

FAQ on PIH's Maternal Center of Excellence (MCOE) Project in Sierra Leone

What is MCOE?

The Maternal Center of Excellence is a service and training facility that will provide the globally accepted gold-standard of inpatient and outpatient maternal and newborn health care. It will also serve as a training center to bolster the skills of the existing health care workforce and develop the next generation of providers, giving them the knowledge and tools to deliver evidence-based, high quality care to the women and infants in their communities. Thus, the Maternal Center of Excellence is not just an expansion to the Koidu General Hospital (KGH) in Kono, Sierra Leone, where PIH partners with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation, but a comprehensive program that includes all the necessary staff, staff, space, and systems to transform maternal and newborn health in Sierra Leone. The new infrastructure and additional investments in maternal care will enable increased quality and quantity of care for the women of Sierra Leone, and their families.

Why Sierra Leone? Why Now?

- In a country whose health system was devastated by a decade of civil war and then Ebola, 2,941 maternal deaths occur in Sierra Leone each year. This is the highest maternal mortality ratio in the world and 98% of these maternal deaths are preventable.
- Currently 1 in 17 women will die during pregnancy or birth in her lifetime in Sierra Leone. For every 100,000 live births, 1,380 women will die.
- The staff available to provide care is simply insufficient in Sierra Leone, where for each doctor, there are 41,669 patients. In contrast, there is one doctor for every 389 people in the United States.
- In Kono District, PIH has dramatically improved the availability and quality of care since we arrived during the Ebola outbreak five years ago. Some examples include:
 - The time it takes from a decision for the need for C-section to initial surgical incision has been reduced by 69 % to just over one hour.
 - With a variety of system and quality improvements, there has been a 24% reduction of stillbirth at PIH-supported Koidu Government Hospital.
 - PIH has modernized the blood bank to safely screen and store blood, meaning postpartum hemorrhage is no longer a death sentence, and giving birth is significantly less dangerous for the 110 women who deliver at the hospital each month.
 - Facility based deliveries at our two facilities there have increased 40% in just two years.
- Despite these improvements, we are only currently supporting 27% of the expected Universal Health Care (UHC) district need, in a 500k-person catchment area that expects 18,000+ deliveries each year.
- Of the 99 facilities in Kono, KGH is the **only one** that can address serious complications, including C-sections; as we increase our efforts in primary and community health, referrals will increase and we'll have to meet the demand.
- In a place where maternal mortality is even 3X worse than similar low-income countries, as PIH achieves health equity and creates evidence of what is possible, we can advocate for change on the global scale.

What activities will MCOE support?

Through a robust costing exercise, conducted with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation and applying best practices from PIH's other sites, we are planning for the following increases in capacity and care:

| Snapshot of Increased Care Capacity |
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| 46 → 119 bed-capacity |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75 beds for routine care + complications (triage, L&D, ANC/PP, post-partum, perinatal loss isolation) • 23 beds in surgical suite + 2 operating theatres • 21 critical care beds |
| 119 → 361 deliveries per month |
| 48 → 102 life-saving C-sections |
| 217 → 471 maternity admissions per month |
| 500 → 1558 antenatal care visits month |
| Training capability to prepare a new generation of care providers |

| New or Enhanced Services Offered at MCOE: | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| Inpatient Services | Outpatient Services | Integrated Services / Principles of Care | Support Services |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antenatal Complications • Routine Labor & Delivery • Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric & Newborn Care • Management of Major Direct Obstetric Complications • Obstetrical Surgical Care (pre, intra, & post-op) • Maternal Critical Care • Routine Postpartum Care • Postpartum Complications • Essential Newborn Care • High-Dependency Newborn Care (NICU) • Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) • Family Planning • Reproductive Health Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routine ANC • High Risk ANC • Routine PNC • Family Planning • Reproductive Health Services • Adolescent Friendly Health Services (AFHS) • U5 Vaccination Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectful Maternity Care • PMTCT • Adolescent Friendly Health Services • Family Planning • Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Screening & Treatment • Lactation Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laboratory • Pharmacy • Blood Bank • Clinical Training & Learning Lab |