

LUCIE – NTARUKA, RWANDA

Save the Children is supporting Ntaruka Health Centre by constructing and equipping of much-needed medical facilities.

Lucie Nyiranshuti is in charge of Community Health at Ntaruka Health Centre, and has been working here for several years. There are 157 community health workers who work under her supervision. They do the leg-work of health care in rural Rwanda, spending almost all of their time busily visiting patients in remote villages, following up on pregnant mothers, newborn babies, illnesses, accidents etc.

Save the Children has recently built a Maternity Ward at Ntaruka Health Centre. This includes a waiting room for mothers in the last stages of their pregnancy, a fully-equipped delivery room, and a room for post-partum care and recovery. Typically mothers who are about to give birth are accompanied to the Maternity Ward by their local community health worker, and Lucie and the specially trained birth attendants are there to meet them.



Lucie says that the Maternity Ward has made a huge difference for mothers. “It’s so calm now” she says, “mothers aren’t even nervous when they come in, and the levels of hygiene are much improved”.

The number of women giving birth at the health facility has increased, thereby lowering maternal deaths in this zone.

“Many women used to give birth at home, and any small complication could rapidly become life-threatening both for the mother and the baby”.

“We still need more space for storing medicine”, says Lucie, pointing to their dispensary room which is equipped at the moment with a single refrigerator. But she explains that Save the Children’s construction has already made a big difference to this Health Centre, especially once the third building – the Admission Block – will be completed. “It’s organised now: men, women, children all know where to go”.

The Government of Rwanda has ambitious plans to ensure that even the most rural areas have access to basic health. Save the Children’s contribution to one centre through construction and supplies shows that, with a bit of support, the country’s healthcare is taking impressive steps forwards.