



IFPW Foundation Launches Empowering Workshop for Female Leaders in Nigeria

The Strategic Training Executive Program (STEP 2.0), a joint effort between Empower School of Health and the IFPW Foundation, successfully convened in Lagos, Nigeria, from January 6th to 10th, 2025. The program brought together 29 female participants from the National Products Supply Chain Management Program (NPSCMP) and the Department of Food and Drug Services (DFDS) under the Federal Ministry of Health. This initiative is designed to strengthen female leadership in Nigeria's public health supply chain, equipping participants with the skills to drive transformation in their respective organizations.

The five-day workshop launched with inspiring opening remarks from Olunmi Aribena, Director of DFDS, and Celine Onunkwo, National Coordinator of NPSCMP. The first sessions, led by facilitators Olga d'Hennezel, Namrata Singh, and Henri Fourcault, focused on self-awareness, personality assessments, and leadership traits, encouraging participants to reflect on their individual strengths and areas for growth.

The second and third days were filled with dynamic activities that encouraged collaboration, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Participants engaged in team mobilization exercises, situational leadership training, and interactive discussions on how leadership styles influence workplace effectiveness. A creative highlight was the development of team chants, reinforcing the power of unity and shared purpose.

The group also conducted root cause analyses of their leadership and transformation challenges. Elise Grace from Merck emphasized the need to strengthen supply chain human resource capacity, while Esther Ndichu from People that Deliver introduced their Theory of Change, showcasing the importance of a skilled workforce in tackling supply chain inefficiencies.

A core objective of the STEP 2.0 program is to bridge gender gaps in leadership within Nigeria's health supply chain sector. Through carefully curated training modules, the participants gained confidence and honed their ability to develop action plans, create urgency, and build coalitions to drive meaningful change in their organizations.

With the support of eight expert coaches from Advantage Health Africa (Aha!), Pfizer, Merck, CHS Advisory, and People that Deliver, participants engaged in personalized coaching sessions, refining their leadership strategies. Sessions led by Abimbola Adebakin (Advantage Health Africa) on using the SCORE tool and Tutu Oladipo and Jennifer Huff (Pfizer) on target setting and resource sharing provided participants with actionable frameworks to implement their learnings. Ruth Dresselgn Deneke from Red Lightning also guided them on crafting compelling narratives to support their initiatives.

Throughout the workshop, participants worked collaboratively to identify key challenges in Nigeria's public health supply chain and propose strategic solutions. By combining leadership development with supply chain management best practices, the program fosters a holistic approach to driving transformation in the sector.

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Around the Globe...

♦ On World Health Day 2025, the **United Nations Network on Migration (UNNM)** has reaffirmed its commitment to ensuring that every pregnant migrant woman, mother and newborn has access to essential health care, regardless of migration status. This priority aligns with the WHO global action plan on promoting the health of refugees and migrants and is upheld in the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration*. In its newly released statement, UNNM, together with WHO and its partner organizations, issues a call to action to urgently remove barriers that prevent migrant women and newborns from accessing essential prenatal and postnatal care.

♦ **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance**, in partnership with the government of Côte d'Ivoire is supporting the launch of the largest human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination campaign in the country to date. The campaign, which will run from 7 April until 13 April, will target 3.5 million girls aged 10–18 years old, both in-and-out of school, and will include those that have missed out on vaccination including during the COVID-19 pandemic. Every year 348,000 women across the world tragically lose their lives, with 90% of these deaths occurring in countries across Africa and Asia.

♦ The **World Health Organization (WHO)** has published its first-ever global guidelines for meningitis diagnosis, treatment and care, aiming to speed up detection, ensure timely treatment, and improve long-term care for those affected. By bringing together the latest evidence-based recommendations, the guidelines provide a critical tool for reducing deaths and disability caused by the disease. Despite effective treatments and vaccines against some forms of meningitis, the disease remains a significant global health threat. Bacterial

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Antimicrobial Resistance Remains a Significant Threat but Pharma and Non-Profits are Focusing on R&D

(Source: An article by Amy Baxter for PharmaVoice)

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) remains a significant and formidable challenge. Unfortunately, the lack of return on investment for antibiotic drug development is a serious obstacle when it comes to finding a solution in the form of new drugs. In the past several years, only a small number of pharma companies have kept antibiotics in their pipelines, and without the market's high incentives, those that are tackling AMR are teaming up with the federal government and nonprofits to assist with funding these efforts.

From 2017 to 2024, only a dozen new antibiotics were approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), according to the World Health Organization. Without much in the way promising drug development, the gap between R&D and unmet need is considered a "dead zone," according to Erin Duffy, chief of R&D at CARB-X, a biopharmaceutical accelerator.

CARB-X – The Combatting Antibiotic Resistant Bacteria Biopharmaceutical Accelerator – is a recent innovation in the industry's

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IFPW Foundation (cont.)...

On the final day, participants reflected on their transformative journey, celebrating their growth, achievements, and future aspirations. Equipped with a clear vision, strategic action plans, and a strong support network, these 29 empowered women are now better prepared to lead, influence, and create lasting impact in Nigeria's public health supply chain.

Empower School of Health and the IFPW Foundation are proud to support this initiative, reaffirming their commitment to capacity building and leadership development in global health. Click [HERE](#) to access the full report and photos.

AMR (cont.)...

arsenal. Created in 2016, CARB-X provides funding to companies working on AMR-related diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines. Its pipeline, focused on the "greatest bacterial threats to humans," includes work with GSK and Novo Nordisk's philanthropic arm. With financial backing from numerous organizations and government sources, including the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA), CARB-X recently announced its 2024 funding round to fill R&D gaps, asking for applicants focused on where AMR burden is the highest.

However, because bacteria can develop resistance to antibiotics and they need to be used thoughtfully and sparingly, it remains a difficult "sell" for pharma.

"We need these antibiotics on the shelf, but we need to be very careful about when they are used," said Emily Wheeler, director of infectious disease policy at Biotechnology Innovation Organization. "That's a good thing for public health, but it makes a really challenging business model in a traditional market dynamic that is based in the drug space on volume of use."

However, some new antimicrobial products are making their way into the pipeline. In February, GSK announced positive results from a phase 3 trial testing of a new antibiotic to treat gonorrhea, which has recently become one of the most common superbugs and is the second most common sexually transmitted infection in the U.S. The drug could be on the market by 2025, sources reported. The pharma giant also snagged fast track designation by the FDA for its experimental gonorrhea vaccine candidate, NgG, last year.

CARB-X has partnered with GSK on several antimicrobial candidates, and is providing funding for a phase 1 small molecule drug aimed at preventing urinary tract infections, plus vaccine candidates for streptococcus and Salmonella enterica.

The need for more collaboration between the pharma industry and outside funding sources comes as recent studies on the impact of AMR reveal the problem is much larger than originally thought. According to the WHO, an estimated 1.27 million deaths globally in 2019 were directly caused by bacterial AMR. Another study published by The Lancet found that there were an estimated 250,000 deaths in Africa directly attributed to AMR and another 1.05 million deaths associated with it in 2019. To date, AMR killed more people in Africa in 2022 than either HIV or malaria.

"With many more deaths than was previously understood, this is a growing problem because bacteria and fungi are living organisms that are continually changing and evolving...[and] want to fight the drugs that treat them," Wheeler said.

In addition to incentives supporting AMR R&D such as CARB-X, the PASTEUR Act has been introduced in the U.S. Congress multiple times and would include US\$6 billion in funding for AMR drug research. More than 250 organizations support the bill. But thus far, the bill has been held up in committees and has yet to pass. For pharma, collaboration will be critical in addressing the AMR threat.

Around the Globe (cont.)...

meningitis is the most dangerous form and can become fatal within 24 hours.

- ◆ *Ehijie Enato*, Professor of Clinical Pharmacy at the University of Benin (UNIBEN) in Nigeria, and President of simHealth Africa (Africa Society for Improved Health Delivery) has been appointed the new deputy chair of the **People that Deliver (PtD)** coalition, taking office at the end of 2024. Mr. Enato will focus on Advocacy and investing in the supply chain, increasing the level of SCM professionalization, developing leadership capability, making supply chains more efficient, and increasing access to health products, ultimately, leading to improved health outcomes. PtD is a partner of the **IFPW Foundation** in its STEP 2.0 initiative.

- ◆ Since January 2025, Angola has seen a substantial cholera outbreak. As of late March, a total of 8543 cases and 329 deaths (case fatality rate (CFR) 3.9%) have been reported. The outbreak has spread to 16 out of Angola's 21 provinces, affecting individuals of all age groups, with the highest burden among those under 20 years old. The Ministry of Health is managing the cholera outbreak response through case detection, deployment of rapid response teams, community engagement and a vaccination campaign.

- ◆ The **World Health Organization (WHO)** launched the *National Essential Medicines Lists (nEMLs)* repository, a centralized digital platform compiling 150 national essential medicines lists from six global regions. This comprehensive resource enhances access to critical health-care data. Developed through extensive research, online searches and collaboration, the repository offers an up-to-date and robust collection of essential medicines lists spanning from 2005 to 2024, reflecting evolving health-care priorities, balancing medical necessity, affordability and accessibility. Beyond a static database, the nEMLs repository serves as a collaborative tool inviting contributions from Member States, WHO regional offices and researchers to ensure completeness and relevance.

- ◆ The **Texas Department of State Health Services** has reported its measles outbreak had grown to 505 cases, with 57 of the patients having been hospitalized and two children confirmed dead from the illness. The Texas health department said 10 of the cases were in vaccinated people, with the remainder of the 495 sick patients being unvaccinated or having an unknown vaccination status. An eight-year-old girl died in early April in Lubbock, Texas, of "measles pulmonary failure" after contracting the disease, making her the second measles death in Texas. The child was unvaccinated and did not have any underlying health conditions.

- ◆ The **Fight the Fakes Alliance (FtF)** welcomed **Fondation Pierre Fabre** and the **Italian Center for Coordinated Research (CRC) in Precision Medicine and Chronic Inflammation** at the **University of Milan** as its newest members in the first quarter of 2025. Fondation Pierre Fabre has been historically active on the topic of substandard and falsified medical products. The CRC focuses on precision medicine which aims to tailor the approach to the patient by prescribing the most appropriate drug to ensure the best response while minimizing the possibility of experiencing side effects. FtF partners represent healthcare professionals, manufacturers, wholesalers, researchers, and patients, with a collective mission to enhance awareness and drive impactful change.

(Sources: Forbes and Organization Press Releases and ReliefWeb)