

Finding and treating people with TB in

Rwanda

- Laboratory strengthening and contact investigation leads to increased case detection
- Number of cases detected jumped by more than 200% in one district
- Focus on TB and HIV helps reduce stigma and increase treatment support



Bugesera - A novel tuberculosis (TB) case detection project, implemented through the World Vision and the Ministry of Health, was initiated in October, 2010 in four key districts. Central to the interventions undertaken is a robust campaign to increase knowledge and awareness of TB both at the community level and among health care providers. This informational campaign builds a better understanding of co-infection between TB and HIV and stresses the importance of community-based treatment once a diagnosis has been made. The project has supported local facilities by providing much needed diagnostic equipment for the laboratories as well as supporting the implementation of contact investigation. Door to door activities are taking place, checking the contacts of

TB patients for the disease as they are at very high risk of falling ill. Case detection through household screening has proven very effective, increasing the number of new cases reported in one district by 211%. The assignment of a community health worker dedicated to a specific household has been a big part of the success. As each health worker gains the trust and respect of his or her assigned family with regular and consistent visits, more successful contact tracing, diagnosis and treatment follow-up has been possible. These locally trusted workers, together with village leaders, are also able to carry out regular community forums on TB treatment and prevention which have led to significant behavioural changes among care seekers in the targeted communities.

