



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Annual Report 2024

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The fabric shown is from Sierra Leonean designer MaryAnn Kai Kai. She met Dr. Paul Farmer during the Ebola outbreak and said he was instrumental in her efforts raising money through Fashion for Relief in 2015. She now focuses on teaching gara tie-dye and helping women set up their own businesses.



PIH Sierra Leone

- PIH Supported Hospital
- PIH Supported Health Center
- PIH Implementation District
- PIH Ebola Survivor Programs
- PIH Accompaniment District
- Capital City

Sierra Leone Psychiatric Teaching Hospital

Western Area Urban
Freetown

Lakka Government Hospital

Western Area Rural

Port Loko

Tonkolili

Falaba

Kono

Wellbody Clinic

Koidu Government Hospital (KGH)

Kailahun

Jojoima Clinic

Bonthe

Partners In Health Sierra Leone (PIH-SL) began supporting the Government of Sierra Leone in response to the Ebola epidemic in October 2014. In the aftermath of the Ebola crisis, PIH-SL recognized the country's great need for continued investments to rebuild a resilient health system and committed to long-term health system strengthening in support of the Ministry of Health (MOH).

PIH-SL is guided by principles of social justice, government accompaniment, integrated health services, flexibility, agility, community ownership, and evidence-based interventions.

900 STAFF,
94% SIERRA LEONEAN NATIONALS

8 DISTRICTS SUPPORTED

11 FACILITIES DIRECTLY SUPPORTED

Today, in partnership with the Government of Sierra Leone, PIH-SL supports 11 health facilities and works across eight districts in an effort to build systems that protect every Sierra Leonean's right to health, especially those most vulnerable to sickness and injustice. With a team of over 900 staff members, 94% of which are Sierra Leonean nationals, PIH-SL's model utilizes a public-private partnership with MOH, leveraging Kono District as a model district for the provision of integrated, patient-centered care across all levels of health care delivery. Ultimately, PIH-SL aims to ensure holistic health systems strengthening through continuous, comprehensive investments, and quality improvement initiatives that respond to emerging needs informed by research and community voices.

The reporting period for the annual report encompasses the Fiscal Year 2024 from July 2023 to June 2024.



Vicky Reed, executive director of Partners In Health Sierra Leone at the Freetown office. Photo by Chiara Herold / PIH

Dear Friends,

It is with great honor to be writing to you as the Executive Director of Partners in Health Sierra Leone. Over the past year, it has been a privilege to step into this role to lead and work alongside our staff in Sierra Leone, our colleagues across 11 other countries, and our global family, including all of you, whose vision and support make our work possible.

I am pleased to present to you, our 2024 annual report, which is just a snapshot of the incredible work our team is carrying out to deliver a preferential option for the poor in healthcare. In reflecting on the past year and all that we have achieved together, I am reminded again why all of us continue to answer the call for social justice and remain unwavering in our commitment to delivering high quality healthcare to the most vulnerable.

Despite continued challenges of shrinking resources and ongoing global health crises, we have made advances in health equity by improving and expanding life-saving medical care and contributing to strengthening the national health system in Sierra Leone through our “5S” model approach.

Our commitment to the Ministry of Health in improving maternal health outcomes is highlighted by the ongoing construction of the Maternal Center of Excellence. A model facility that will radically change the way maternal and child health is delivered, while being a training site for the next generation of health care workers. Mental health services are at the pinnacle in our programming, with residents being trained as part of the first cohort of psychiatrists and accompanying the government in the fight against the national emergency substance abuse epidemic.

We remain steadfast in improving tuberculosis care and responding to other infectious disease threats while expanding access to care for non-communicable diseases. Recognition of our model of care, and replicability is highlighted by our implementation of the Quality Essential Health Services and Systems Support Project in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and funded by the World Bank. Our primary care expansion and community-based programs demonstrate the need for continued social support to our patients to improve health care access. None of this great work be possible without our dedicated team, who truly believe that “injustice has a cure” and “health is a human right.”

I am truly grateful to our partners – government, supporters, and other organizations who have allowed us to continue this important mission. I am reassured that together we will remain committed to our mission of providing a preferential option for the poor in health care, even amidst challenges. The progress that we have all made together in health systems strengthening to bend

In solidarity,

Vicky Reed
Executive Director



Community-Based Programs

Community-based programs help PIH-SL better understand patients' and communities' needs by providing non-judgmental support in a comfortable setting. Meeting patients where they are leads to understanding where they want to be and how that can be achieved. PIH-SL uses these programs to eliminate barriers to health and wellbeing.

COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS

The dedicated team of 123 PIH-SL community health workers (CHWs) plays a vital role in providing compassionate support and guidance to patients striving for optimal health outcomes. In Kono District, these CHWs serve 4,651 patients affected by tuberculosis (TB), HIV, or co-infections, ensuring they receive regular home visits, assistance with medication adherence, and psychosocial care. CHWs remind patients of clinical appointments and frequently accompany them to these visits. This year alone, they accompanied patients on 6,002 visits for medication collection or clinic appointments. Notably, many CHWs are individuals living with HIV or are former TB patients, which allows them to offer empathetic peer to peer support and a deep understanding of the challenges associated with these diseases.

ACUTE NEEDS PROGRAM

PIH-SL's Acute Needs Program (ANP) provides essential short-term cash transfers to support the most vulnerable patients as well as nutritional assistance for children at risk of malnutrition. This year, the program expanded with the addition of two new staff members, and services are now accessible at the Gandorhun Community Health Center in southern Kono District. CHWs and clinicians identify vulnerable patients on a weekly basis, ensuring timely support. The ANP committee, which includes clinical leads from PIH-SL, social workers, and community program representatives, assesses eligibility for financial assistance. In total, 6,093 patients received cash transfers across all PIH-supported facilities and communities this year. At the Wellbody Clinic, a new canteen was established to produce Bennimix, a nutritious blended meal designed for infants and children. This initiative is supported by a new grinding machine that facilitates the preparation and distribution of meals to 2,922 children at risk of malnutrition, ensuring they receive vital nutrition to support their growth and health.



ADULT EDUCATION

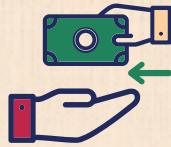
In both Kono and Port Loko District, PIH-SL is committed to addressing high illiteracy rates, which are closely associated with extreme poverty. This year, 85 individuals were supported to engage in Village Savings and Loan Associations, and 42 new students were enrolled in vocational training programs. To foster a safe and conducive learning environment, four training centers underwent renovations. We proudly celebrate the achievements of 79 high-performing learners who graduated from the Accelerated Learning Program, marking a significant milestone in the efforts to empower individuals through education.

IMPACT



4,652
patients

were supported by
community health workers



6,093
patients

received cash transfers



79
learners

graduated from the
Accelerated Learning
Program



Primary Care

Wellbody Clinic in Kono District exemplifies primary health care delivery, training, and innovation in the country. Through the Primary Health Care Expansion Program, four additional peripheral health units (PHUs) are now supported by PIH-SL.

ABOVE: Mariama Konataya with her son at the new canteen at Wellbody Clinic. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH

WELLBODY CLINIC

Wellbody Clinic in Kono District is a model primary health facility which has significantly improved health care access and quality for its patients through comprehensive investments in innovative approaches, clinical training, infrastructure, and community health initiatives. Wellbody continues to pioneer the use of the electronic medical records system allowing for better patient management and continuity of care for the roughly 4,400 patients who visit the clinic each month. The facility is the first in the county to be fully reliant on an electronic medical record system.

Not a single maternal death was registered this year and only one since 2016, thanks to the ongoing mentorship of maternity staff and use of maternal waiting homes—facilities where women with high-risk pregnancies can stay for 24-hour monitoring ahead of their due date. These homes were first opened in 2017 and freshly renovated in 2023. This year, cervical

cancer screenings started, offering an essential service to women and enhancing early detection and treatment options.

Also this year, a newly constructed observation room opened to improve patient care by providing a dedicated space for monitoring and assessing patients' conditions, ensuring timely interventions.

EXPANSION PROGRAM

Through the Primary Health Care Expansion Program, four PHUs in the district are being supported through staffing, mentorship and training, infrastructure and equipment upgrades, medication, and community-based programs. Each facility has been equipped with screening, triage, registration, and adequate clinical consultation spaces. The expansion of health services at these four PHUs reduces the number of patients who rely solely on the Wellbody Clinic and increases health care access across the district. Infrastructure upgrades at Kayima Community Health Center (CHC) were also completed this year. Nutrition support for children expanded to the PHUs, ensuring children with moderate acute malnutrition receive the support they need to grow up healthy and strong. This year, over 880 children received nutritious meals across Sewafe and Kombayendeh CHC. The enhancement of services at the PHUs allows families to access support close to their homes without having to travel to Wellbody Clinic.

MENTORSHIP

Wellbody is increasingly being recognized nationally as a center for teaching and training the next generation of health care workers. In 2022, the primary health care team rolled out a comprehensive mentorship program. This program aims at improving and expanding the quality of care at the facilities. The mentorship program includes physicians, community health officers (CHOs), pharmacy, laboratory, and data management mentors. These mentors rotate through the different facilities to offer training and mentorship.



The new canteen at Wellbody Clinic during Bennimix production. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH

IMPACT



2,922
children

received nutritious Bennimix meals to combat malnutrition



4,412
patients

seek care at Wellbody Clinic every month



36,056
patients

were treated across Sewafe, Kombayendeh and Gandorhun CHCs

Maternal and Newborn Health

PIH-SL is improving maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health services at Koidu Government Hospital (KGH) and Wellbody Clinic, and connecting women in the communities to quality care through traditional birth attendants, ambulance referrals, and community outreach.

ABOVE: Nurse Esther Ansumana is taking care of a newborn baby at the maternity ward inside Koidu Government Hospital. Photo by Chiara Herold / PIH

KOIDU GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL

Maternal and newborn health outcomes in Sierra Leone have improved significantly in recent years, with maternal mortality rates decreasing drastically after being among the highest in the world. Contributing to and building on these successes, PIH-SL has made progress through comprehensive initiatives across Kono District at KGH, Wellbody Clinic, and in the communities.

From 2020 to 2024, KGH saw a remarkable 33% increase in women choosing to deliver their babies at the facility. This year, over 2,700 deliveries took place at the hospital and 46% of deliveries were caesarean sections (C-sections). The percentage is high because KGH is a key referral facility for pregnancy complications, which often lead to a C-section. Well-trained staff are ready to handle complications that arise during childbirth.



Geodrica Williams Kamara, senior midwife mentor at Koidu Government Hospital maternity ward, uses the Janitri fetal monitoring technology. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH

INNOVATIVE CARE

This year an innovative approach was introduced at KGH, Wellbody Clinic, and Sewafe and Kombayendeh Community Health Centers – the Janitri fetal monitoring technology. The device enhances maternal care by providing continuous, real-time monitoring of fetal heart rates during labor, allowing health care providers to swiftly identify and respond to potential complications, thereby improving outcomes for both mothers and their newborns. This year over 1,300 complications were detected thanks to the device with low fetal heart rates being the most common cause.

SPECIAL CARE BABY UNIT

At the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) over 1,000 babies were treated, cared

for, and nursed to health this year. The SCBU provides the highest standard of neonatology care for neonates born at KGH, as well as those born outside of the hospital, with a dedicated space and trained pediatricians to provide care. Designed for pre-term babies, sick neonates, and babies that require other specialized care, the SCBU is highly valued and has increased the survival of neonates. This year 671 infants within KGH and 419 from outside the hospital were referred to the SCBU, most commonly due to neonatal infections.



READ MORE,
about improved
maternal care through
training



IMPACT



**3,193
women**
gave birth across KGH and
Wellbody Clinic



**191
Traditional Birth
Attendants**
made over 25,000 visits



**1090
infants**
were cared for at the Special
Care Baby Unit

ADOLESCENT AND YOUTH FRIENDLY SERVICES

Through the Adolescent and Youth Friendly Services (AYFS) at KGH, young people have access to confidential and non-judgmental health care services. This ensures that their unique needs and rights regarding sexual and reproductive health are met effectively. This year over 7,100 young people visited the AYFS clinic at KGH. Outside the clinic, the team conducts school visits, facilitates school clubs, and meets with young people out of school to ensure continuous education on sexual and reproductive health.



Nurse Fatmata Junisa speaks with a young person at the AYFS Clinic at Koidu Government Hospital. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH



Gladys Abu (right), traditional birth attendant, accompanies expectant mother Mary Senesie for a prenatal appointment. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH



Nurse Patience Hawa Kargbo explaining different methods of family planning at Koidu Government Hospital. Photo by Chiara Herold/ PIH

FAMILY PLANNING

Other services offered at KGH include family planning support and cervical cancer screenings. This year over 6,600 family planning consultations happened at KGH with contraceptive implants being the most popular method of birth control. Almost 50% of women opted for this form of long-acting reversible contraception. In Sierra Leone cervical cancer is the second most common form of cancer. Cervical cancer screenings are crucial to detect early signs of the disease and to provide timely interventions. This year a total of 2,413 women were screened and 236 were identified to receive follow-up care.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

In the community, Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) work with women, accompanying them to clinical appointments and creating trust in the health care system. PIH-SL has recruited and trained 191 TBAs who provide health education and accompaniment for mothers in their communities. This year, TBAs made over 25,000 visits connecting pregnant women to health care, helping to reduce the number of obstetric complications, stillbirths and, maternal deaths in Kono District. When emergency cases are detected at Peripheral Health Units in the communities, time is of the essence. To ensure quick referrals to KGH, PIH-SL supports the National Emergency Medical Services (NEMS) with fuel to operate their ambulances. NEMS ambulances are strategically positioned across key locations in the district to ensure a prompt response. This year, 536 pregnant women were brought to KGH, helping to save the women's and babies' lives.



The National Emergency Medical Services ambulance arrives at Koidu Government Hospital. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH



READ MORE,
about Abdulai's
journey

Mental Health

Since 2017, PIH-SL has expanded community and clinic-based mental health care in Kono District, transformed the oldest psychiatric hospital in sub-Saharan Africa, introduced the nation's first mental health helpline, and piloted the nation's first Psychiatry Residency at the Sierra Leone Psychiatric Teaching Hospital (SLPTH).

ABOVE: Abdulai sought care for drug abuse in 2019. Today, he's in recovery and aspires to become an entertainer. Photo by Sabrina Charles / PIH

INTEGRATING MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Supporting the Ministry of Health (MOH), PIH-SL is transforming mental health services in Sierra Leone by integrating them into general health care across community, primary, secondary and tertiary levels, launching the country's first mental health helpline, and pioneering the first psychiatric residency program for medical doctors.

In Kono District, the team of trained clinicians and counselors provide a comprehensive model of care within Koidu Government Hospital, Wellbody Clinic, and the community. This year 2,169 mental health outreach activities took place across communities in Kono District. The team continues to implement community-based psychotherapy interventions such as the Common Elements Treatment Approach (CETA), which addresses multiple problems in a short time frame with easy-to-understand guidance. Seventy-six patients received care through CETA this year. Through a robust team of

community health workers, homeless individuals living with mental illness are connected to psycho-social counseling, rehabilitation activities, and income-generating projects. This year an average of 47 homeless patients were engaged per month.

MENTAL HEALTH HELPLINE

In 2022 PIH-SL in collaboration with MOH launched the country's first toll-free, mental health helpline, enabling patients across the country to access care. This year an average of 200 individuals per month were supported through the helpline linking them to mental health care, medical care, and social services, as needed.

SIERRA LEONE PSYCHIATRIC TEACHING HOSPITAL

Starting in 2018, in partnership with MOH, PIH-SL transformed the Sierra Leone Psychiatric Teaching Hospital (SLPTH) into a hub for the delivery of high-quality mental health care. The facility is the oldest psychiatric hospital in sub-Saharan Africa and admits some of the country's most vulnerable people who face stigma and abandonment from long untreated mental health conditions. PIH co-developed Sierra Leone's first psychiatric residency program for medical doctors at the SLPTH in partnership with MOH and the West African College of Physicians

(WACP). Officially accredited in July 2022, the residency program utilizes a training curriculum based on the WACP's curriculum and welcomed its first class of seven Sierra Leonean residents. This year, two residents traveled to Ghana College of Physicians and Surgeons in Accra, to fulfill critical rotations in child and adolescent mental health and neurology as they continue to grow essential knowledge and skills.

DRUG REHABILITATION

In response to President Julius Maada Bio's declaration of a state of emergency on substance abuse, PIH-SL, in collaboration with MOH, opened the drug treatment and rehabilitation center at the SLPTH in June 2024. The center, which houses 30 beds, is staffed by a multidisciplinary team, including one clinical psychologist, three psychiatrists, and seven resident psychiatrists, along with a dedicated cadre of mental health nurses and care providers.



In June 2024, the new drug treatment and rehabilitation center inside SLPTH officially opened. Photo by Sabrina Charles / PIH



IMPACT



127
patients

were admitted at Sierra Leone's Psychiatric Teaching Hospital each month on average



1,810
individuals

were provided with support through the national mental health helpline



703
outpatient

visits were conducted on average per month

HIV and Tuberculosis

PIH focuses on tuberculosis (TB) and HIV care across all levels, from the community to hospitals. This year, 85% of identified TB cases in Kono District were detected as a result of PIH-supported activities and successfully linked to care.

ABOVE: Clinicians working at the treatment center for drug-resistant tuberculosis at Koidu Government Hospital. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH

DECENTRALIZING TUBERCULOSIS CARE

In June 2022, the treatment center for drug-resistant tuberculosis (DR-TB) opened at Koidu Government Hospital (KGH) with the goal of decentralizing care. Now, patients from the east and south of the country can receive the same high standard of treatment as those in the capital, without having to travel far away from their communities. Since opening, 43 DR-TB patients have been registered, and 80% have completed their treatment successfully.

Sierra Leone is one of 30 countries with the highest burden of TB globally, but each year, many cases are missed. To address this PIH-SL introduced community-based interventions for TB screening. This year, active outreach increased with 74% of cases identified by community health workers (CHWs) and referred to KGH. Community interventions like screening with portable X-ray machines, contact tracing through CHWs,

and expanding the use of the GeneXpert, a machine that quickly tests clinical samples, are contributing to the increase of notified patients that can now receive care, from 992 cases in 2023 to 1,055 cases in 2024. At the hospital, active screening, especially for children, has also increased, enhancing access to early diagnosis and treatment. All patients who are admitted to KGH receive nutritional support on their journey back to health.



Dr. Michael Mazzi consulting a patient at the TB treatment center at Koidu Government Hospital. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH

HIV CARE

Kono District has a high prevalence of HIV and stigma, discouraging people from seeking services and treatment. To connect people to care, PIH is supporting the District Health Management Team, the National HIV/AIDS Control Program, and partners with community screening activities. This includes



Community health worker Mariama Yomba (right) conducts a home visit with Alice, a patient affected by tuberculosis. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH

integrating HIV screening into other community programs like TB testing. CHWs work to link people diagnosed with HIV to appropriate care, treatment, and social support. Overall, 85% of patients are linked to care at PIH-supported facilities. We have also implemented treatment for HIV-related cancers by conducting lifesaving chemotherapy.

This year, a special pediatric HIV clinic was established to improve care and prevention. Within six months, all children who were previously unreachable for follow-up treatments re-engaged in care. Every eligible child now receives TB prevention treatment to prevent HIV and TB co-infections.



IMPACT



4,652
patients

were supported by
community health workers



681
patients

at Lakka Government Hospital
received nutritional and
psychosocial support



75%
MDR-TB

treatment success rate at
Lakka Government Hospital

LAKKA GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL

Lakka Government Hospital (LGH) opened the country's first multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) treatment program in 2017. Sierra Leone's National Leprosy and Tuberculosis Control Program's (NLTCP) partnered with PIH-SL to support MDR-TB activities by providing technical expertise, supporting the recruitment of staff, facilitating training, procuring medication, and delivering care on-site. Out of the total capacity of 150 beds, 100 are dedicated to MDR-TB patients.

PIH supports the Ministry of Health with the implementation of the new oral WHO-recommended treatment protocols. With this treatment regimen, medication can be taken orally as opposed to injections previously. This leads to fewer side effects, better treatment, and more adherence. Now, hospitalized patients are discharged 2-3 weeks after starting the medication, cutting hospitalization time in half.

Since 2017, 880 patients have been enrolled in the MDR-TB treatment program with a treatment success rate of 75%, above the global average of 59%. This year, over 681 patients admitted at LGH received nutritional and psychosocial support, including rehabilitation and counseling support, ensuring comprehensive mental health care. For outpatients, follow-up services facilitate ongoing support.

A hematology machine and a Biochem centrifuge were installed in the lab this year, significantly enhancing the hospital's diagnostic capabilities and enabling timely and accurate testing for patients.



Saio Kamara poses for a portrait outside of Lakka Government Hospital in Sierra Leone after she completed treatment for multidrug-resistant TB and was declared cured. *Photo by Caitlin Kleiboer / PIH*



Dr. Girum Tefera checks up on Kadiatu Kabia five days into her course of treatment for MDR-TB at PIH-supported Lakka Government Hospital. *Photo by Caitlin Kleiboer / PIH*

Clinical Education

The clinical education program in Sierra Leone focuses on empowering the next generation of health care workers in Sierra Leone, building their capacity to improve systems and offer quality of care to patients.

ABOVE: Nurse Mariama Yanka and her colleagues practice their skills during a simulation exercise at the emergency nursing training. Photo by Chiara Herold / PIH

CLINICAL TRAININGS

Through clinical education, PIH is providing ongoing mentorship and training programs for health care professionals, enhancing their skills in areas such as maternal health, surgery, and emergency care. Hosting residents and interns at Koidu Government Hospital (KGH) for their rotations means fostering a new generation of skilled health care workers capable of delivering high-quality care in a rural setting.

This year, nursing mentors participated in 10 weeks of mentorship training, including five weeks of theory and five weeks of practice. The emergency nursing training program taught 23 nurses over the course of 10 weeks essential skills to provide emergency and critical care services. It included both classroom teaching and simulation exercises, bridging the education gap in formal emergency care training for nurses in Sierra Leone. Now nurses are more confident using systematic approaches to patient assessment and reassessment, documenting processes,

and providing thorough handovers. Community Health Officers (CHOs) and clinical officers completed a three week long training for trainers in emergency care with 26 participants. This contributes to improved health outcomes for patients in those critical moments after arriving at the hospital. Orientation training was delivered for 78 student nurses, blood sample collection and transportation training for 51 nurses, and patient triage training for 34 participants, including CHOs and physicians. Over the course of five days, quality improvement implementation training was delivered to 35 health system staff members, including 15 from KGH, 15 from the Peripheral Health Units (PHUs) across the district, and five from Ministry of Health and PIH-SL leadership.

RESIDENTS

Since KGH's accreditation as a rural teaching hospital by the West African College of Surgeons in 2022, the institution has hosted both local and international residents. This year, KGH hosted the largest number of residents at the same time from the University of Sierra Leone Teaching Hospitals Complex (USLTHC), including three from general surgery, two from OBYGN,

and one from anesthesia. Five Senior House Officers are completing their provincial rotations at KGH. These medical doctors have graduated and completed a one-year internship in the capital before coming to the rural hospital in Kono. Different groups of nurses also completed their rotations at KGH, including diploma and Bachelor of Science nurses. Further, the institution hosted 13 interns from two universities in the country at the medical laboratory. The PIH-supported Bachelor of Science in clinical medicine started in 2017 at the School of Clinical Science in Makeni, Sierra Leone. This year, the junior class of five student clinical officers completed a 20-week posting at PIH-SL's partner hospital in Masanga.



Sister Patricia Efe Azikiwe leads a training for nurses and midwives. Photo by Chiara Herold / PIH



IMPACT



6
residents

from the University of Sierra Leone Teaching Hospitals Complex were hosted at Koidu Government Hospital



23
nurses

participated in the 10-week emergency nursing training



51
nurses

participated in blood sample collection and transportation trainings

Koidu Government Hospital

Koidu Government Hospital (KGH) is widely recognized as a model hospital in Sierra Leone, drawing patients from across the country, and neighboring countries like Liberia and Guinea. This year, over 65,600 patients visited KGH.

ABOVE: Emmanuel Fofanah, Community Health Officer, uses an ultrasound machine to conduct an echocardiogram on a patient at Koidu Government Hospital. Photo by Michael Duff for PIH

SURGICAL CARE

Since 2015, PIH has supported Sierra Leone's Ministry of Health (MOH) by strengthening operations and expanding patient-centered services at Koidu Government Hospital. Through a joint management approach, MOH and PIH-SL have made huge strides in the quality of service delivered at KGH.

Surgery at KGH plays a crucial role in providing essential medical services to the community and beyond. This year, KGH hosted a delegation of the West African College of Surgeons as part of the 64th Annual General Meeting and Scientific Conference in Sierra Leone. Ten of the 600 surgeons attending the conference traveled to Kono District to provide a week of free surgeries, mainly urological, as well as thyroid and hernia procedures.

An average of 26 major surgeries are performed each week. To improve the quality of care for patients, the main theater was

renovated this year. Further, to provide specialized care for children, the surgical pediatric ward started operating this year, with an average of four interventions each week.

MICROBIOLOGY LAB

The laboratory at KGH was renovated to accommodate a brand-new microbiology laboratory. Modern challenges in global healthcare, like multidrug-resistant organisms (MDRO), require laboratories to be flexible and responsive to provide the right information at the right time. New instruments, like the BACKTEC FX 40 and the VITEC 2 COMPACT 30, allow for faster detection of microorganisms, even in patients who are receiving antibiotics, and enhance our laboratory efficiencies with reduced hands-on time and rapid reporting capabilities. The new lab will improve patient outcomes and improve antimicrobial stewardship at KGH and in Sierra Leone as a whole.



Lab technician James Koroma works at the new microbiology lab at Koidu Government Hospital. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH

NCD CLINIC

Infrastructure updates across the hospital will expand patient-centered services. A new building for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is under construction and now 90% complete. In the current space, up to three clinicians share one consultation room. The new building will include three consultation rooms and accessible restrooms. Barriers for patients to return for follow-up visits are a challenge within the clinic. To address this, the team has started multiple initiatives, including peer group discussions, home visits by clinicians, and community health services.



IMPACT



48,903
patients

visited Koidu Government Hospital this year



807
surgeries

were performed



12,987
patients

visited the non-communicable disease clinic

EMERGENCY CARE

Since the opening of the pediatric and adult emergency wards in 2018 and 2019, patients with acute medical and surgical conditions have been admitted free of charge. Having a well-equipped, separate space for treating critically ill patients has relieved substantial pressure on hospital staff. Here, high standards of care are delivered through clear protocols and highly trained personnel. This year, all management protocols were revised and updated to ensure consistent, quality care. Mid-level clinicians were trained in advanced emergency care and 23 nurses participated in emergency training for nurses, improving the clinical care provided to critically ill patients.



Clinical Officer Alhaji Kargbo refers a patient to the adult emergency department at Koidu Government Hospital. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH



Nurses at the Emergency Department are working quickly to stabilize a patient. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH



Sister Patricia Efe Azikiwe (right), reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent clinical program manager, mentors the next generation of nurses and midwives at Koidu Government Hospital. Photo by Chiara Herold / PIH

SPECIALIZED CARE

Specialized medical and surgical staff at KGH significantly enhance the quality of services provided, with ongoing training and mentorship programs that ensure clinicians are well-equipped to meet the complex needs of patients in the community. The hospital hosts three specialists in internal medicine, emergency medicine, and infectious diseases, two in surgery, and three in obstetrics and gynecology. In addition, a large team of specialized nurses, including neonatal nurses, midwives, and emergency nurses, work in mentoring and capacity building.

Maternal Center of Excellence

The Maternal Center of Excellence (MCOE) will advance maternal and child health outcomes and create an evidence-based blueprint for scaling solutions for women's health around the world.

ABOVE: The MCOE construction site next to the Koidu Government Hospital campus from above. Photo by AbuBakarr Tappiah Sesay / PIH

ADVANCING MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

The Maternal Center of Excellence (MCOE) will emerge as a state-of-the-art facility for quality care delivery, innovation, and a model for training the next generation of health care workers in a rural setting. In partnership with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Build Health International (BHI), who are leading the construction, PIH is working to ensure high-quality maternal and child health care is more accessible in Sierra Leone. As an extension of Koidu Government Hospital in Kono District, it will dramatically expand the current 48-bed maternal ward and special care baby unit.

This year, huge progress was made at three out of the four MCOE buildings. The Birthing Center sits at the heart of the MCOE. This building will be the entry point for all mothers and babies admitted to the facility. It has two major operating theaters and one minor procedure room to attend to all critical cases. The MCOE is one of the few hospitals in Sierra Leone with cutting-edge biomedical equipment as well as wall-piped

oxygen thanks to the incredible work of BHI installing the medical gas systems throughout the Birthing Center and South Ward.



Medical gas installation at the South Ward of the MCOE. Photo by Chiara Herold / PIH

SOUTH WARD

The South Ward will admit and provide care to all critically ill and post-operative mothers. Hand in hand with the Birthing Center, staff across both wards will ensure that no mother or baby dies from a preventable cause. The South Ward is the furthest along in construction. External works are completed and finishing touches are being made on the inside—installing windows, lights, ceiling fans, electrical outlets, nurses' stations, and other fixtures and fittings.



Inside the South Ward of the MCOE. Photo by Chiara Herold / PIH

NORTH WARD

The construction of the North Ward began this year and has seen great progress with the concrete frame of the building completed and roof bars installed. The ward will provide care for pregnant women and new mothers who had normal vaginal labor and deliveries without major complications.



Construction of the North Ward of the MCOE. Photo by Chiara Herold / PIH



IMPACT



67%

of construction workers at the MCOE are women



95%

of the South Ward is completed



76%

of the Birthing Center is completed

CONSTRUCTION CREW

The MCOE construction crew is a success story in itself. For many of the women working at the site, it has become more than just a job, but rather a place to grow—both personally and professionally. Women like Yei Mansaray, a 29-year-old mother of five, learn livelihood skills that will stay with them long after the MCOE construction has been completed. Mansaray was hired as a laborer, promoted to a cleaner, and now works in the depot department, which is where all the tools and equipment are organized and stored. With no formal education, Mansaray never learned how to read or write—until her job in the depot.



Yei Mansaray works in the depot department at the MCOE construction site. Photo by Caitlin Kleiboer / PIH



Members of the construction crew at the MOCE construction site. Photo by Caitlin Kleiboer / PIH

READ MORE,
about Yei Mansara
and the MCOE - the
future of dignified
care

PARTNERSHIPS

Our strong partnership and collaboration with stakeholders at the national and local levels continued this year. The MOH and PIH teams have come together to create the MCOE National and Local Steering Committees. The committees are composed of members from PIH, MOH, and other government counterparts, as well as local authorities from Kono and the KGH management team. This year the team has met quarterly to discuss progress and take action on all critical activities. The Local Steering Committee meets monthly which allows PIH and BHI to connect with key community members, ensuring ownership of the implementation process and facilitating an effective feedback mechanism. This year, members have consistently brought plants and trees to the MCOE nursery outside the South Ward. These plants will become part of the beautiful landscape planned for the hospital campus. We are incredibly proud of this deep community connection to the hospital, bringing people closer to the MCOE, one plant at a time.



Carlos Velazquez (right), PIH's MCOE program manager and Charles Bartholomew from Build Health International at the construction site. Photo by Chiara Herold / PIH

The passion, dedication, and determination exhibited by PIH in delivering vital healthcare services in challenging settings are nothing short of extraordinary. Their tireless efforts to make a positive impact on the lives of individuals facing adversity are not only commendable but also serve as a beacon of hope for organizations like BHI. We are inspired to continue striving for excellence and innovation in healthcare delivery, knowing that our collective efforts can bring real and lasting change. Our shared vision to improve the world has led us to collaborate on significant projects, such as the Maternal Center of Excellence in Sierra Leone."

OMAR HERNANDEZ,
BHI Director of Architecture, Engineering, and Construction

Quality Essential Health Services and Systems Support Project

The Quality Essential Health Services and Systems Support Project (QEHSSSP) enhances health care delivery at community health centers across rural districts, ensuring that patients receive vital services regardless of their location.

ABOVE: Zaine Kanneh, a 19-year-old student who aspires to be a nurse, visits Jojoima Community Health Center for prenatal care. Photo by Caitlin Kleiboer / PIH

ESSENTIAL HEALTH SERVICES

PIH-SL is supporting the Ministry of Health (MOH) in improving the quality of essential health service delivery in five districts outside of Kono, including Kailahun, Bonthe, Falaba, Tonkolili, and Western Area Rural. The implementation of QEHSSSP, funded by the World Bank, aims to increase utilization of facility-based health services and improve maternal and child health care by supporting community health centers in rural districts so that patients, regardless of where they live or come from, will receive the services they need—and deserve. PIH-SL is directly implementing this project in Kailahun District and provides technical assistance to the MOH District Health Management Teams, which are leading implementation in the remaining four districts. The project focuses on improving maternal and child health outcomes for approximately 2 million people by increasing facility-based deliveries and access to nutrition services.

JOJOIMA HEALTH CENTER

This year, Jojoima Community Health Center (CHC) in Kailahun district has seen a great transformation. Staff have been hired and trained, health commodities including drugs, medical equipment, laboratory equipment, and consumables have been procured, electricity is now available 24 hours a day, and there is access to running water through the installation of 50,000-liter water tanks. Equipping the facility with staff, supplying stuff, and enhancing the space has significantly improved health care delivery. This year began with only around 1,800 patients seeking care in January, to over 3,800 in May—a testament to the quality of services now available in this health center. Overall, a total of over 7,500 patients have visited Jojoima since its opening.

SURGERY

PIH-SL is establishing Jojoima CHC as a modern, well-equipped facility specialized in maternal and newborn care, which is also home to pediatric care and other essential health services. The PIH-SL team celebrated the first surgeries performed in this facility in November 2023, where six children underwent hernia repair surgeries, completely free of charge, done by a team of highly skilled professionals. Additionally, the first C-section at Jojoima was performed in March 2024, and since then a total of 37 C-sections

have been conducted this year. Overall, a total of 178 surgical procedures were performed at Jojoima this year.

BLOOD BANK

Supporting blood transfusion services at Jojoima Community Health Center and Kailahun Government Hospital marked a significant milestone with the first blood donation in March 2024, followed by the first blood transfusion in April 2024. A total of 200 units of blood have been successfully administered to 125 patients, greatly enhancing emergency care and maternal health outcomes in the district.

CLINICAL EDUCATION

Over 250 health care workers from 165 facilities across all five QEHSSSP supported districts participated in trainings to manage obstetric emergencies this year. This is essential to equipping individuals with the skills to respond effectively to life-threatening situations during childbirth. The training not only enhances the capacity of health care facilities but also fosters a culture of preparedness and confidence among health workers, ultimately leading to improved health outcomes for mothers and infants.



IMPACT



37

C-sections

were performed at Jojoima CHC since March 2024



250

clinicians

participated in trainings to manage obstetric emergencies



7,534

patients

visited Jojoima CHC



Thank You!

Thank you to the Government of Sierra Leone for standing in solidarity with PIH-SL; to our supporters and donors for making PIH-SL's vision come to life; to all staff for your dedication and tireless efforts to provide a preferential option for the poor in health care; and to our patients for placing your trust in us.



OUR MISSION

To provide a preferential option for the poor in health care. By establishing long-term relationships in settings of poverty, Partners In Health strives to achieve two overarching goals: to bring the benefits of modern medical science to those most in need of them and to serve as an antidote to despair. We draw on the resources of the world's leading medical and academic institutions and on the lived experience of the world's poorest and sickest communities. We accompany our patients, Ministry colleagues, and local and international partners, working with them shoulder to shoulder. At its root, our mission is both medical and moral. It is based on solidarity, rather than charity alone. When our patients are ill and have no access to care, our team of health professionals, scholars, and activists will do whatever it takes to make them well.