ENSURING QUALITY ACCESS AND LEARNING FOR MOTHERS AND NEWBORNS IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED CONTEXTS (EQUAL)

EQUAL is a multi-country research consortium generating evidence on effective approaches for delivering life-saving maternal and newborn health (MNH) care in countries affected by conflict. We are a group of research partners united in our shared commitment to reduce maternal and neonatal deaths by ensuring quality health services are accessible to every woman and newborn, regardless of where they live. Our work focuses on the DRC, Nigeria, Somalia, and South Sudan – countries with the highest burden of maternal and neonatal deaths worldwide.

PROJECT OVERVIEW
- Project Name: EQUAL
- Funder: UK Aid from the UK Government
- Length: July 2021 – April 2026
- Locations in Nigeria: Yobe State

NIGERIA STUDY OVERVIEW

In Nigeria, the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN) will lead the EQUAL consortium to conduct three priority research studies in Yobe State:

1. **Policies and Practices Impacting MNH**
   - **WHAT:** A Political Economy Analysis to better understand the politics, financing, and practices affecting maternal and newborn health in Nigeria (Yobe state specifically).
   - **HOW:** A literature review of relevant academic, policy, and operational documents from the health system alongside key informant interviews with diverse stakeholders.

2. **Midwifery Education and Services**
   - **WHAT:** A study to gain deeper understanding and actionable insights into issues influencing midwives’ ability to deliver quality MNH services in conflict-affected contexts. This includes assessing the quality of midwifery pre-service education in Yobe State and comparing the experiences and costs to students of community midwifery education and basic midwifery education programs.
   - **HOW:** A mixed methods study including a mapping and rapid assessment of the quality of midwifery pre-service education. An annual longitudinal cohort study will be conducted to identify factors affecting early career midwives’ workforce participation, performance, and retention and to document their experiences working in conflict-affected areas.

3. **Facility-based Quality of Care**
   - **WHAT:** Evaluation of readiness and quality of MNH care in health facilities to assess the quality of maternal and newborn care available in Yobe state.
   - **HOW:** 1) A facility inventory and record review at all accessible health facilities offering MNH services; 2) Direct observations of antenatal, intrapartum, and inpatient postnatal care at accessible facilities with an average of at least five births per day; 3) A qualitative study via focus groups to assess women’s experiences of care during pregnancy, childbirth, and immediate postpartum periods.

For more information visit [www.EQUALresearch.org](http://www.EQUALresearch.org) or contact Dr. Emilia Ngozi Iwu ([eiwu@ihvnigeria.org](mailto:eiwu@ihvnigeria.org))