



Partners In Health Inshuti Mu Buzima

Accompanying a progressive government, strengthening health systems, driving innovation, and achieving scale.

Who We Are

Partners In Health is an international nonprofit organization founded in 1987 that helps build and sustain public health systems in poor and underserved communities in ten countries around the world. At the invitation of the government, Partners In Health/Inshuti Mu Buzima began operating in Rwanda in 2005. Our mission is to support Rwanda in strengthening the health system to provide high quality care to all. We envision thriving communities of healthy, happy, and productive people, where social justice and universal quality health services are available.

What We Do

We work to strengthen the Rwandan health system through innovating health care delivery, educating medical professionals, and leading global health research. In order to improve health outcomes and bring care to more people we implement, evaluate, and scale innovative approaches to care across a wide range of clinical and social support programs. By training practicing health care professionals in Rwanda and educating the next generation of global health delivery experts we are building Rwanda's capacity to provide high quality care. Our impact reaches beyond Rwanda as we conduct and disseminate research to improve health care delivery and advocate for evidence-based policy change.

Above: During a weekly Pediatric Development Clinic visit at Rwinkwavu District Hospital. Social worker Alphonsine Umuteri checks in with patient Elisabeth Tuyisabe, 19 and provides counseling.

Photo by Cecille Joan Avila / Partners In Health

Where We Work

Total Population: 11,533,446
Catchment Population: >900,000
Life Expectancy at Birth: 66 years



We work to strengthen health systems in three rural districts of Rwanda: Southern Kayonza, Kirehe, and Burera. We support three district hospitals, 40 health centers, and a network of over 5,000 community health workers. By developing innovative approaches to care, serving as an advisor to the MOH and conducting research our impact reaches far beyond these three districts.

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Total District Strategy

We set out to expand our operations to support all health facilities in the districts we support. We now support every health post, health center, and district hospital in Southern Kayonza, Kirehe, and Burera Districts.

Butaro Hospital and Cancer Center of Excellence

This 180-bed hospital is an ambitious endeavor to redefine what rural health care looks like. In addition to providing a comprehensive array of high quality health services to a previously under-served region, the hospital also serves as locus for medical education. Now designated as the national cancer referral center, the Butaro Cancer Center of Excellence is proving that quality cancer care can be delivered in a poor, rural setting.

Innovated Model of Chronic Disease Care

Even in regions where health facilities exist, adults and children with chronic diseases such as mental health issues, hypertension, asthma, or epilepsy are often left untreated. We have adapted the core elements of our successful approach to HIV treatment to provide comprehensive, community-based care for chronic diseases. We are now working with the MOH to implement this model nationally.

Mentorship for Quality Improvement

In order to bolster skills and solve the know-do gap, in which knowledge learned in school or training is not put into action by health care professionals, we developed the Mentorship and Enhanced Supervision for Healthcare and Quality Improvement (MESH-QI) program which mentors visit health facilities to provide one-to-one clinical mentorship and establish data-driven quality improvement projects. This program has since been adapted by the MOH and used to guide the national model for HIV treatment and maternal and child health programs.

Greatly Improved Neonatal Care

We developed an ambitious program to intensely focus on saving the lives of vulnerable newborns. All three district hospitals we support now have state-of-the-art neonatal high care units, featuring modern incubators. Through training and mentorship we greatly improved the capacity of community health workers, nurses, and physicians to deliver life-saving care for newborns. The All Babies Count (ABC) program is an 18-month intensive clinical mentorship and quality improvement intervention that accelerates systemic change by intensely focusing on maternal and newborn health care processes and promoting data driven decisions.

Social and Community Medicine Training

In collaboration with the University of Rwanda, we developed an undergraduate training for medical students to introduce them to values of community-based care and an understanding of the social determinants of health. Presently, every future Rwandan medical doctor visits a PIH/IMB supported district hospital to participate in social and community medicine education.

Provided Social and Economic Support

In order to address the root cause of illness, we have implemented programs that help poor and vulnerable patients become self-sufficient. By providing housing, food packages, income generating opportunities, and jobs training we are working to help poor families move out of poverty and stay healthy. This program has so far supported more than 10,000 vulnerable individuals.

Provided Health Insurance for Patients

Rwanda's national health insurance system provides coverage for the nation's poor for a small annual fee of about two dollars, plus co-pays for services of about 40 cents. However, for some Rwandan families even this fee is a barrier to accessing care. We cover these fees for about 30,000 patients who are unable to afford them.