

Press release

For immediate release

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Commissioning of the St Paul's Mission Hospital oxygen production plant

The Minister of Health Dr. Alex Katakwe commissions the last Life-Saving Oxygen Plant at St. Paul's Mission Hospital



- Minister of Health Dr. Alex Katakwe commissioned the sixth oxygen production plant situated in Luapula Province.
- The plant produces a minimum of 6,000 litres of oxygen per day, operating continuously around the clock under optimal conditions.

Nchelenge District— The Republic of Zambia's national healthcare capacity received a significant boost yesterday as the Minister of Health, Dr. Alex Katakwe, was officially commissioned the sixth and final medical oxygen production facility under a crucial national initiative.

Located at St. Paul's Mission Hospital in Luapula Province, this new plant is poised to deliver a guaranteed and consistent supply of life-saving oxygen for critical respiratory and emergency care to Nchelenge District and its neighboring health centres.

The project, which enhances Zambia's overall oxygen supply capacity, was successfully implemented by UNOPS and is a key outcome of funding provided by The Global Fund, with strong support from the Zambia Ministry of Health. The six strategically installed plants are now operational across Luapula, Central, Muchinga, Northern, and Eastern provinces.

With a minimum production capability of 6,000 litres of oxygen per day, the facility is designed for continuous, around-the-clock operation under optimal conditions. The facility employs state-of-the-art Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) technology, which separates medical-grade oxygen from ambient air.

To ensure seamless operations, UNOPS managed the extensive site preparation and infrastructure development for the plant, which occupies an approximately 2000 sq.m space. This included site clearance requiring the removal of dilapidated structures, a decommissioned septic tank, and two latrines. Essential security and operational infrastructure- such as a perimeter wall, controlled-access gate, and an independent fire detection and fighting system- were also installed to ensure long-term resilience. Beyond the central PSA plant, the system is fully integrated, featuring oxygen distribution pipelines, manifolds to key clinical areas, a dedicated standby genset, and a vehicle for cylinder logistics, all designed to maximize reliability and ensure uninterrupted delivery.

Minister of Health, **Dr. Alex Katakwe** stated: "Medical oxygen is a critical component of care in obstetrics, neonatal services, surgery, trauma management, and the treatment of infectious diseases."

The Global Fund **Ms. Annie Sampa** Chair CCM Global Fund representative stressed the importance of keeping up with the efforts, even now that implementation has concluded:

"As we commission this facility today, our responsibility now shifts from infrastructure delivery to performance, reporting, and sustainability."

George Kamau, UNOPS Project Manager and Eastern and Southern Africa representative, emphasized the significance of the project:



“The successful delivery of this facility represents a monumental stride in realizing our collective goal for a more equitable and resilient healthcare system, guaranteeing that no individual is deprived of vital medical attention.”

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Notes to the editors:

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