

The Rwandan government is deploying artificial intelligence (AI) in prenatal care to detect pregnancy complications early and improve outcomes for mothers and babies, the government announced Wednesday.

State Minister of Technology and Innovation Yves Iradukunda told senators that the initiative is part of a wider effort to integrate AI across key sectors including health, education, and agriculture.

The program will use AI-powered point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS) devices in primary health centers to help nurses and midwives monitor pregnancies and identify potential risks at an early stage.

“These devices will allow health workers to determine gestational age accurately and spot complications that could threaten the mother or fetus, enabling timely interventions,” Iradukunda said.

The AI system performs a “simple blind sweep,” letting health workers without advanced ultrasound training conduct scans. The technology instantly analyzes images, measuring fetal parameters such as head circumference and femur length, and delivers results in under 10 minutes.



*State Minister of Technology and Innovation Yves Iradukunda*

Iradukunda emphasized that the technology is easy to learn, requiring only one day of training, and will be rolled out to community health workers, nurses, midwives, and other frontline staff.

The initiative is expected to improve early detection and referral of high-risk pregnancies, including preterm labor and abnormal fetal growth. It also aims to boost prenatal care attendance and ensure timely treatment, particularly in areas with limited medical resources.

During the Senate session, some lawmakers raised concerns about potential misuse. Senator Mukabaramba Alivera said that while AI could assist health advisors, many community health workers have limited medical knowledge. She also cautioned that AI might misinterpret results if not carefully supervised.

“Results that a doctor would normally review over several days can be processed by

AI in hours. We need careful oversight to avoid mistakes in health care,” Mukabaramba said.

In response, the Minister stressed that AI is intended to complement, not replace, medical professionals. “Doctors and nurses will continue their work, using AI as a tool to make care more efficient and accurate,” he said.

The rollout is part of Rwanda’s broader strategy to adopt AI in essential services. Officials hope that AI-assisted prenatal care will reduce maternal and infant mortality by enabling earlier detection of complications and timely interventions.