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Abuja workshop calls for evidence-based policies to improve maternal and child health in Nigeria

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Innovative interventions to improve maternal and child health in Nigeria were the focus of a workshop in Abuja on September 21, 2016. Nigeria has the second highest absolute number of maternal deaths and perinatal deaths in the world, contributing to approximately 15% of all maternal deaths worldwide.

Approximately 40 representatives from the Federal Ministry of Health of Nigeria (FMoH), the West Africa Health Organization (WAHO), three research teams, and knowledge translation experts on maternal and child health in Nigeria attended the workshop organized by FMoH and WAHO. The workshop chair, Dr Adebimpe Adebisi, director of the [Family Health Department](#) at FMoH, stressed the need for research to identify gaps and recommend solutions to improve health services in the country.

Initial research findings from the three teams were presented:

- [Using home visits and educational entertainment to improve maternal and child health outcomes in Bauchi state](#), by the Federation of Muslim Women Association in Nigeria and McGill University
- [Scaling up care for detection and treatment of perinatal depression in Oyo state](#), by the University of Ibadan and McGill University
- Increasing women's access to maternity care in primary health centres in Edo state, by Women's Health and Action Research Centre and the University of Ottawa

These projects are part of the [Innovating for maternal and child health in Africa \(IMCHA\)](#) initiative, a seven-year CA\$36 million initiative funded by Global Affairs Canada, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, and IDRC. The projects are developing practical solutions to health system challenges in Nigeria by generating new knowledge about innovative interventions and how they work, for whom, and under what conditions. Evidence-based innovations will go a long way in addressing some of the challenges in improving maternal and newborn health services in the country.

"Seamless interaction between health administrators and researchers is a must."
- Dr Adebimpe Adebisi

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