



## Kilifi County Strengthens Maternal and Referral Care with Modern Maternity Wing at Malindi Sub-County Hospital



Figure 1A section of the 40-bed maternity wing at Malindi Sub-County Hospital

Kilifi County has strengthened maternal and newborn healthcare services through the commissioning of a 40-bed maternity wing at Malindi Sub-County Hospital, complete with two fully equipped theatres and a dedicated maternity ambulance.

The investment is part of the County's broader health system strengthening strategy under H.E. Gideon Maitha Mung'aro's Afya Mashinani initiative, which focuses on improving the availability, accessibility, affordability, and quality of healthcare services. Implemented through a partnership between the County Government of Kilifi and the Government of Italy, the project demonstrates how strategic collaboration can accelerate delivery of critical health infrastructure at the County level.

### The Challenge

Malindi Sub-County Hospital serves a large and growing population along the coastal region, resulting in increased demand for skilled delivery services, emergency obstetric care, and referral support.

Previously, limited maternity space and critical care capacity contributed to congestion, delays in emergency response, and avoidable referrals outside the County. This placed financial and emotional strain on families while stretching existing hospital resources.

## The County's Response

Kilifi County adopted an integrated health systems strengthening approach, combining infrastructure expansion, digital transformation, and emergency referral improvements to address service gaps comprehensively.



Figure 2A section of the 40-bed maternity wing at Malindi Sub-County Hospital, featuring patient monitoring stations

The new maternity wing significantly enhances the hospital's ability to provide Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (CEmONC), improving patient flow, privacy, and timely access to life-saving interventions.



Figure 3 Inside the dedicated maternity ambulance at Malindi Sub-County Hospital, equipped for emergency maternal and newborn transport

This development builds on major upgrades undertaken over the past three years, including:

1. Expansion of inpatient capacity to over 160 beds
2. Establishment of an 8-bed ICU/HDU unit
3. Renovation and equipping of the main theatre
4. Upgrading of outpatient services
5. Implementation of a paperless hospital system through an integrated health information management system
6. Construction of accessible walkways
7. Establishment of a modern hospital kitchen

## 8. Ongoing construction of a modern mortuary facility

Further investments underway include a modern Accident and Emergency (A&E) unit, the Malindi Private Wing, and expanded ambulance and referral services.

A notable feature of this approach is the deliberate integration of physical infrastructure with digital systems and emergency response strengthening. The transition to a paperless hospital system has improved records management, enhanced efficiency, and strengthened continuity of care across departments, while the dedicated maternity ambulance has reinforced timely referrals within and beyond the sub-county.

### Impact

These investments are already contributing to:

- Improved maternal and newborn health outcomes
- Reduced referrals outside Kilifi County
- Strengthened critical care and emergency response capacity
- Improved patient experience and dignity in care
- Greater efficiency in service delivery through digital systems



*Figure 4H.E. Gideon M. Mung'aro, Governor of Kilifi County, with leaders from the Government of Italy during the official opening of the new maternity wing at Malindi Sub-County Hospital*

Malindi Sub-County Hospital is increasingly serving as a key referral facility for Lamu and Tana River Counties, as well as health facilities in Magarini and Malindi Sub-Counties.

Through sustained, coordinated investments, Kilifi County is reinforcing its commitment to accessible, quality maternal healthcare and advancing progress toward Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

*What initiative has your County taken to increase access to quality maternal and newborn health services? We would love to hear your story.*

Visit <https://maarifa.cog.go.ke/> to learn more about the successful initiatives on service delivery our Counties are undertaking.

Compiled by: Steve Konde - Knowledge Management Champion, Kilifi County  
Mercy Gatabi – Council of Governors, Maarifa Centre