

# Africa Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health Innovations (CERHI)



-- Addressing reproductive health challenges in West  
and Central Africa

# CERHI: University of Benin in Nigeria

- Established in 1971, University of Benin is 6<sup>th</sup> out of the existing 165 Universities in Nigeria
- It's one of 43 federally funded Universities
- With a students' population of 60,000, it is one of the largest Universities in Nigeria



# CERHI – Centre Leaders

**Centre Leader:** Professor Friday Okonofua, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and International Health – Takemi Fellow in international Health of the HSPH

**Co-Centre Leader:** Professor Obehi Okojie, Professor of Community Health, and environmental/occupational health



# CERHI's participants in the Japan Tour

- Dr. Akhere Omonkhua, PhD – Associate Professor of Clinical biochemistry and the Chairman of the Laboratory Research Committee of CERHI
- Professor Friday Okonofua, MD, PhD, FRCOG – Centre Leader, researcher on health systems and reproductive health epidemiology



# Vision and Mission of CERHI

Vision: To be a leading institution providing innovative and transformational changes on matters relating to population and development and the improvement of the living standards of citizens in Africa.

Mission: To build capacity within West Africa's tertiary educational system for implementing high quality training and applied research for reproductive health professions to tackle policies and programs for reducing the region's high burden of fertility, unsafe abortion, maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS.

# CERHI's Program Objectives

- PhDs in reproductive health, public health, health economics and nursing
- Masters in reproductive health, public health, health economics and nursing
- Short courses in reproductive health policy topics in the region.
- Develop regional laboratory capacity to support HIV/AIDS and other reproductive health related problems.

# CERHI Laboratory

- Comprehensive Medical Diagnostic Services
- ✓ Haematology
- ✓ Clinical Chemistry
- ✓ Microbiology
- ✓ Immunoassays
- Male and Female Reproductive Function Assessment
- DNA and RNA Analysis
- Molecular identification and characterization of pathogens
- General Research
- ✓ Freeze drying
- ✓ Atomic Absorption Spectroscopy (AAS)





# CERHI Laboratory...





# CERHI's Research Areas

- Characterizing natural products that have shown promise in the treatment of reproductive health disorders.
- Research aimed at scaling up childhood immunization in West and Central African region
- HIV/AIDS research
- Identifying laboratory bio-markers for the identification of STIs, gestational diabetes, pregnancy induced hypertension, pre-term delivery etc.
- Cancer research -prevention and treatment of breast, cervical and ovarian cancers
- Assessing the relationship between gut microbiota composition and the development of childhood obesity with potentials for the prevention of long-term NCDs
- Study of the Reproductive Health experiences of women in conflict zones, including sexually trafficked women.

# Some Selected CERHI's Innovation

- Establishment of new Reproductive Health Masters and PhD programmes in Nursing, Public Health, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Health Economics
- Short courses – with international accreditation of two of the courses
- Regional and international focus
- International Validation of the MPH program with the APHEA, with pending self-assessment and course & Institutional accreditation
- Partnerships and liaison with industry – potential for new drug discovery for women, child and reproductive health

# Areas of Collaboration

- Support for upgrade of CERHI laboratory to meet international accreditation standards
- Exploring the epidemiological and biochemical association between high dizygotic twinning rate and dietary habits
- Characterization of preterm birth biomarkers in saliva using mouse models and other biomarker study models
- Assessment the pro- and anti-fertility effects of selected mushrooms
- Assessment of medicinal plants locally used to treat uterine fibroids
- Biological effects of natural products on conditions such as pre-term birth, dysfunctional labour, ovarian cancer, polycystic ovary syndrome, and endometritis.
- Study of the effects of aflatoxin exposure on reproductive health and fertility outcomes
- Expanding and scaling childhood immunization in West Africa

# THANK YOU

