



Project for Quality of Care for Maternal & New-born Health with Focus on 5S-KAIZEN

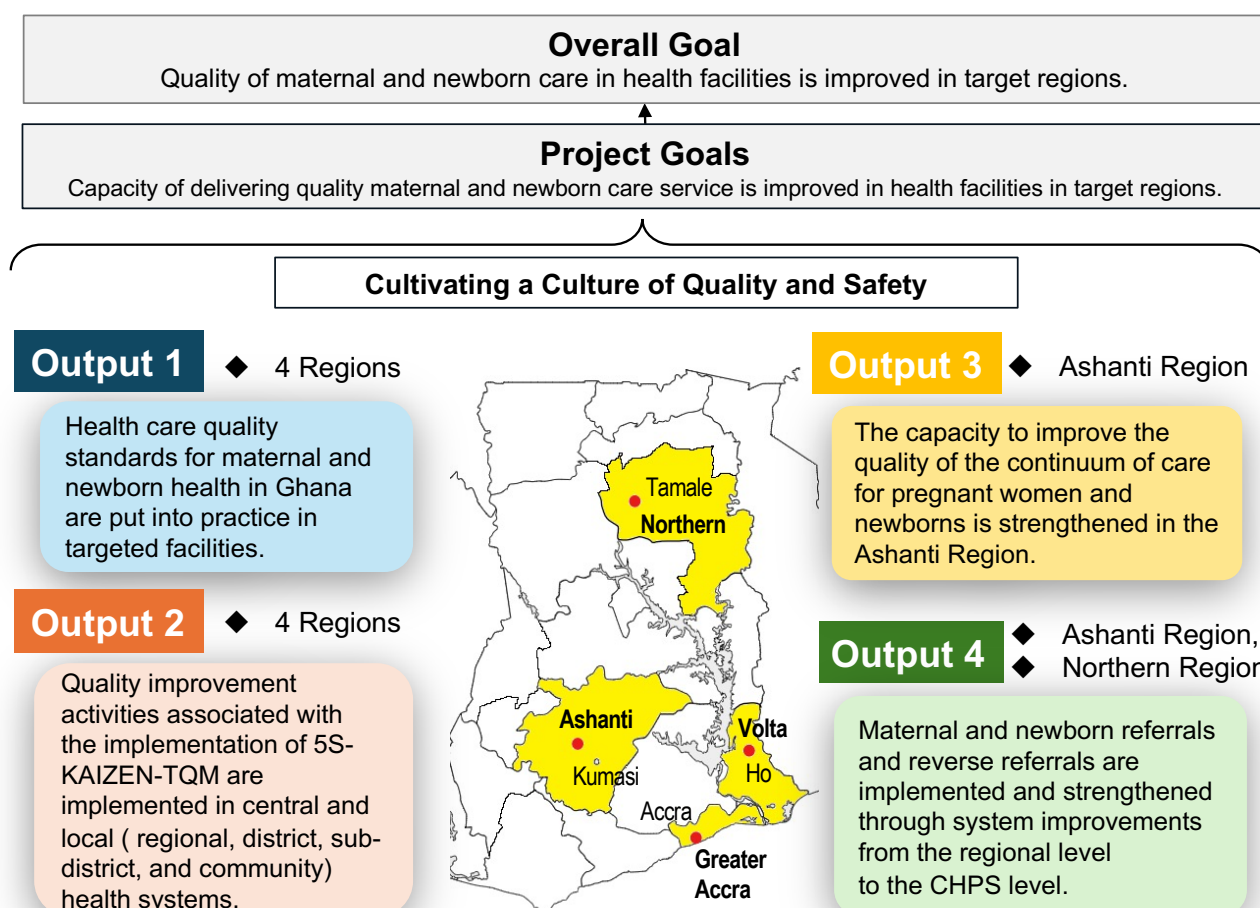
Newsletter

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The Ministry of Health (MoH) and the Ghana Health Service (GHS) in collaboration with JICA launched a 5-year technical cooperation project with the goal of improving the quality of care for maternal, newborn, and child health in healthcare facilities in Ghana, in 2022.

The project, which is shortened as “MNH-KAIZEN project”, seeks to achieve its goal by:

- 1) improving the Quality of Care (QoC) standards for maternal, newborn, and child health,
- 2) improving quality-related activities at the national, regional, district, sub-district, and community levels of the health system with the implementation of the 5S KAIZEN-TQM methodology,
- 3) strengthening the capacity of providers in the continuum of care for maternal, newborn and child health
- 4) strengthening referral and counter-referrals of mothers and children at all levels of the health system.



Trainings on quality management using the 5S-KAIZEN-TQM approach in Tanzania (June 2025)

In the project, the full-scale implementation of the 5S-KAIZEN-TQM approach began, and it was introduced to 52 target facilities in the four target regions since 2022. However, it is not easy to disseminate and establish 5S-KAIZEN activities, and there is a large variation in the progress of 5S-KAIZEN activities among the target facilities.

Therefore, the project carried out a study tour to Tanzania, a country which has been implementing 5S-KAIZEN-TQM activities since 2007 and has a lot of good practices and good quality management system implementation structure. In total 19 participants comprised of quality managers of regional and district health directorates, and target facilities were invited to this tour.

The participants arrived in Kilimanjaro, Tanzania on 1st June, and visited various health facilities and training institutions for human resources for health in Kilimanjaro, Arusha and Dar es Salaam from 2nd to 7th June.

The schedule of the tour is below.

	Facility visited	Place
2 nd June	Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University (KCMU) Training Centre for Orthopaedic Technologists/TATCOT and Nursing school	Moshi, Kilimanjaro
3 rd June	Kibosho Designated District Hospital	Kibosho, Kilimanjaro
4 th June	Mt. Meru Regional Referral Hospital	Arusha, Arusha
5 th June	Centre for Educational Development in Health	
6 th June	(National Holiday in Tanzania) Move to Dar es Salaam	Dar es Salaam
7 th June	Amana Regional Referral Hospital	

During the study tour, participants learnt a lot of good practices not only 5S tools' application but also many innovative changes made by reducing wastes using 5S-KAIZEN approach. The participants were impressed by hearing that Mt. Meru RRH decreased the institutional Maternal Mortality Ratio from 27 cases to 9 cases per year in three years by a series of intervention using KAIZEN with QC story, and another outcome that the facility increased their hospital income by 5 times through effective mobilization of revenue. Additionally, the participants were deeply affected by Tanzanian facility managements' strong commitment and well-structured support framework in QI activities at various levels from the facility to the national.

In the closing ceremony, Dr Christina Akufo, Director of quality assurance unit, ICD, GHS-HQ, commended the facility management for their warmth of reception. She also commended them for the great work done relative to Quality with the mention that a lot has been learnt as best practices. She requested for the Tanzanian MOH to collaborate more with the Ghana team in terms of learning and sharing of best practices after the study tour.

Dr Fadhili Kibaya on behalf of the Tanzanian MOH commended JICA MNH KAIZEN project team for making the learning tour successful and kindly requested for the team to assist for the Tanzanian team to also have a visit to Ghana to learn best practices from the country.

The participants were also very satisfied with the program contents, all the arrangements and thoughtful hospitality made by the Tanzanian Ministry of Health.



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Ghana Health Service Headquarters, Dodoo Lane, Accra

Trainings on quality management using the 5S-KAIZEN-TQM approach in Tanzania – Voice from participants #1

In the study tour, the participants identified the difference regarding quality improvement in the health sector between Ghana and Tanzania and developed an action plan to fulfill the gaps. Learning from the experience of Tanzania, a country in a similar setting, seemed very fruitful and equipped them with more knowledge and practical examples, and made them more confident.



Josephine Atsufi Kporngor (Regional Quality and Safety Manager, Volta)

What are the challenges that your organization is facing?

Our region is currently facing several challenges that impede the implementation and sustainability of quality improvement initiatives, key among these are the negative attitudes and low enthusiasm among senior managers and staff towards quality improvement activities. There is also inadequate commitment from senior facility managers of healthcare facilities towards quality management issues, coupled with limited knowledge on quality management models among staff. High staff attrition, inadequate supportive supervision, and weak monitoring systems at all levels (departmental/ward, facility, and regional) are other critical concerns in the region.



Volta Region team

What impressed you the most in the study tour?

What impressed me most during the tour was the well-established and functional quality management systems across the healthcare facilities, the strong leadership and ownership of the quality agenda demonstrated by top-level managers, and a well-structured monitoring and supportive supervisory framework which ensures accountability and continuous improvement. Finally, the integration of quality management into healthcare training curricula and the staff motivation systems in place (award systems for performing departments and capacity-building support for underperforming departments) were remarkable strategies for sustaining quality culture.

What is your next plan for your organization?

Inspired by the study tour, I am engaging the Deputy Director Clinical Care and the Volta Regional Director to align our regional quality improvement goals. We plan to introduce a robust monitoring and supportive supervision framework to guide QI efforts across all facilities. Capacity-building sessions for senior facility managers will be rolled out to strengthen their leadership and understanding of QI principles. Finally, we have updated the regional peer review checklist to include functionality of facility quality management teams as a critical assessment area.



Mohammed Mubarak Baba (Quality Manager of Tolon District Hospital , Northern Region)

What are the challenges which your organization is facing?

- Limited resource allocation for trainings and supporting quality improvement activities in our facility.
- Lack of continuous quality improvement culture stemming from minimal involvement of staff in quality issues

What impressed you the most in the study tour?

- The opportunity to visit various levels of facilities practicing 5S KAIZEN with similarities to the Ghanaian facilities and to learn from their journey of how they transformed challenges into fortunes.
- Engagements with various stakeholders especially with the Ministry of Health of Tanzania.

What is your next plan for your organization?

- Debrief the Hospital Management and the current Quality improvement team
- Strengthen the Quality improvement Team to include other key health care Team members and make it functional
- Extend 5S KAIZEN to other departments
- Regularize internal monitoring and supervision

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Trainings on quality management using the 5S-KAIZEN-TQM approach in Tanzania – Voice from participants #2



Marilyn Gillard

(Quality and Safety Manager, Ngleshie Amanfro Polyclinic, Greater Accra Region)

What are the challenges that your organization is facing?

- Low staff engagement and ownership
- Difficulty in maintaining improvement activities
- Lack of budget to support quality and safety activities

What impressed you the most in the study tour?

- Top Management fully involved in Quality and Safety Activities.
- Innovative ideas that promote quality and safety of both Staff and Clients.
- Employment of Quality Improvement initiatives to increase income and reduce costs.
- Rewards for staff involved in 5S KAIZEN Implementation

What is your next plan for your organization?

- To debrief management and QIT members on lessons learned on the study tour.
- Incorporate 5S task into daily routines and standard operating procedures.
- Ensure budget is allocated to Quality and Safety activities
- Introduce 5S KAIZEN to other departments



Perpetual Amfobea Amoyaw

(QIT member, Kumasi South Hospital , Ashanti Region)

What are the challenges which your organization is facing?

My organization is currently facing many challenges regarding implementation and sustainability of quality initiatives. Key among them is multiple roles of quality manager and quality improvement team members making it difficult to focus solely on quality activities, difficult in scheduling meetings, planning, monitoring and many more.

Again, management has not come to a full understanding of quality initiatives most notably 5S-KAIZEN-TQM which makes it difficult to get the needed support from them. The lack of a motivational system is not encouraging staff participation.

What impressed you the most in the study tour?

What I was impressed with the most in the study tour was the involvement and support from management of the various facilities visited which translated into sustainability of quality improvement activities. Cascading of 5S KAIZEN to almost all departments within the facilities visited, introduction of 5S KAIZEN in some institutions, allocation of budgets for quality improvement activities and institution of an award system to motivate staff to participate in quality improvement activities.

What is your next plan for your organization?

My next plan is to brief hospital management, QIT, and WITs on the tour. Advocate for full-time QIT members, encourage WITs to continue giving their best, using benefits of 5S KAIZEN to plead management support in cascading it to other departments, instituting an award and motivation system and advocating for its integration into the various health training institutions.



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