



UN Volunteer Frida Temple (left) during the contribution of donations to the University of Rwanda and other midwifery schools.

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Heralding a brighter future for women and children in Rwanda

Frida Temple (Sweden) is a UN Volunteer Midwife with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Kigali, Rwanda. In this story, she shares how she contributes to the wellbeing of women and children through her expertise. Her assignment is fully funded by the Government of Sweden.

When I first arrived in Rwanda, the country went into lockdown as COVID-19 had reached its peak in the country. Hence, I was first deployed to support Rwanda's National COVID-19 Command Post Centre in Kigali, which coordinates the entire country's COVID-19 response. I was part of the Technical Advisory Group, where representatives from different partner organizations met and discussed technical responses, including decisions on the number of COVID-19 tests and vaccination roll-out.

As a midwife, I assisted in revising treatment guidelines and helped change policies, especially for pregnant mothers. I also did home visits to pregnant women who were tested COVID-19 positive and ensured that they were

cared for during their isolation period.

“ The relieved tears from a pregnant woman I take care of and the moment when I was able to tell her that her baby was well are dear to my heart. --Frida Temple, UN Volunteer Midwife with UNFPA in Rwanda

After my time at the Command post, I came back to UNFPA and am now supporting a hospital in Kigali to reduce the maternal and neonatal mortality rate. This includes supervising the emergency obstetric and neonatal care needs assessment. By supervising data collectors in multiple health facilities, we assess the status of the maternal care system in Rwanda and the needs of beneficiaries.

I also work closely with the Rwanda Association of Midwives and the University of Rwanda to enhance Rwanda's midwifery profession and education.

“ While facilitating the International Day of the Midwives, I could see that what I have been doing so far with UNFPA is not only about supporting individuals, but also encouraging them to be brave – the enthusiasm in their eyes generates hope for a brighter future in Rwanda. --Frida Temple

Currently, I am working in Muhima hospital, which faces one of Rwanda's highest maternal and neonatal mortality rates. Together with managers, we try to make work in the labour ward more effective, patient-centred and safe by mentoring the midwives and students.

Although the environment is challenging, with lack of staff, overload of

clients and very limited access to supplies, we are learning from each other and making the labour ward, operating theatre, neonatal intensive care unit and post-partum treatment better together.

Apart from my work as a midwife, I also got the chance to participate in outreach. For instance, I once visited the Swedish Ambassador, together with the Rwanda Association of Midwives (RAM), which was very encouraging. I was also involved when UNFPA gave donations of laptops for scholars and anatomy models to midwifery schools in Rwanda.

“ I am proud to be a UN Volunteer for UNFPA, as it is such an amazing organization that makes a big difference for women, children and young people. --
Frida Temple



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