, and clarity into action,” she explains.

Page 8 continuation **A Nurse's Commitment: How Compassion is Changing TB Care in Nigeria**

Beyond physical healing, Emmanuel has also seen how TB treatment can restore lives. He remembers a young woman who faced both illness and rejection from her family. “She was very sick and emotionally broken because her family had abandoned her,” he says. “We worked with her, counseled her, and even tried to reconnect her with her family. It took time, but after about three months, they accepted her again. That was when we truly saw her recover not just physically, but emotionally. Today, she's doing well in her business and with her family.”

Due to the commitment of health care workers like Emmanuel, the Global Fund Nigeria TB-HIV Reach, Integration and Impact Project (N-THRIP) project has

identified more than 237,000 individuals with tuberculosis including 85,565 children and 3,038 people with drug-resistant tuberculosis between January 2024 and December 2025.

For Emmanuel, success is not measured in numbers but in transformation. “When I see a patient gain weight, stop coughing, and smile again that's success,” he says. “Even when they come in sad, I want them to leave feeling better.”

Emmanuel's message to anyone starting TB treatment is simple but powerful: “Take your medication as directed and don't be afraid. TB is curable. We're here to support you every step of the way.”

And to the wider community, he emphasizes prevention: “If we all practice basic measures like proper cough etiquette and early testing, we can reduce the spread. Prevention is always better than cure.”

Through compassion, innovation, and unwavering commitment, thousands of health care workers across the country are contributing to the fight against tuberculosis in Nigeria.

IHVN and its sub-recipients like LTR continue to provide support and mentorship to ensure that prevention, treatment and care services for tuberculosis are provided.

A Nurse's Commitment: How Compassion is Changing TB Care in Nigeria *by Ritnen Gomwalk*

Our Lady of Apostles Hospital, Jos, a Faith-Based Organization (FBO) is one of the private providers providing tuberculosis (TB) and HIV services with support from Leprosy and Tuberculosis Relief Initiative (LTR), a sub-recipient of the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN).

With funding support from the Global Fund to Fight HIV, TB and Malaria, the hospital provides tuberculosis services.

For the hospital, the fight against tuberculosis (TB) is not just clinical, it is deeply personal. At the heart of this effort is Emmanuel James, a registered nurse and TB DOT Officer whose journey into TB care began unexpectedly but has since become a calling.

"I actually wanted to work in the Intensive Care Unit," Emmanuel recalls with a smile, but because I had taken a basic TB course, I was moved to the TB Unit. "I was told that the unit had never had a nurse with a TB background before. I have found joy in helping patients get better."

Over the past four years, Emmanuel has dedicated himself to ensuring that TB patients not only receive treatment but also complete it successfully. His role goes beyond administering medication. He

supervises patient care, leads infection prevention efforts, and ensures that both patients and healthcare workers remain safe.

A typical day for Emmanuel is anything but routine. Yet, what stands out most to him are the small victories. "I like it when patients come in and say, 'I feel better today.' That means everything," he says. "Our work is built on empathy. We listen to our patients and help them find solutions that work for them."

This patient-centered approach is a cornerstone of the success of the Global Fund tuberculosis program in Nigeria. It means that rather than strictly enforcing guidelines, Emmanuel adapts treatment plans to fit individual lifestyles while still staying within medical standards.

"We're not just book-oriented; we're patient-centric," he explains. "If a patient says 6 a.m. works best for their medication, we help them set reminders, so they don't miss it. When patients feel heard, they are more committed to their treatment."

One of the biggest challenges his patients face is not the medication itself, but everyday realities like hunger and transportation. "Some patients skip their



Nurse Emmanuel James, a nurse and DOT officer at Our Lady of Apostles Hospital, Jos

drugs because it increases their appetite, and they don't have enough food," he shares. "Others struggle with transport costs. So before starting treatment, we look at how far they live and try to make things easier for them."

Despite these challenges, Emmanuel has witnessed remarkable stories of resilience. One case that stands out involved a patient who repeatedly tested positive for TB even after completing treatment. "He was worried because he kept hearing TB is curable, yet he wasn't getting better," Emmanuel recounts.

"After further testing, we discovered he had drug-resistant TB. He went through another round of treatment, and today, he's completely fine. He still checks in to say he's doing well. That kind of outcome is incredibly fulfilling."

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Contact Address

Head Office

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN), Plot 62 Emeritus Umar Shehu Avenue, Cadastral Zone, C00, Abuja, FCT, P. O. Box 9396, Garki, Abuja - Nigeria

Delta State

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN)
9, Sir Austin Nwaeze Avenue, Off Isala Avenue,
Off Okpanam Road, Core Area, G.R.A, Asaba, Delta State

Kano State

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN)
No 14, UDB Street, Hotoro G.R.A, Kano State

Katsina State

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN)
165 IBB Way, Beside TAJ Bank, Katsina, Katsina State

Lagos State

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN)
Lagos State Office 59A, Adekunle Fajuyi Road, G.R.A, Ikeja,
Lagos, Nigeria. No 2A, Herbert Macaulay Crescent GRA, Ikeja

Nasarawa State

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria Office (IHVN)
C/O Nasarawa State Ministry of Health,
Bukkan Sidi, Jos Road, Lafia

Rivers State

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN)
Rivers State Project Office, C/O University of Port Harcourt
Teaching Hospital, Choba, East-West Road, Port Harcourt,
Rivers State

Plateau State

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN)
Plateau State Human Virology Research Center, Plateau State
Specialist Hospital, No.13 Old Bukuru Road, Jos, Plateau State

Ogun State

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria, (IHVN)
Chalet 10, Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library
Cultural Village, Oke-Mosan, Abeokuta

Oyo State

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria, (IHVN)
26, Baale Akintayo Street, Jericho G.R.A, Ibadan, Oyo State

Osun State

Institute of Human Virology Nigeria, (IHVN)
TB LON 3 Project, No 30, Raji Oke Street, Opposite
Osun State Property Development Corporation Zonal Office,
Oroki Estate, Osogbo, Osun State

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