



**RWANDA HEALTH INITIATIVE
FOR YOUTH AND WOMEN**

HEALTH SYSTEM STRENGTHENING IN PRIMARY HEALTH FACILITIES: TRAINING, MENTORSHIP, AND EQUIPMENT SUPPORT (2020–2025)

Objective

To improve the readiness of primary health facilities in rural areas to deliver quality sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and maternal health services through capacity building of health personnel and improved availability of essential medical equipment.

Background

Despite significant progress in Rwanda's health sector, many primary health facilities in rural areas continue to face challenges related to shortages of skilled health personnel, inadequate medical equipment, and limited service delivery capacity. To address these gaps, the Rwanda Health Initiative for Youth and Women (RHIYW), in collaboration with its partners, implemented programs designed to strengthen the capacity and performance of public primary health care facilities.

Results Achieved (2020–2025)

RHIYW, in collaboration with its local and international partners, strengthened health systems through a range of interventions, including in-service training of health care providers, provision of medical equipment, mentorship, supportive supervision, and continuous quality improvement initiatives focusing on SRH and maternal health services.

◆ Capacity Building of Health Care Providers

- ❑ More than 4,500 health care providers (including nurses, midwives, and medical doctors) from 56 public primary health facilities across five districts Karongi, Kirehe, Rwamagana, Musanze, and Ruhango were trained in various aspects of sexual and reproductive health and maternal health care services.
- ❑ To further strengthen service quality, the training program was complemented by the dissemination of updated clinical guidelines and protocols, alongside ongoing mentorship and supportive supervision. Between 2020 and 2025, 56 primary health facilities and 5 district hospitals received regular mentorship visits focused on improving the quality of sexual and reproductive health services, particularly in the areas of family planning, comprehensive abortion care, and gender-based violence prevention and response.





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◆ *Provision of Essential Medical Equipment*

- A total of 161 public health facilities across 13 districts (Gicumbi, Nyagatare, Burera, Huye, Nyaruguru, Nyanza, Rutsiro, Nyamagabe, Kirehe, Musanze, Kayonza, Nyarugenge, and Ngororero) were equipped with essential medical equipment and commodities to strengthen the delivery of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and maternal health services. The equipment provided included **161 portable ultrasound machines**, significantly enhancing diagnostic capacity during antenatal care (ANC) services at the primary health care level.

The availability of portable ultrasound machines improved the early detection and management of pregnancy-related complications, enabled timely identification of high-risk pregnancies, and strengthened referral linkages to higher levels of care. As a result, health facilities were better equipped to provide quality antenatal and maternal health services, contributing to improved access, availability, and quality of SRH and maternal health care.



Training HCP on ultrasounds use in ANC, in Musanze supported by RHIYW

Impact

The availability of essential medical equipment, combined with the training and mentorship of health care providers, contributed to improved patient management, strengthened referral systems, and enhanced service readiness in rural and underserved communities.

Lessons Learned

Sustainable health system strengthening requires an approach that combines workforce development, adequate provision of equipment and commodities, and continuous supportive supervision and mentorship. Strengthening clinical skills alone is not sufficient; it must be complemented by functional equipment, standardized clinical guidelines, and ongoing quality improvement mechanisms.