

2025 Program Retreat

November 3–7, 2025 | Abuja, Nigeria

The PATH Malaria Control and Elimination Partnership in Africa (MACEPA) data analytics fellowship program, launched in 2024, convened its first in-person group retreat and workshop in Abuja, Nigeria, from November 3–7, 2025. The team retreat brought together mentors with all the fellows from both the first and second cohorts. In attendance were a total of 13 participants from the USA and six different African nations, namely: Ethiopia, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), The Gambia, Nigeria, and Zambia.

First in-person meeting

The data fellowship program is centered on a robust technical training curriculum and provides room for regular hands-on mentorship to each cohort of fellows. The mentors, who are from the MACEPA data analytics and modeling team, usually hold virtual meetings with their respective mentees on a weekly basis. They guide them as they work on practical problems and build skills which can directly and immediately add value to the National Malaria Programs (NMPs) in their respective countries.

After several months of virtual engagement, the 2025 data fellowship program retreat was scheduled as an in-person meeting for the purpose of improving team dynamics, fostering better collaboration, and strengthening the fellows' data and analytical skills through hands-on intensive trainings.

The workshop and team retreat

The five-day workshop was successful and impactful as confirmed by the fellows, each of whom reported positive feedback on the overall structure and individual sessions. Each day opened with an icebreaker session led by an assigned mentor. The fellows were also actively engaged during the entire event, showcasing their skills while receiving instant feedback. They paired up to share

recaps from the previous day, co-led the technical training sessions with their mentors, and presented on their ongoing or completed projects from their various geographies.



A learning session on day 4 of the workshop led by one of the mentors. Photo: PATH.

Every day of the workshop was structured to have intensive learning sessions and personalized mentorship sessions in the mornings, while the afternoons were for technical training and hackathon sessions.

Outcome

At the close of the workshop, each fellow had successfully pulled malaria data from DHIS2 using the API in R, systematically cleaned the data, created visualizations of the data with different plot types using ggplot2 in R, and developed dynamic dashboards for the visualization of malaria epidemiological surveillance data with R-Shiny.

The workshop strengthened the fellows' technical expertise and reinforced their capabilities to support their countries' NMPs in driving data-informed decision-making.