As part of upscale efforts to improve the diagnosis of tuberculosis (TB) among People Living With HIV (PLWHIV) in Nigeria, as well as other priority groups at risk of TB, the National Agency for the Control of AIDS, NACA, in collaboration with the National TB and Leprosy Control Programme and KNCA TB Foundation, has installed a GeneXpert machine at St Kizito Clinic in Lagos. The development which is aimed at reducing the burden of the deadly duo of tuberculosis and HIV which currently rank Nigeria as second highest HIV disease burden in the world with an estimated of about 3.5 million (PLWHIV) and 4th among the 22 high-burden TB countries in the world. Speaking during the unveiling of the GeneXpert machine and award presentation as part of activities to commemorate World TB Day, Medical Director, St Kizito Clinic, Dr. Ada Gemmami blamed the high burden of TB in Nigeria on low rate of awareness and detection which makes the disease spread easily.

"Many people present very late. TB is infectious and one person can infect 12 people. This is also fuelled by overcrowded and unhygienic environment which make it important to emphasise early detection. Our message is that once a cough lasts more than two weeks, such person should visit a healthcare facility to ascertain the status." Gemmami said since commencement of their TB treatment in 1991 over 70,000 patients have benefited, majority of who presented late.

"The new machine will help us to make immediate and precise diagnoses of TB and Multi-Drug Resistance TB which is a serious challenges in Nigeria. This machine will help us to avoid any lose of patient or need for them to comeback." Gemnami who made award presentation to the Lagos State government and Chevron Nigeria, said it was in recognition of their stellar support and immense contribution to the hospital initiatives particularly in the combat against TB in the state.

On her part, Community Physician, St Kizito Clinic, Dr. Ndidi Nwosu said Nigeria has been selected among 30 countries that World Health Organisation is looking at to see how they can reduce the burden of TB. "Not only that TB is high in Nigeria, but we also have burden of high multidrug resistance TB, high TB-HIV which is worrisome. By 2020 if we don’t do anything about it, there would be 4,000,000 cases of TB of which 1 million will be HIV positive, and over 200,000 with multi-drug resistant TB. Nwosu highlighted some of the hospital approach in patient support, "Isoniazid prophylactic treatment for adults living with HIV and children under 6 years. Interrupter tracking through phone call, visitation and counseling. Support groups for patients and their families and economic strengthening." "St Kizito Clinic is the only comprehensive diagnostic and treatment TB DOTS centre with trained health personnel and standard laboratory diagnosis in Lekki-Epe expressway axis."