



#EAWA

Continuous Capacity Building is Making My Work More Enjoyable and Effective

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#EAWA PROJECT FRONTLINE STORY

A working mother, Djeneba is a beneficiary of #EAWA's new local capacity-strengthening (LCS) strategy to enable national and local partners to take on greater leadership in managing HIV services, treatment programs, performance, and evaluation.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officer Djeneba Naba, age 38, is enthusiastic about the ongoing capacity building she is receiving through an innovative program run by the Ending AIDS in West Africa (#EAWA) project led by FHI 360 and supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

"This learning-by-doing technical assistance is helping me enjoy my work in M&E. I have more job satisfaction because I know I'm being more effective," she explained. "I think weekly capacity-building sessions, supplemented by nearly continuous contact with the trainer, really are a necessity after the initial training on M&E that we receive through FHI 360."

As part of the #EAWA project, FHI 360 is implementing a rigorous M&E system that allows for the collection, analysis, sharing, dissemination, and use of data from all

program activities. Each site uses a set of primary tools in paper format for collecting and reporting data, which are then entered into the E-Tracker database. #EAWA has taken this M&E system to the next level through mechanisms to improve implementation of M&E by partner sites on a continuing basis.

"This ongoing support is very helpful, especially for using the digital E-Tracker, which has many features. Using it efficiently is important because it is the core platform for generating accurate data to end AIDS more quickly in my area and my country."

Djeneba works at the CM Yerelon/Muraz Center in Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso's second largest city located in the southwestern part of the country, about 350 km from the capital, Ouagadougou. As the M&E officer, she ensures that her site collects and provides high-quality data to local managers and #EAWA management.



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She particularly appreciates that emergent problems at the site are discussed, and often resolved, during the weekly capacity-building sessions—for example, issues with the E-Tracker related to data entry errors, data extraction, data security, computer functionality, and internet connection. Also helpful are the short guidance sessions scheduled as needed to address specific capacities, such as how to extract lists of patients expected for refills of antiretrovirals, those with interruption in treatment, or individuals found eligible for viral load testing.

Typically, the weekly capacity-building sessions are in-person events. This permits physical verification of data entered from paper tools into the E-Tracker and declared in weekly reports. This is essential for ensuring high-quality services in the HIV prevention and treatment cascade, including clinical care and laboratory work.

“I find these sessions very positive because, since it is a face-to-face exchange, our team is able to detect the errors we generate and then correct them systematically. For example, during the sessions, we have come up with new follow-up strategies to improve our completion of the indicator data entered in the E-Tracker,” Djeneba said.

“My M&E work involves daily challenges. Continuous capacity building helps me find solutions to problems, verify the accuracy of data, and improve performance at my site. It has also strengthened my capacities in personnel management.”

#EAWA set up the weekly capacity-building sessions to facilitate continuous strengthening of the technical skills of partner sites, check the quality of their use of primary data collection tools, and address the areas identified for improvement. Trainers provide the technical skills and guidance to improve the quality of the weekly reports dispatched and the completeness of data entered into the E-Tracker.

In addition to the weekly sessions, #EAWA continues to organize other capacity-building activities, including traditional training and refresher sessions and experience-exchange trips among partner staff. Innovations such as these to strengthen technical capacity are important for building the core capabilities needed for the #EAWA project (2017–2026) and to harmonize the support practices of partner sites within the project framework. They will also facilitate partners’ ability to receive direct awards from USAID and PEPFAR in the future.

#EAWA has been operating in Togo and Burkina Faso since 2017 and in Benin since FY22 to provide support toward the achievement of the UNAIDS 95-95-95 targets for HIV diagnosis, treatment, and viral suppression across West Africa.

For more information about the #EAWA project, please email eawainfo@fhi360.org

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