

## Air Liquide deploys its Access Oxygen programme in Madagascar to improve oxygen access in rural areas

Access to oxygen is an essential component of any healthcare system. Yet, more than half of the global population still lacks access to an oxygen source<sup>1</sup>. To address this public health challenge, which is supported by the World Health Organization, Air Liquide is launching its social impact program, Access Oxygen, in Madagascar. Relying on a local ecosystem, this program, already deployed in Senegal, Kenya, Mali, and South Africa, mobilizes the Group's longstanding expertise in medical gases to provide reliable, affordable and sustainable access to oxygen for populations in low- and middle-income countries. This initiative fully aligns with Air Liquide's societal commitment.

In Madagascar, the initiative is being inaugurated in eight primary healthcare centers in the Antsirabe region, south of Antananarivo. These small, community-based facilities (2 to 6 beds), serving a population of 215,000, are particularly isolated and far from hospital infrastructure. They often represent the first point of access to healthcare for patients living in rural areas.

Until now, these centers lacked access to oxygen, despite its vital role in combating maternal and infant mortality. The introduction of this solution will allow for **the care and stabilization of patients experiencing respiratory distress in premature infants, complications related to childbirth, and conditions requiring temporary respiratory support, such as pneumonia or acute and chronic respiratory crises**. Once stabilized, patients could be transferred to hospitals for long-term treatment.

**Access Oxygen provides a comprehensive, frugal, and autonomous oxygen therapy solution.** It includes the supply of equipment (in this case, high-flow oxygen concentrators, pulse oximeters, and consumables necessary for care), as well as training for healthcare staff and technicians. **For the first time, the project integrates photovoltaic panels and batteries, ensuring continuity of care even in the absence of a stable power supply.** In addition, training for healthcare professionals is delivered by an Air Liquide expert. In Madagascar, Hospiteq will handle the distribution, technical maintenance, and monitoring of the medical devices. The healthcare centers are part of the Ekar Santé network.

**Diana Schillag**, Executive Committee Member, overseeing Sustainability, stated: **"Making oxygen more accessible where it is most needed is essential to help build sustainable healthcare systems. This is why I am particularly proud of the roll-out of Access Oxygen in Madagascar. Since its launch in 2017, this social impact program has already covered areas with a total population of more than 3.4 million people in low- and middle-income countries. This initiative perfectly illustrates Air Liquide's societal commitment and gives it its full meaning: leveraging our historical expertise in healthcare to make a real difference for local communities."**

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<sup>1</sup> Lancet Global Health Commission on medical oxygen security

Graham H, King C, Rahman A et al. "Reducing global inequities in medical oxygen access: the Lancet Global Health Commission on medical oxygen security". *The Lancet Global Health*, 2025; 13, e528-e584