



Butaro District Hospital

Butaro, Burera District, Rwanda

Date: Completed 2011

Client: Rwanda Ministry of Health, Partners in Health

Size: 6,000 sq m / 64,583 sq ft

Construction Budget: \$5.5MM USD

A 150-bed tertiary hospital with in- and outpatient services that employs natural cross-ventilation to mitigate airborne disease transmission.

As part of the Partners In Health mission to bring high-quality healthcare to Rwanda’s poorest regions, and developed in partnership with the Rwandan Ministry of Health, MASS Design Group was brought in to plan and design a state-of-the-art district hospital facility in Butaro.

MASS and PIH’s partnership created a holistic model of architecture that choreographed the process of construction to employ, educate, and empower the local community. The 150-bed Butaro District Hospital was developed to provide both inpatient and outpatient services, with a particular emphasis on maternal services. A laboratory, neonatal intensive care unit, and operating rooms were core programs to provide referral care and critical care services. Centered around an umuvumu tree, the hospital is a landscaped campus of buildings on the terraced hillside. It is designed to mitigate and reduce the transmission of airborne disease through innovative systems, including overall layout, patient and staff flows, and natural cross-ventilation.

Local materials—such as the volcanic rock from the Virunga mountain chain—and local labor-intensive practices delivered site-appropriate, sustainable design, and stimulated the local economy. The careful coordination of design and construction held the budget of the hospital to two-thirds of comparable projects elsewhere in Rwanda.



Awards & Press

BBC News
“Tomorrow’s Buildings: Smarter by Design”, 2016

Metropolis Magazine
“The 16 Best Buildings of the Twenty-First Century (So Far)”, 2016

The New York Times
“In Redesigned Room, Hospital Patients May Feel Better Already”, 2014

The New Times Rwanda
“Butaro Hospital: An Icon of Modern Health Service Delivery”, 2014

Time Magazine
“Designs with Dignity: The Architects of a New Kind of Health Care”, 2012