

Theme 3: Health and Access to Services

1. What is the role and place of the church in Kigali in responding to the crisis of Health and Access to Services?

- The church in Kigali plays a key role in **mobilising and bringing people together** to raise awareness about health issues and services available. It serves as a platform to connect individuals with **healthcare providers**.
- The church also supports those who have health problems by helping them access health services, acting as a bridge between the community and healthcare facilities .
- The church can also build **partnerships with health institutions** and other leaders to address health crises effectively. These partnerships aim to ensure that health services are accessible to all, especially the vulnerable .

2. What are three practical steps that the church in Rwanda can take to respond to the Health and Access to Services?

- **Creating Health Groups:** Churches should establish dedicated health groups that can **assist congregants in accessing hospitals and healthcare facilities**. These groups would facilitate health education and help navigate the healthcare system.
- **Financial Assistance Programmes:** The church can initiate programmes to **raise funds** to support individuals who are facing financial difficulties in accessing healthcare. This would ensure that even the economically disadvantaged can receive the care they need.
- **Long-term Healthcare Initiatives:** Churches should develop **long-term healthcare programmes** that not only address immediate health concerns but also promote sustainable health education and preventive care for the congregation.

3. What are three practical steps that your church community can take to respond to the crisis of Health and Access to Services?

- **Healthcare Education:** The local church community can train its members to **educate others about available healthcare services** and guide them on how to access these services. This education would improve overall health literacy within the community.
- **Building Partnerships with Health Institutions:** Churches can form **partnerships with local health institutions** to provide healthcare access for congregants and ensure that community members know where to seek help in case of health emergencies.
- **Advisory Teams:** The church should establish **teams of health advisors** who can provide ongoing support and advice to individuals facing health issues, ensuring that they receive timely care and guidance on maintaining their health.

Conclusion:

The participants highlighted the church's significant role in improving health access by creating awareness and acting as a bridge to healthcare services. The church's responsibilities extend to building partnerships with health institutions and providing both financial and educational support. Practical steps identified include creating health-focused groups within the church, offering financial assistance to those in need, and fostering long-term healthcare initiatives to ensure sustainable health outcomes. The church community should also focus on education and forming partnerships to ensure everyone has access to essential health services.

