

# and saves lives



Patients waiting for treatment. (PHOTO: TABITHA OTWORI/STANDARD)

## LATF: A bottomless pit where public funds have been sunk

The Nairobi City Council's Nyayo Wards in Pumwani and Korogocho are examples of Local Authority Transfer Fund (LATF) projects that have remained barely operational over 15 years.

Unfortunately, the parcels of land allocated to the projects have since been grabbed, or allowed to rot away.

Neither the effort of the former Health Minister Charity Ngilu nor the Medical Services Anyang Nyong'o's efforts have borne fruit in kicking out the grabbers.

Last month, the Medical Services ministry set aside Sh2 million for the fencing of a section of the land allocated to the two facilities in order to prevent further grabbing.

At Pumwani, most of the land has been grabbed and the dilapidated structure provided temporary shelter for the homeless.

In the meantime, 21 women die daily during childbirth, a situation that could be addressed through provision of

more health facilities manned by competent medical personnel.

LATF is managed by an advisory committee comprising the private sector, the Ministry of Finance, the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Local Government, and the Kenya Local Government Reform Programme's secretariat.

### ELUDED SCRUTINY

LATF annual reports and other disbursement information are disseminated through newspaper advertisements. Sixty per cent of LATF allocations are released based on local authorities' set requirements.

Budgeted LATF allocations are gazetted but no disbursement is made unless local authorities meet the requirements.

LATF, unfortunately, has eluded scrutiny in the past, and sources at City Hall say it is a bottomless pit through which public funds have been sunk.

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