Maternal and newborn health outcomes are closely tied to the quality of care mothers receive. Yet, in Kenya, there is a gap in cost-effective training to improve and sustain life-saving emergency obstetric and newborn care (EmONC) skills.

Comprehensive training, supportive supervision, and coaching are effective in giving nurses and midwives the skills to avert or mitigate life-threatening pregnancy and postpartum complications, improve clinical performance, and motivate providers and managers.

Since 2015, Jacaranda has partnered with county governments and public hospitals across Kenya to deploy MENTORS, a low-cost mentorship program that equips frontline obstetric providers with the sustained skills to deliver life-saving care. The program empowers government nurses and midwives with a toolkit of skills and knowledge to, in turn, cascade it down to their peers in facilities.

A BLENDED APPROACH TO SUSTAINABLY IMPROVE CLINICAL PERFORMANCE AND MOTIVATION.

• A standardized training package that includes simulation-based training around real-life emergency scenarios.

• In-facility coaching that helps providers improve their EmONC skills and knowledge as they deliver services.

• Advisory support that helps facilities resolve system-level bottlenecks hampering the delivery of lifesaving care.

A Snapshot of Scale & Impact

800+ program mentors actively cascading skills to their peers in facilities

10,900+ frontline government nurses trained in basic and emergency care

350+ high volume health facilities actively partnered with the program

87% of program nurses have improved confidence and competence to manage emergencies.
To maximize its scale and impact, the program is based on a ‘training of trainers’ model, whereby Jacaranda Lead Mentors train and support a cohort of government nurse midwives to become maternal and newborn health quality of care champions within their respective facilities.

The approach is cheaper and more sustainable than existing training options - and has a demonstrated impact on life-saving skills.

Jacaranda Lead Mentors equip government mentors with lifesaving emergency care skills.

Government Mentors are embedded within public health facilities and champion high quality care among their peers.

Mentees gain advanced emergency care skills through continuing medical education (CME) lectures, and drills within their facilities.

When [MENTORS] started at our hospital, it had a great impact on our service delivery. I saw better teamwork and preparedness, and lessons being shared between our colleagues. Before, we struggled to handle most complications. The results we’ve seen since, in terms of attending emergencies and preventing mortalities, speak for themselves.

– Loise Nzilani Muthami, Head Nurse, Referral Mother and Child Department, Makueni County Hospital

Seven Skills for Safe Delivery

Our MENTORS’ curricula draws on the seven signal functions of BEmONC as set by the World Health Organization, ensuring all participating facilities have the practical skills and knowledge to safely and respectfully bring new life into the world.

Continuous Medical Education (CME)
- Postpartum hemorrhage
- Neonatal resuscitation
- Shoulder dystocia
- Pre-eclampsia
- Respectful maternity care
- Infection control & prevention
- Management of normal labor
- Post abortion care

Simulation drills:
- Practical application
- Normal birth of a non-vigorous baby
- Normal birth of a vigorous baby
- Shoulder dystocia birth
- Eclampsia
- Breech delivery
- Assisted Vaginal Delivery
DELTA offers frontline maternity nurses routine, remote EmONC training to improve clinical practice while they deliver services.

Nurses access the platform for free via WhatsApp and begin the nine self-learning, scenario-based modules drawn from Jacaranda’s accredited EmONC curriculum. After each module, they validate their progress through knowledge tests and gain ministry-recognized ‘Continuous Professional Development’ points if reaching the pass mark.

Qualitative and quantitative data conducted by Jacaranda shows how a client-centered remote learning tool like DELTA can benefit nurses, facilities and counties.

The idea of learning EmONC skills virtually is so encouraging. I’ve already learnt so much about different areas in nursing and problem solving, which will help us all improve the quality of care we give our clients. The certificates are motivating this progress.”

– Stephen Odindo, DELTA User

Empowers nurses to improve their skills. Nurses are self-selective of learning content based on perceived competency gaps or a recent emergency case, and complete modules on their own schedule without compromising service delivery.

Improves facility and county standards of care. Continuous training helps mitigate the impact of staff turnover in facilities, cements best practices during periods of transition.

Generates actionable data for health system managers, including insights on gaps in provider knowledge and skill sets and increasing provider competence in facilities.
A SCALABLE & SUSTAINABLE approach to improving quality of care

Our EmONC training package - MENTORS and DELTA - is designed to be affordable, sustainably integrated into county budgets, and scaled through government leadership.

DRIVING DEEPER PROGRAM OWNERSHIP IN NAIRIBI

In Nairobi, we’ve seen how deeper, implementation-based partnerships with government could increase ownership. In Q1, the capital’s governing body expressed an interest in co-implementing MENTORS with its own cadre of EmONC trainers.

Six county Reproductive Health Coordinators were converted into mentors under our EmONC curriculum, cascading skills like problem solving and respectful care to their peers. For the first time, county representatives could quantify our program data with firsthand experience. By Q4, the county had taken on 82% of the program’s running costs.

We’re investing in [MENTORS] as a more affordable way to capacity build health care workers than standard EmONC training packages. It helps us sustainably build bridges between different provider levels by strengthening teamwork and giving government mentors the skills to train up their peers.

– County Reproductive Health Coordinator, Kirinyaga County

70% of MENTORS running costs are currently covered by Kenyan county governments. This cost share is an encouraging reflection of the increasing trust our government partners have in our solutions to deliver real impact on priorities. Jacaranda is currently one of the few implementing partners in Kenya achieving this level of government cost share.

1/5 MENTORS is one fifth of the cost of similar five day training programs in Kenya, and counties are already sharing a significant proportion of the program’s running costs.
Disclaimer: This report discusses pregnancy and motherhood. While we use the term “mother” throughout the piece to mirror the language of the community we are collaborating with; we also acknowledge that not all pregnant people identify as “mothers.” We would like to recognize that pregnancy and motherhood can be experienced by people of all genders.