

Rwanda's housing authority says construction work to expand Masaka Hospital, one of the country's largest health infrastructure projects, is 96% complete and nearing final handover.

The Rwanda Housing Authority (RHA) said Thursday that the hospital's expansion, which will transform it into the new Kigali University Teaching Hospital (CHUK), is in its final stages. The project, launched with Chinese support, aims to strengthen Rwanda's healthcare system and ease congestion at the current CHUK facility in downtown Kigali.

Once completed, the new hospital will accommodate 837 inpatients more than double the 400-bed capacity of the existing CHUK. The expansion includes three multi-story inpatient buildings, with some reaching five floors, as well as facilities for research, medical education, and specialized treatment.

The RHA said the project, costing about 85 billion Rwandan francs (roughly 580 million Chinese yuan), represents a major investment in modern healthcare infrastructure.

Masaka Hospital, located about 15 kilometers from central Kigali, was originally built in 2011 with Chinese funding. The ongoing expansion continues to receive support from the Chinese government.

In November 2024, Masaka Hospital launched several new departments as part of its transition into a teaching and referral facility. These include a maternal pain management unit, an orthopedic trauma department, a day surgery unit for minor procedures, and a hernia treatment center.

The hospital has also opened specialized clinics in partnership with Chinese medical teams, including a Traditional Chinese Medicine-based Pain Clinic at Masaka and a hernia clinic at Kibungo Hospital in eastern Rwanda. Rwandan doctors are training alongside Chinese specialists to eventually take over these units.

Although officially inaugurated in 2024, the new departments had already been operating on a pilot basis, treating more than 200 patients.

Officials say the expanded hospital will play a key role in improving access to advanced medical care, reducing patient overcrowding in Kigali, and supporting training and research for Rwanda's next generation of doctors.

When completed, the Kigali University Teaching Hospital at Masaka will stand as one of Rwanda's largest and most advanced medical facilities, a milestone in the country's push to modernize its healthcare system and deepen cooperation with China.