

Developing the 2024 National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) Annual Operational Plan (AOP), 29th January – 2nd February 2024, Lagos, Nigeria.

Nigeria developed and launched its first strategic five-year National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS) in 2018. In a bid to accelerate the NAPHS implementation, the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) has adopted the approach of simplifying and prioritising the five-year plan into shorter annual operational plans (AOPs).



Facilitators leading an activity synthesis and prioritisation session.

Resolve to Save Lives (RTSL)'s Nigeria team supported NCDC's International Health Regulations (IHR) Division with planning and facilitating the NAPHS 2024 Annual Operational Plan Workshop. The workshop, a five-day intensive residential exercise, was held in Lagos, Nigeria. It was attended by over 110 stakeholders, including participants from 20+ NAPHS-implementing Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and development partners including the Federal Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (FMHSW), Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (FMAFS), Federal Ministry of Environment (FME), Federal Ministry of Finance, Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), NCDC, National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI) World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, United Kingdom Health Security Agency (UKHSA), African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET), Breakthrough Action Nigeria (BA-N), Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN), Georgetown University, and Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI) etc.

The objectives of the 2024 NAPHS AOP development workshop were to validate the 2023 State Party Annual Reporting (SPAR) report, review the implementation progress of the 2023 NAPHS AOP, develop the 2024 costed NAPHS AOP, enhance the knowledge of NAPHS technical area leads on the national budgeting process, and initiate planning for the development of the five-year strategic NAPHS (2024-2028).

The workshop demonstrated the value of using assessment synthesis, activity prioritisation, use of functional grouping and costing by a team of core facilitators as outlined in the WHO AFRO NAPHS toolkit. Nigeria stands out as one of the few countries that have used this process and demonstrated the value of this approach. Furthermore, the workshop allocated a day to train participants on the national budgetary process, exploring opportunities to align the NAPHS AOP with the national budgetary process and enhance domestic funding for health security.

The assessment synthesis and activity prioritisation session of the workshop provided an innovative approach for countries to translate lessons learned from the other IHR monitoring and evaluation framework (IHRMEF) tools such as the [SPAR](#), [Joint External Evaluation](#) (JEE), After-Action Reviews (AAR), Simulation Exercises (SIMEX), Strategic toolkit for assessing Risks (STAR), and the recently [introduced early action review \(EAR\) 7-1-7 target](#). This approach ensures that countries' public health systems are continuously improving based on responses and learnings. The workshop provided an answer to how the [7-1-7 framework](#) can be applied to NAPHS planning as, in addition to teasing out key recommendations from the 2023 IHMEF tools, a 7-1-7 summary report was presented highlighting national progress on achieving the framework with key bottlenecks and recommendations that could be prioritised for the 2024 NAPHS. One such recommendation adopted was

operationalising a flexible funding mechanism to support outbreak response at the subnational level.



A selection of participants completing functional grouping exercises.

The functional grouping exercises provided a platform for similar technical areas to align with a systems approach, thereby reducing silos and duplication of efforts. It promoted technical interconnection and appropriate activity sequencing, enabling networking and collaboration among technical leads.

Nigeria is at the forefront of generating valuable insights for building national International Health Regulations (IHR) capacities by consistently utilising the recommendations from the IHRMEF. In 2023, Nigeria conducted its second JEE, revealing a commendable improvement in readiness score to 54% from 39% in 2017, demonstrating national leadership commitment and focused investments in strengthening national IHR capacities. As Nigeria prepares to develop the second five-year strategic National NAPHS, the IHR team aims to leverage lessons learned from applying the NAPHS toolkit during the AOP to accelerate the development of the strategic NAPHS document.

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