Empowering Women in Malawi: Ruth’s story

We help train group leaders, such as Ruth, who leads two community groups in Malawi.

In Ruth’s groups, women come together to create solutions for the health challenges they face.

Ruth says, “In the group we discuss the most serious problems facing our community and work out strategies to deal with them.”

“A big issue is the number of women who give birth at home because the health facility is far away.” She continues, “We encourage women to deliver their babies in the health facility, so we lobbied for funds for a bicycle ambulance.”

Ruth also emphasises the importance of encouraging mothers to attend regular HIV checks. She says: “One of our aims is to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. The women’s group discusses the issues and encourages people to go for regular HIV testing, so they know their status.”

“We want people with HIV to have Anti-Retroviral treatment.” This has been achieved, with the reduced risk of transmission from mothers to their newborn babies.

Ruth also speaks about the social importance of the group, and how the women come together to solve the problems themselves, making for direct, sustainable changes.

She said, “We have organised households to paint words and phrases on their homes about the problems we face, so everyone can think about how to solve them in the community.”

Ruth takes pride in the achievements of the group – including successfully lobbying for sustainable transport to health facilities and setting up a village loan scheme – enabled by kind supporters like you.

In Malawi, the work of Women and Children First has meant that women like Ruth have been able to empower their community to enact real change and make access to good health, and health facilities, more a part of everyday life.

You can continue to empower women, transforming them into leaders in countries like Malawi, by donating to Women and Children First: womenandchildrenfirst.org/donate