



# Fostering an Approach For Data-Informed Decisions: Incident Command Center (ICC) Impact Brief

**EGPAF Overview:** Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF) has played a significant role in strengthening health systems and national capacity to support the HIV response and is a recognized leader in the global fight to eliminate pediatric AIDS through a combination of research, advocacy, and program implementation and technical assistance (TA) support. EGPAF provides high-quality and contextually responsive TA approaches for a wide range of areas, such as health system strengthening, strategic information and evaluation, quality improvement (QI), community engagement, operational research, organizational development, project management, and HIV service delivery.

**DELTA2 Overview:** The overall goal of the Delivering Technical Assistance Project (Project DELTA2, 2019-2024) is to provide comprehensive and cost-effective TA, capacity building, and program implementation expertise to optimize the impact of programs supported by PEPFAR and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) to ultimately help achieve an AIDS-free generation. In the first four program years (PY1-4), EGPAF has implemented or is implementing 13 multi-faceted assignments, including support for the PEPFAR Faith and Community Initiative (FCI), COVID-19 infection prevention and control (IPC)

activities, gender and youth HIV prevention strategy development, No Means No Worldwide (NMNW) IMpower/IMsafer programming, ECHO telementoring platform activities in Haiti, Violence Against Children Survey (VACS) Jamaica implementation, COVID-19 Response TA, Pediatric and PMTCT TA in Nigeria, and Rome Pediatric Initiative/Vatican Initiative TA.

## **Nigeria DELTA2 AP3 Project Overview**

This project aimed to increase and accelerate the progress of Pediatric HIV and PMTCT services by leveraging available resources and progress made in Nigeria through sustainable strategies that strengthen both facility-level and community-level interventions. The project focused on five states, namely Abia, Benue,



*Geographic locations of the ICC*

Delta, Lagos, and Rivers, as well as national-level technical assistance support. EGPAF worked closely with the National AIDS and STDs Control Program (NASCP), State Ministries of Health, and CDC Lead Implementing Partners (IPs) to coordinate stakeholders' engagement and unify vision.

### Incident Command Systems

In partnership with the State Ministry of Health (SMOH) and the Lead IPs in the supported states, needs assessments were carried out to identify the gaps in the infrastructure for a functional Incident Command Center (ICC). Following the identification of space and associated needs, EGPAF procured and set up ICCs at the five supported states and the Federal MOH (NASCP) level including furniture, smart screens, relevant video conferencing equipment, and backup power to enable data visualization.

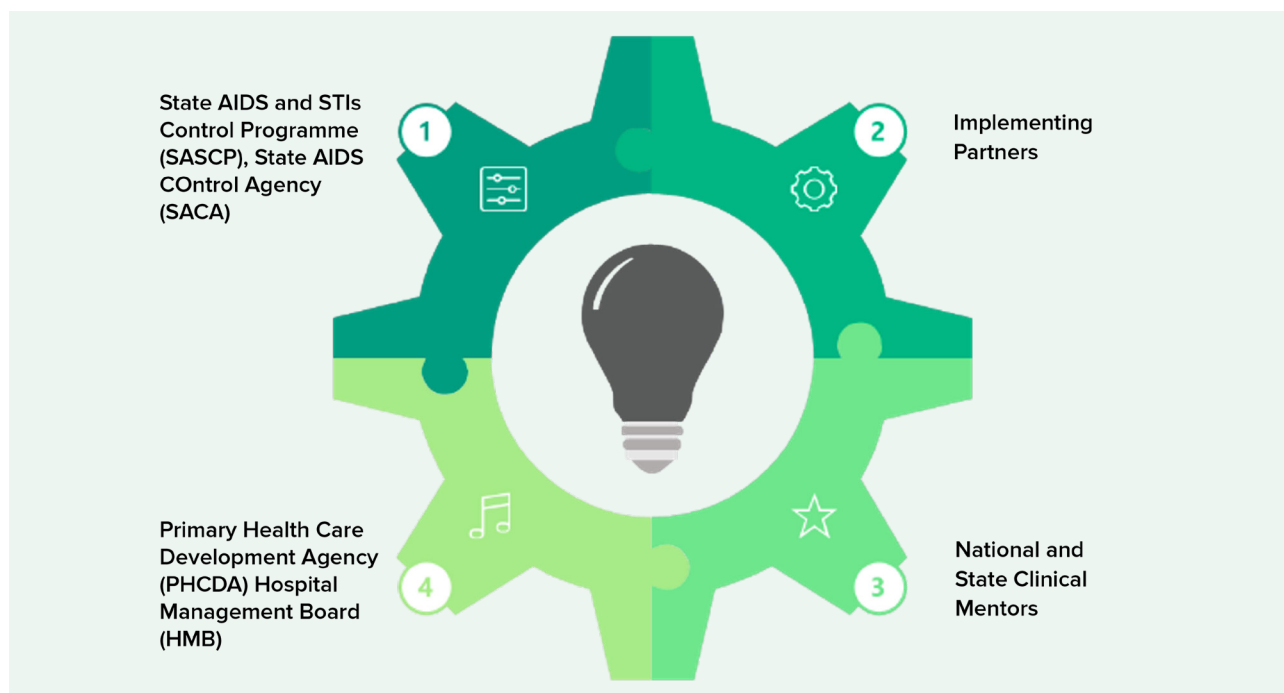
Members of the joint PMTCT and Pediatric HIV ICC team were identified and inaugurated including the Incident Commander who is saddled with the responsibility of coordinating the weekly AP3 meetings, establishing measurable objectives, and facilitating

discussion and information sharing. The ICC teams commenced the weekly AP3 meetings supported by EGPAF which improved access to real-time data to assess the HIV programs.

In collaboration with Public Health Information, Surveillance, Solutions and Systems (PHIS3), dashboards tracking PMTCT and Pediatric HIV indicators at facilities, local government areas, and state levels were developed/adapted and deployed on smart screens installed in the ICCs. The capacity of the SMOH team was built on the use of and navigation of the dashboard to guide the evaluation and implementation of strategies in improving service delivery.

### ICC Mechanism for Partnership and Ownership

Quality and timely data are the foundations of the health system and inform decision-making in each of the other WHO five building blocks of the health system. The ICC aims to increase responsiveness and efficiency thereby leading to achieving the overall goals of the health system. The ICC established at the SMOH and National AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, and STIs Control Programme (NASCP) offices equips the



Composition of incident Command Structure

stakeholders with access to quality data needed to improve the continuum of care including policy changes and commodities quantification thereby furthering ownership.

Strengthening data systems and utilization plays a crucial role in developing a framework



Photo by Nyakno-obong Okon, EGPAF, 2023

for monitoring and evaluations of implemented strategies in the HIV program; therefore, improving the use of and demand for data. Hence, the essence of partnership among stakeholders to jointly analyze data and provide data-informed decisions with necessary buy-in.



Photo by Nyakno-obong Okon, EGPAF, 2023

## Stakeholders' Voices on the Impact of ICC on the HIV Program:

*"The Incident Command Structure in Rivers state has ensured integration of efforts among stakeholders and partners. It has also strengthened coordination, ownership, and government control of the HIV program in Rivers State"* Dr. Ufuoma Edewor, State AIDS and STIs Programme Coordinator, Rivers State AIDS and STIs Control Programme (SASCP)

*"This intervention has played a crucial role in the HIV program in Delta State as visualization and interaction with the installed dashboards has led to effective monitoring and informed strategies to improve service delivery at both facilities and communities."* Dr. Linda Peter-Enyi, State AIDS and STIs Programme Coordinator, Delta State AIDS and STIs Control Programme (SASCP)

*"The establishment of Incident Command Center in Abia state improved access to PMTCT data and we have been able to monitor and analyze our state program data in our well-furnished ICC."* Dr. Kelechi Omende, State AIDS and STIs Programme Coordinator, Abia State AIDS and STIs Control Programme (SASCP)

*"The setting up of the ICC at Benue State Ministry of Health has better shaped the HIV response through improved coordination and communication with the health facilities providing HIV prevention, treatment, and care services in the state. Through this intervention, the programme can identify and respond promptly to implementation gaps and set up quality improvement interventions to close these gaps, leading to improved performance in our key performance indicators"* Dr. Gabriel Anefu, State AIDS and STIs Programme Coordinator, Benue State AIDS and STIs Control Programme (SASCP)



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## Moving forward

To promote access to real-time data and resilient health systems, the following should be taken into consideration:

- **Sustain action** to ensure that all stakeholders are informed of the progress made in the HIV program and strategically make data-informed decisions to improve service delivery including data collection and reporting.
- **Promote data** use through continuous visualization of installed dashboards which are user-friendly with granular data analysis to identify challenges and institute sustainable solutions to improve health outcomes.
- **Execute the plan and assess** the progress of the actionable recommendations and next steps agreed upon by the team. This should include joint mentoring and supportive supervisory visits involving stakeholders and implementing partners to sites with identified gaps for on-site mentorship and coaching.
- **Collaborate** with all stakeholders and partners in the weekly AP3 meetings to monitor the HIV response through data triangulation, performance reviews, and strategic approaches to institutionalize data quality at all levels with periodic assessments.
- **Institute quality improvement projects** that carefully analyze the root causes of identified gaps/challenges, map processes, and monitor tested changes with proper documentation to inform scale-up of best practices.

## Contact Information

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