



The evolution of the landscape of provision of maternal and newborn healthcare in Lubumbashi, urban city: a comparative analysis between two healthcare facilities censuses in 2023 2026

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Introduction: The provision of maternal healthcare services in urban areas is dynamic in response to the rapidly growing population and expanding urban boundaries. We aim to describe the evolution of maternal and newborn healthcare services available in Lubumbashi, DR Congo, between 2023 and 2026.

Methods: We conducted two comprehensive censuses of healthcare facilities (HF) in Lubumbashi. The first census in November-December 2023 started by a list of HF obtained from the health authorities. The second census in March-April 2026 used the list of HF from the first census as a starting point. In both cases, we employed a snowball sampling method to identify new facilities that did not exist on the lists. Data collectors visited HF and administered a questionnaire (same questions for census I and II) using Kobo Collect tools. The analysis compares the trends and distribution of HF between the two censuses.

Results: The first census covered 1,455 HF, of which 971 (66.7%) reported offering maternity services and 289 (29.7%) offered C-sections. During the second census, 1,455 HF visited, 323 had closed or ceased operations. Conversely, 533 HF were added to the list as new facilities. In total, 1,337 HF were identified. Among them, 1,217 (84.3%) reported offering maternity services, and 352 (31.2%) reported providing C-sections.

Conclusions: A comparison of the two censuses in Lubumbashi, highlights the fast-paced evolution of obstetric care provision in urban areas and underscores the need to continuously update databases on the availability of childbirth care in cities to inform health systems planning.

