

AMURT FOUNDATION 2020



EBONYI STATE, NIGERIA - PRIMARY HEALTH CARE,
MATERNAL HEALTH & WATER PROJECTS

AMURT overview

AMURT's mission is to help improve the quality of life for the poor and disadvantaged people of the world, and those affected by calamity and conflict. We encourage and enable individuals and communities to harness their own resources for securing the basic necessities of life and for gaining greater economic, social and spiritual fulfilment, while respecting their customs, language, and religious beliefs.

AMURT (Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team) is one of the few private international voluntary organizations founded in the developing world. Since its inception in 1970 its original objective was to help meet the needs of the affected population after disasters. Over the years AMURT has established teams in thirty-four countries, to create a network that can meet disaster and development needs almost anywhere in the world.



AMURT staff January 2021

Message from the country director

The significance of EVERY LIFE COUNTS, the AMURT Nigeria slogan, resonated in 2020. This translated into AMURT giving each patient the attention and care he or she deserved and going the extra mile to save lives. This pure and simple spirit of service defines AMURT and its mission.

In 2020, AMURT opened two new project areas, Ohagelode and Item Amagu, bringing the number of AMURT assisted rural health centers to 11. We upgraded two more health centers, Mgbalukwu and Inikiri, to offer emergency obstetric services. 34 more rural villages were given access to safe water. The economic empowerment program reached 100 more widows, as three new cooperative groups were started. Our first newborn intensive care unit and modern operating theater in the new wing at Odeligbo health center made a big impact. We sponsored 58 pediatric surgeries in 2020. The adolescent reproductive health program, and care for teenage mothers started in Mgbalukwu. Three solar powered blood banks were installed in the CEmONC center.

According to the Federal Gov., Ebonyi State is now the 4th poorest state (out of 36) in Nigeria with 79.7 % living under the poverty line. AMURT still has much work to do in Ebonyi State.

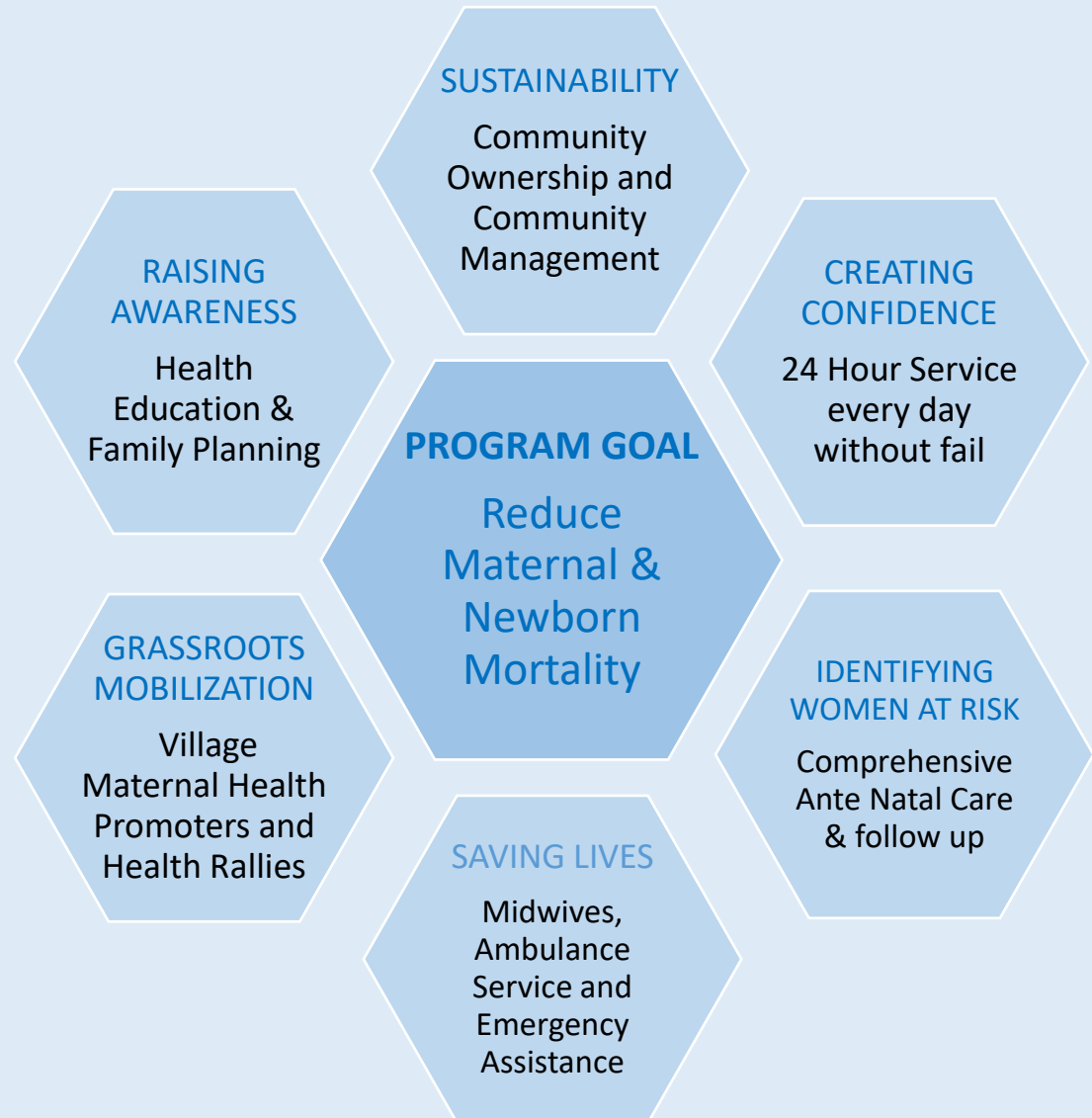
Yours, in Service ,
Dada

Making primary healthcare work

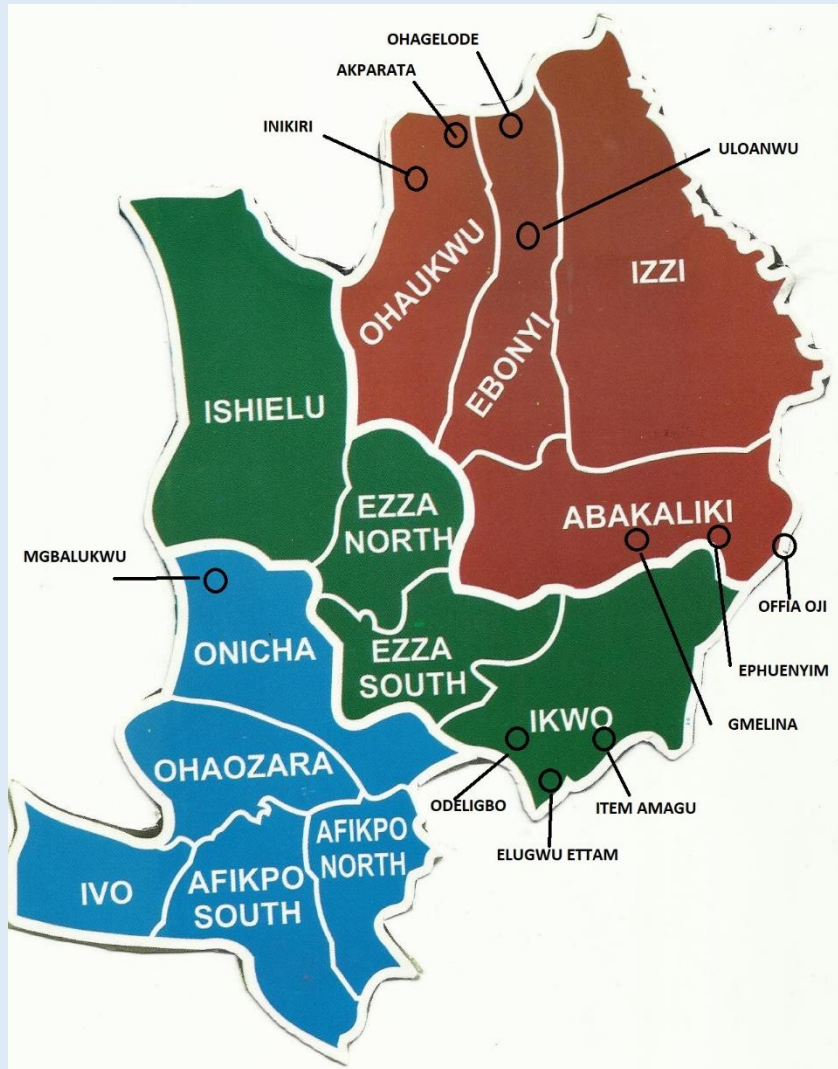
AMURT is building a sustainable and replicable model for meeting the primary healthcare needs of rural communities through a partnership involving the communities, grassroots organizations, the private sector and government.



Health worker Lizzy in Agwugwu village, Akparata



Project areas and health centers



For each health center AMURT serves a 'project area' of about 20 surrounding villages for outreach, monitoring and health education activities.

	HEALTH CENTER	LOCAL GOVT AREA	MONTH/YEAR OPENED
1	Gmelina	Abakaliki	Sep 2010
2	Offia Oji	Abakaliki	Nov 2010
3	Ephuenyim	Abakaliki	Nov 2010
4	Elugwu Ettam	Ikwo	Feb 2012
5	Odeligbo	Ikwo	Jun 2012
6	Akparata	Ohaukwu	Apr 2015
7	Inikiri	Ohaukwu	Oct 2016
8	Mgbalukwu	Onicha	Nov 2017
9	Uloanwu	Ebonyi	Aug 2018
10	Ohagelode	Ebonyi	Mar 2020
11	Item Amagu	Ikwo	Dec 2020

Every Life Counts: The personal attention each patient deserves

Support for referrals

AMURT provides support for obstetric and pediatric referrals from the health centers to the tertiary institutions. AMURT assisted health centers have doctors and facilities to manage most patients. Only serious, mostly life-threatening cases are referred. After referral, AMURT staff makes frequent visits to ensure that the requirements for treatments are available without delay. We assisted 44 obstetric emergencies, 28 children's surgeries, 47 newborn emergencies, and over 40 pediatric cases.



Dr. Sunshine is in charge of referral follow up. Here is one of her younger patients.

High risk follow up

In 2020, AMURT health workers made 1,084 home visits to women at high risk of complication during birth. The high risk mothers are identified by doctors during the ante-natal days at the AMURT assisted health centers. During home visits, the health workers advise families to make plans for safe delivery and take precautions according to the doctor's advice. The health workers come equipped to measure blood pressure and collect samples for lab work. These home visits are crucial to prevent maternal and neo-natal deaths.



Health worker Amarachi getting ready for a round of high-risk visits in Gmelina project area.

Special needs children

AMURT gives close attention and support for special needs children and their parents. Central to this work is AMURT's special needs children coordinator, who made 120 home visits in 2020. Rural parents of children with disabilities, birth defects and chronic conditions lack access to specialized care or even basic information. AMURT believes these children deserve the best and has made their care a priority.



Ogadinma, special needs children coordinator, on a home visit near Odeligbo

Improving access to emergency obstetric care

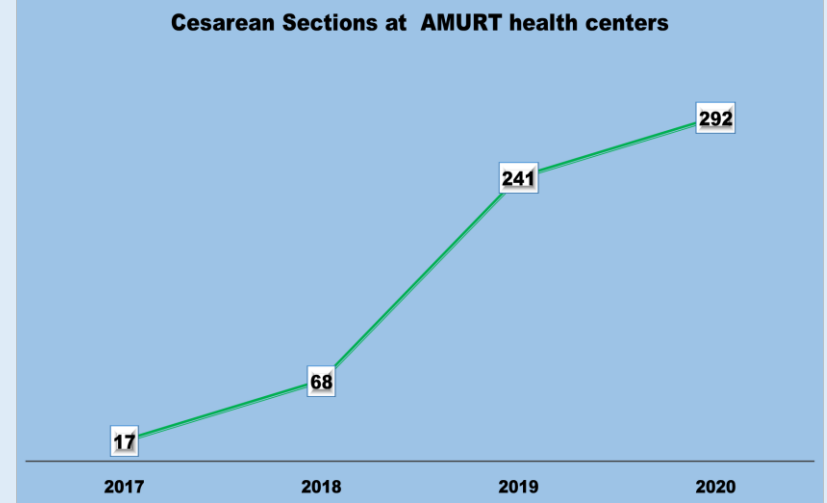


Ohagelode Health Center



Gmelina Health Center

AMURT's primary goal is to reduce maternal and child mortality. In 2020, Inikiri and Mgbalukwu Health Centers were upgraded with operating theaters, and a new wing with improved theater facilities was built at Odeligbo. As a result, AMURT assisted facilities' reputation as reliable referral centers grew. In addition to making emergency obstetric care accessible in the rural areas, AMURT subsidizes obstetric emergencies to make cesarean sections affordable. Thereby, 80% of the 292 cesarean sections in AMURT assisted health centers were paid in full by the patients. With resident doctors, lab scientists and midwives, the 5 AMURT CEmONC (Emergency Obstetric Referral Centers) enable early identification and reduce the referral time delays. 82% of the cesarean sections came from outside our project areas, revealing the gap in access to emergency obstetric services in the rural areas. Only 7% of the cesarean sections were elective, and 93% were emergencies.



In just ne day, they had five births at Offia Oji Health Center

Construction and upgrades

Odeligbo Health Center: Construction of new wing with new theater and newborn intensive care unit. Ohagelode Health Center: new health center constructed. Mgbalukwu Health Center: New operating theater set up. Inikiri Health Center: New operating theater set up.



At Odeligbo, the theater and newborn unit is powered by a powerful solar power set up



The pathways between the wings at Odeligbo are very convenient for patients and staff.



The performance of the Odeligbo Health Center staff, now 40+ members, has driven the growth.



The Odeligbo operating theater holds a high standard with patient monitor and AC.



The new health center at Ohagelode Ishieke is the biggest among the AMURT facilities.



Dr. Ikechukwu and Midwives Happiness and Doris at the new operating theater at Mgbalukwu

Safe motherhood

AMURT's maternal and newborn health services expanded their reach in 2020. The number of deliveries assisted by AMURT rose to 3889. The percentage of deliveries from outside the project area was 56%. Uloanwu Health Center was the most improved with a 33% increase in number of births. Only 0.7% of total births, were referred to the tertiary hospital due to serious complications. A total of 302 deliveries were done by caesarean section. Of those, 292 were done at AMURT assisted health centers, compared to 242 in 2019. 10 were done at the AEFUTHA in Abakaliki, down from 53 in 2019. The CS rate remained steady at 7.8%. The average ratio for facility birth vs. home birth in AMURT project areas went down from 83% to 75%. This can be traced partially to the new project areas which before had only 5% facility deliveries before AMURT's intervention.



Mgbalukwu Health Center



Gmelina Health Center



Mgbalukeu Health Center



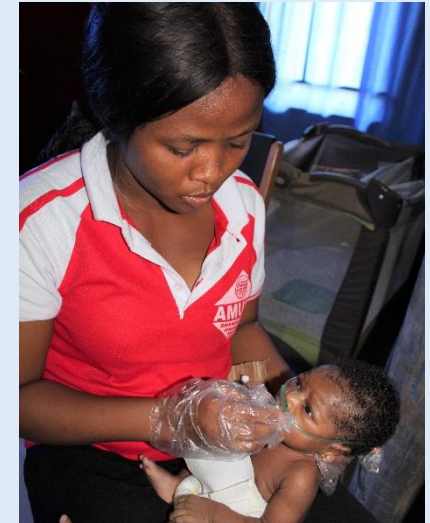
Offia Oji Health Center



Triplet birth at Uloanwu Health Center

Newborn care: saving the most vulnerable

The establishment of a newborn intensive care unit at Odeligbo Health Center made a big difference. All the equipment is run with a solar system designed to provide power 24 hours a day. With the neonatal incubator, we could care for premature babies in the health center for the first time. The CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) machine helps babies asphyxiated at birth. In addition, the phototherapy machine is fundamental for the treatment of neonatal jaundice. In 2020, the number of neonatal mortalities (at health center and through referral), reduced by 18% to 56. Neonatal referrals reduced by 36% to 47. As neonatal complications often accompany obstetric emergencies, it is our intention to upgrade the newborn care services in the health centers performing cesarean sections



Newborn Intensive Care Unit at Odeligbo:.. Clockwise: Dr. Obinna, Midwife Emilia, health workers Faith, Midwife Mary Jane and Midwife Uche

Comprehensive antenatal care & follow up



Group exercise during ANC day Item Amagu Health Center

AMURT makes Comprehensive Antenatal Care available in all our project areas. The number of women attending ANC in AMURT assisted health centers rose by 16% in 2020 to 7848. With attendance in some health centers reaching up to 200 in one day, two or three doctors are on duty during A.N.C. so that every pregnant mother can be examined well. AMURT has five portable ultrasound machines and scanning is free. Early identification of women who are at high risk of complications is essential. Health workers make home visits to follow up on high-risk cases. The mothers are tested for malaria, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, syphilis (VDRL), and HIV. Urinalysis is done at first visit. We do PCV blood tests and determine the blood group of every woman to crucially save time in the event of an emergency. Other lab tests are done on indication. During ANC days, AMURT also provides family planning counselling, routine drugs, tetanus vaccine, preventive treatment for malaria and mosquito nets. It is significant that 56% of the women attending ANC at AMURT health centers in 2020, came from outside the project areas.



Health talk by Midwife Doris at Mgbalukwu Health Center



Dr. Duru doing an ultrasound scan at Uloanwu Health Center

Laboratories: The gift of blood is the gift of life



Sct. Chike and blood bank at Odeligbo

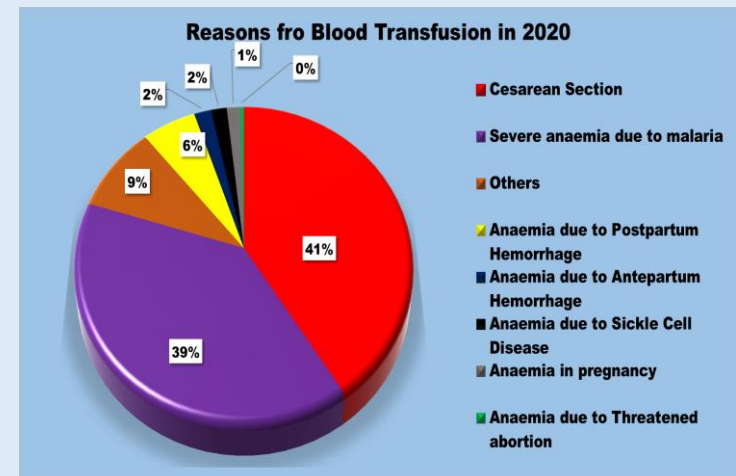


Blood drive at Abakaliki

As the number of obstetric emergencies referred to AMURT assisted health centers rise, the need for blood also increases and the role of the lab and the lab scientists becomes crucial. The lab department is also ready 24 hours a day to provide blood for all our patients on referral. The number of blood transfusions in the health centers rose to 715 in 2020, an increase of 18 % compared to 2019. As the obstetric emergency services grew, AMURT acquired solar powered blood banks for Odeligbo, Ephuenyim and Akparata health centers. In 2020, the AMURT lab department expanded to seven full time scientists. The primary role of the laboratories is to make accurate diagnoses. On ante-natal days they conduct routine investigations for the pregnant women, including urinalysis, hemoglobin, blood grouping and tests for malaria, HIV, hepatitis B & C, and VDRL. In 2020 the reactive rates were as follows: hepatitis B – 7 %, hepatitis C – 6 %, syphilis – 6 % and HIV – 0.7 %. 41 pregnant and 37 other patients tested positive for HIV.



Collecting a blood sample at Ohagelode



Most malaria deaths in children are due to anemia

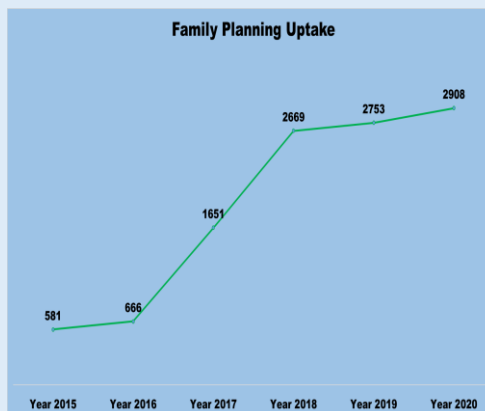
Child spacing: a key to family health

Quietly, gradually, patiently, and through hard work, AMURT's family planning team is succeeding in creating awareness and acceptance of the benefits that child spacing bring to the family.

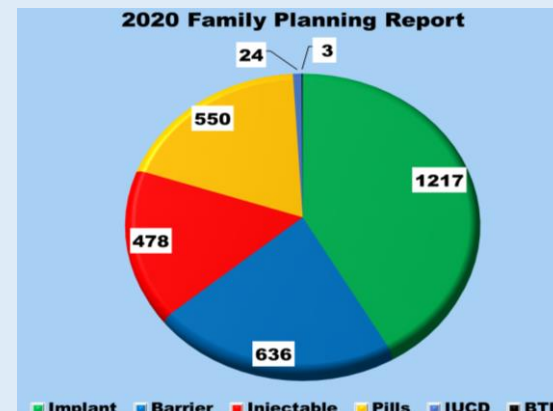
Our new project areas, all remote rural areas, present challenges as AMURT's presence will be their first exposure to family planning. Our experience is that male involvement is a key to community acceptance. Accordingly, our outreach efforts have focused on male participation.

The birth rate in our project areas has reduced as over 6000 women have chosen long term contraceptive options the last four years. Women's access to family planning has been described as the single most important factor in reducing maternal mortality. Accordingly, AMURT identifies women who would be at risk from pregnancy and birth and follow up with home visits by the family planning focal persons. With the raising of awareness and growing community acceptance, we have seen an increase in the number of families seeking family planning by themselves.

The AMURT health centres offer the women a variety of short and long term contraceptive options. Equally important is providing support for natural methods like LAM (Lactational Amenorrhea Method), as they harmonize well with cultural beliefs.



The increase in uptake of contraceptives is significant, but there is still a long way to go



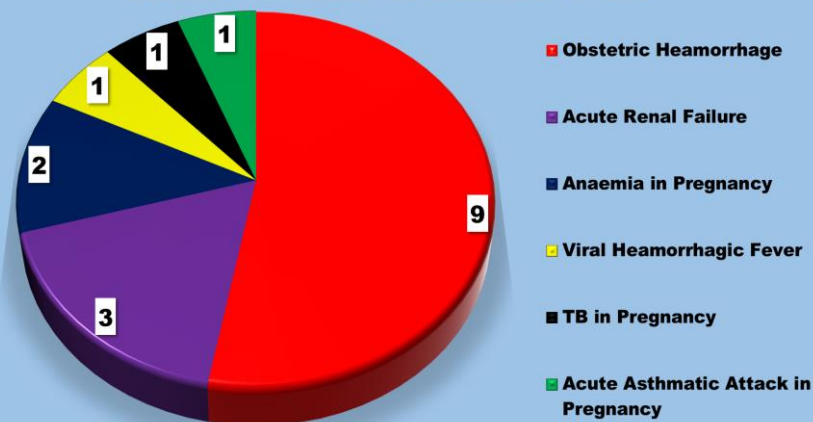
Implants and injectables continue to be the most popular methods in the rural areas



Family planning coordinator Nurse Nora doing an implant at Uloanwu Health Center

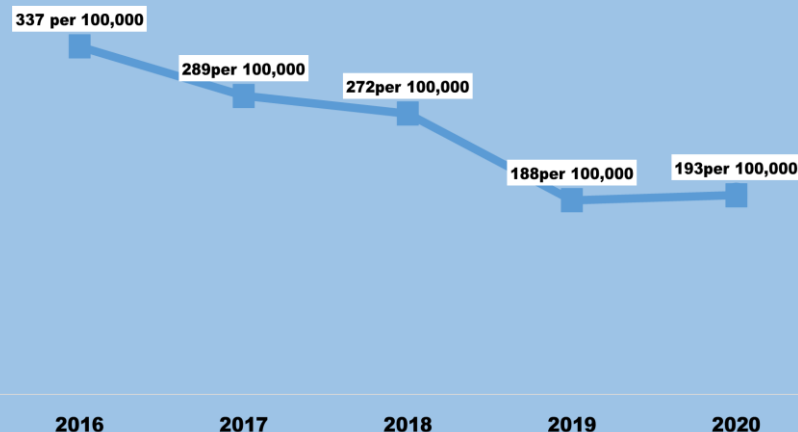
Maternal complications and mortality

Causes of 17 Maternal Mortalities in 2020



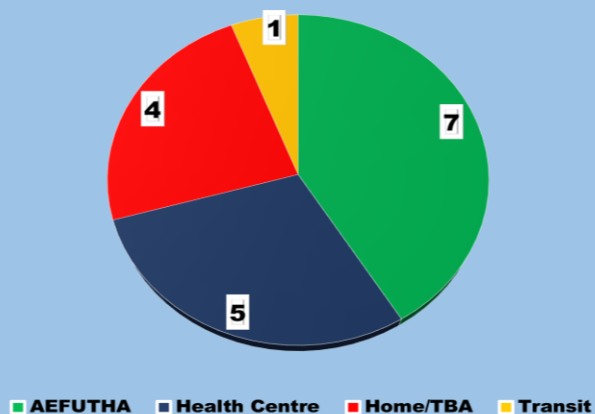
11 of 17 maternal deaths were women coming from outside the immediate project area of the health centers

Maternal Mortality Rate Per 100,000 Births



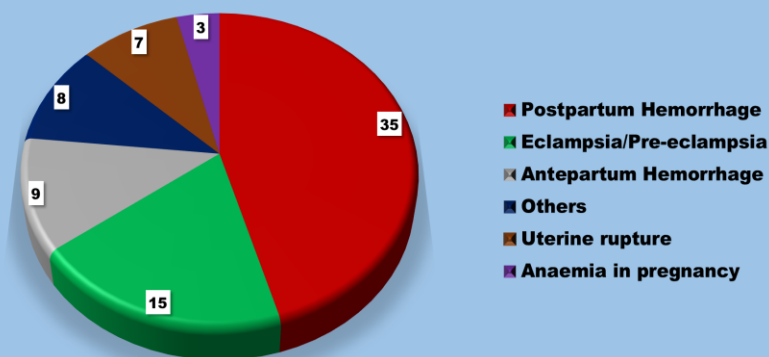
Our maternal mortality rate rose slightly in 2020. AMURT project areas still compare favourably to Nigeria's national rate of 917 (WHO 2018)

Place of 17 Maternal Death in 2020



The highest number of maternal deaths occurred after referral. AMURT also tracks maternal mortalities in connection with home births

77 Serious Maternal Complications Managed in 2020



The 77 obstetric complications were successfully managed in the AMURT assisted health centers. In 2020. (cases ending in death or referral not included)

Ambulance services save lives



Ambulances from Uloawnu, Offia Oji and Mgbalukwu at AMURT HQ Abakaliki

AMURT AMBULANCE REFERRAL 2020

HEALTH CENTER	AEFUTHA Obstetric	AEFUTHA Neonatal	AMURT Obstetric	AMURT Neonatal	OTHER	TOTAL
Odeligbo	10	17	0	1	0	28
Elugwu Ettam	0	1	16	2	12	29
Offia Oji	1	2	31	0	6	40
Ephuenyim	7	4	0	0	28	39
Gmelina	1	3	17	0	2	23
Akparata	2	3	0	0	0	5
Inikiri	6	4	20	0	10	40
Mgbalukwu	3	5	12	1	17	37
Uloanwu	10	4	27	0	0	41
Ohagelode	4	4	24	0	6	38
Item Amagu	0	0	2	0	0	2
TOTAL 2020	44	47	148	4	81	324



Confidence gave birth to her first baby at home. She had retained placenta and serious bleeding. The villagers had no means of transporting her in that condition. Midwife Chidimma and her team arrived by ambulance and were able to carry her to Ohagelode Health Center, where the placenta was removed and the bleeding stopped. This is but one example of the use of an AMURT ambulance to rescue patients from the village.

In the rural areas, transport is hard to find. AMURT operates six ambulances, serving 11 health centers. With the upgrade of five AMURT assisted health centers to emergency obstetric care centers, the number of obstetric referrals to the Federal Teaching Hospital in Abakaliki has been reduced from 226 in 2018 to only 44 in 2020. The major load of obstetric emergencies are now managed at the AMURT assisted health centers. The ambulances now shuttle between the health centers.

Health workers accompany every ambulance referral to assist the families with registration, investigations, drugs and lifesaving interventions. AMURT doctors make follow up visits to provide support, especially for obstetric and pediatric cases. With the growing capacity of AMURT assisted health centers, the number of ambulance referrals reduced by 32 % from 2019.

Every Life Counts: life saving interventions



SUNDAY, 18 months, referred from Ephuenyim Health Center with a bad case of intestinal obstruction. It was a close call, but with support from AMURT, the excellent doctors at the Federal Teaching Hospital were able to manage the case through emergency surgery. After one month in the hospital Sunday had a full recovery.

CHILDREN'S EMERGENCY SURGERIES

In 2020, AMURT sponsored 58 children's emergency surgeries. 28 in the health center, 28 at AEFUTHA and 2 UNTH



Children's surgery at Ohagelode Health Center



ONYEKACHI was born with spina bifida and hydrocephalus. Since the first case in 2013, AMURT has assisted about 25 such cases. In each case, a shunt was placed to drain the cerebral fluids from the brain to prevent swelling of the head and pressure on the brain. Spina Bifida means the spine is exposed, surgery is required to close the wound. We also provide support for the families through home visits.



MARTHA was referred from Uloanwu Health Center to Odeligbo Health Center with premature labour. At Odeligbo, efforts to stop the contractions did not succeed and Martha gave birth to a tiny baby weighing only 600 grams. She was referred to FETHA with oxygen and all necessary drugs were provided without delay. After two months the baby was discharged at 1.8 kg. A true miracle baby!

Community participation: the secret to success in primary healthcare



Community meeting at Ndieke, Ikwo



COVID-19 precautions at Ohagelode

The key to effective primary healthcare in rural areas lies in community participation, which supports the important task in building community confidence in the health facility. In line with Nigeria's national policy, AMURT strives to establish strong community management in all the health facilities it assists. The community must take the lead in key decisions concerning healthcare. Local management is needed to keep drugs and supplies in stock. With a modest mark up on drugs, the health centers can cover operating expenses like auxiliary staff, cleaning supplies, and fuel, and save money for maintenance work and repairs, and expansion of the drug inventory. All the AMURT assisted health centers have been able to save funds to do construction for expansion and upgrades. AMURT encourages recruitment of local health workers and inclusion of Community Resource Persons in the health center personnel. This helps with communication with the community and enables easier patient follow up and outreach and health education programs. The result is stronger bonds between patients and the health center leading to increased patronage. With an empowered community as the leading partner, we have taken a big step towards sustainability.

New projects: reaching the remote rural areas

Ohagelode Ishieke Health Center



The Ohagelode Health Center in Ishieke community opened in March 2020. The community provided labour and AMURT provided materials to complete a long abandoned hospital project. The health center has seen high patronage. The Rotary Club of Abakaliki and Alfarheim in Norway, equipped the center.



Item Amagu Health Center



Item Amagu, is located in Ikwo LGA, applied for AMURT's intervention in 2019. In partnership with the community, AMURT did major renovation and equipped the hospital. The new look healthcenter started operation on 8th December 2020 with additional staff provided by AMURT



Raising awareness: sharing knowledge



Nurse Chinwendu pasting a COVID-19 poster at Uloanwu

For AMURT's health education department, 2020 was a very busy year. The COVID-19 crisis demanded a campaign to create awareness in the villages and for extraordinary precautions to be taken in all the AMURT assisted health centers. The health centers were trained in triage for COVID 19 for all patients entering the health center. PPE (Personal Protection Equipment), additional oxygen, and facemasks, were supplied to the health centers. For five months, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, AMURT ran a program for CMAM (Case Management of Acute Malnutrition). 229 severely malnourished babies were given Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods. The regular upgrading of the skills of health workers was done in all AMURT assisted health centers. Topics included neo-natal sepsis and topics related to the COVID-19 crisis, like donning and doffing of PPE, and reconstitution of 0.5% and 0.05% chlorine solution for disinfection of materials and equipment, and for hand rinse respectively.



Demonstrating PPE at Akparata



Malnourished child at Ephuenyim



Training health workers at Item Amagu

Health rallies: health education and cultural pride



Masquerade at Ohagelode



Children dancing at Mbeke Nwachi



Ogbuenyim Health Rally , Ebonyi LGA

Health rallies are full day events organized by the maternal health promoters and village leaders. They combine health talks and educational dramas with cultural displays like dance, drumming and masquerades to create a festival atmosphere. In 2020, AMURT mobilized 8 health rallies in the Inikri and Ohagelode project areas through 9 village sensitization meetings, 5 focus group discussions and 5 meetings with community stakeholders and leaders. The health rallies provide opportunities for questions and answers, and a dialog between the community and the health center. In 2020, methods of reducing the spread of COVID-19 and Lassa fever were prioritized in all health education programs.

6 KEY MESSAGES ON VILLAGE SENSITIZATION

- a. Importance of skilled birth attendance
- b. Early arrival at the hospital
- c. Family planning
- d. Importance of blood donations
- e. Dangers of herbal concoctions and self medication of pregnant woman and under 5s
- f. Prevention and early treatment of malaria especially in pregnancy and the under 5s



Chizoba speaking on family planning

Maternal Health Promoters: An effective grassroots network



Akparata Maternal Health Promoters

In AMURT's project areas, the women in each village elect a maternal health promoter from amongst themselves. This unique network now extends to 214 villages. They conduct monthly pregnant women support group meetings and work closely with health workers from the health center. Their responsibilities include identifying pregnant women, educating and guiding expectant mothers, and monitoring pregnancies and all births, including homebirths. As community based volunteers, they ensure that the program is well anchored at the grassroots. While promoting safe motherhood, the maternal health promoters play a central role in changing the outlook and attitudes of the rural population to embrace family planning and women's leadership in health and community affairs. They are health educators on the ground, every day.



Ohagelode Maternal Health Promoters with M&E team



Ephuenyim Maternal Health Promoters



Offia Oji Maternal Health Promoters

Holistic care for adolescents & teenage mothers



AMURT taught liquid soap making to teenage mothers



Meeting at Hope High School at Isu

Teenage pregnancy is all too common where AMURT works; many teens have been victims of abuse, others have been abandoned by the men who made them pregnant, and find themselves out of school, and without support for themselves and their growing babies.

In 2020 AMURT launched an Adolescent Sexual & Reproductive Health Program from Mgbalukwu Health Center in Isu, Onicha LGA. The program seeks to educate and create awareness to decrease teenage pregnancies, and to provide support to teenage mothers, young mothers-to-be and their babies. The program gives personalized attention so that the specific needs of each teenage mother is met; this include support for safe births, medical care for mother and baby, psycho-social support, and assistance in returning to school.

Through the First Time Mothers Club, pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers come together for support and sharing. They learn skills that can help them support themselves and their babies.

AMURT has established a close working relationship with three local high schools. Regular programs are held to spread awareness of reproductive health in the student population. Once a month, Mgbalukwu Health Center offers a youth friendly clinic, where doctors and counselors give their time specifically for the teenagers.



AMURT intervenes in Ngbo cholera outbreak

Early morning on 20th April, both the Ministry of Health and the community of Okposhi in Ngbo, Ohaukwu LGA called to report a cholera outbreak, that sadly took 19 lives (later confirmed by AMURT). AMURT immediately rushed to the area and started relief, work successfully treating 116 patients. Doctors Without Borders provided Ringer Lactate which is the best infusion for treating cholera. AMURT visited the affected villages with supplies and offered support and health education to the locals to further stop the spread.



Community meetings at Ndeagu Nwede village



Emergency intervention at Amaeku Health Center



Emergency intervention with Ringers Lactate at Amaeku

Youth capacity building in healthcare



The 2020 scholarship batch in their matriculation gowns



Taking vital signs at Mgbalukwu



Trainee Exam candidates

In coordination with local leadership, AMURT recruits community volunteers from the local project areas to help ensure 24 hour service in the health centers. The presence of locals on the staff has been crucial in strengthening the bond between the health centers and the communities. It has contributed to increased community confidence and higher patronage. The local staff easily organize outreach programs and when necessary, follow up on pregnant women with home visits. The local staff has been reliable in being at their post and doing their best for their own people.

AMURT offers a scholarship program to give the most talented and committed of these community volunteers the opportunity to become qualified health workers. At the end of 2020, sixteen candidates were in school on AMURT scholarships. Through employment and support for further education, AMURT has given dozens of young rural women, and a few young men, a career and opportunity to serve their communities. The candidates enter the School of Health to become CHEWs (Community Health Extension Workers) or Junior CHEWs. Capacity building in health is a key factor for increased self-reliance of primary health care in the rural areas. AMURT is proud that 17 budding health professionals have graduated from its scholarship program.

Water is life! Reaching every village



Amaukabi, Afikpo South LGA



Uhumba Umuoke, Ishiele LGA



Offia Nwachi, Ebonyi LGA.

Many rural villages in Ebonyi State still rely on rivers and ponds for their drinking water. In 2020, AMURT drilled 34 new boreholes giving communities safe water at their doorstep for the first time. AMURT's WASH (Water Sanitation & Hygiene) program prioritizes to remote villages without a source of safe water. Afikpo South, Ishielu, Izzi and Ebonyi local government areas benefited from new boreholes in 2020. In addition to drilling new boreholes, AMURT also repaired 28 old and broken boreholes across 10 LGAs. The WASH team made follow up visits to support villages that have benefitted from AMURT WASH interventions since 2011.

Since 2018, AMURT has enjoyed a close partnership in Water & Sanitation with the Rotary Club of Abakaliki. The 2020 WASH project was funded by the Italian Rotary club of Cassalmaggiore- Viadana-Sabionetta, together with the Rotary Foundation.

BOREHOLES DRILLED 2011 – 2020

Local Govt Area	Village	Clinic	Total
Abakaliki	39	5	44
Ohaukwu	62	2	64
Ikwo	3	3	6
Ezza North	5		5
Onicha	16	1	17
Ivo	3		3
Ishielu	11		11
Izzi	13		13
Ebonyi	18	2	20
Afikpo North	7		7
Afikpo South	4		4
Abia State	5		5
Total	186	13	199

Community ownership of WASH



Ogbodo Ndiebor, Izzi LGA



Bilode Ulepa, Ishielu LGA



Inyurugbada, Izzi LGA

After the assessment and identification of villages for the WASH program, AMURT conducts a one day sensitization program for the whole community. On this day, the villagers elect 12 men and women to be their Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Committee. Members are chosen from different families, to ensure a broad representation. People with mechanical skills, leadership skills and teachings skills are prioritized. They identify two or three preferred locations for the drilling of the borehole. It is important to have more than one alternative location in case the geophysical survey does not detect water in the preferred spot. The WASHCOM training covers maintenance and repair of boreholes, and each village gets a toolbox with all tools necessary to repair their borehole. The WASHCOM members also learn to understand about the mechanical functioning of the borehole. The training also covers protection of water sources, hygiene and sanitation, and critical health issues like family planning and female genital mutilation. Members learn how the community can protect itself from cholera, Lassa fever, COVID-19 and other infectious diseases.



Ndeagu Ishiagu, Ishielu LGA

Women's empowerment: a cooperative model



Training at Uloawnu



The Elugwu Ettam cooperative group



Making palm oil at Obegu, Isu



CECILIA joined the cooperative group at Uloanwu when it started in June 2020. She is a widow with 8 children. She chose to cook and sell food at the small village market. She says her business is running well and she no longer needs to travel out of state in search of money. She can feed her children well and send them to school.

In 2020, the AMURT economic empowerment program added three new cooperative groups: Inikiri in Ohaukwu LGA, Mgbalukwu in Onicha LGA and Uloanwu in Ebonyi LGA. Through the health centers, AMURT encounters many women who are the sole breadwinners in their families. Most are widows; others have husbands who are disabled. Local traditions continue to place widows at a big disadvantage. In the economic empowerment program, indigent women come together to cooperatively manage a revolving credit scheme. Interest free loans are made available to the women to start their own businesses. After two months, they start paying back 10 % monthly. After one year the loan is fully paid back. As the capital is returned new members are empowered and added by the group every month. The women have succeeded in carefully managing the scheme. In 2020 the number of beneficiaries increased from 280 to 387.

Our sponsors and partners

SPONSORS	COUNTRY	PROGRAM
GMT-NIGERIA, LTD.	Lagos Nigeria	Main sponsor
AMURT UK	London UK	Emergency assistance, medical equipment, solar power, COVID-19
Dangote Foundation	Lagos Nigeria	Cement
Rotary International	Nigeria Italy Norway USA	Water & sanitation, primary healthcare
Voice of a Child	California USA	Medical equipment, emergency assistance
Antola Foundation	New York USA	Medical equipment
AMURT Italy	Parma Italy	Water & sanitation, emergency assistance
AMURT USA	Maryland USA	Technical support, emergency assistance
AMURT Norway	Oslo Norway	Emergency assistance
AMURTEL USA	Vermont USA	Scholarships
+ FERENDA Norway, AMURTEL Germany, AMURT Spain and private donors		

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H.O.D. Laboratories	Sct. Daniel Ejiofor
M&E Manager	Chike Anah
WASH Manager	Peter Chukwu Elem
Construction Manager	Paul Haligah
Program Manager	Ibiam Iro Oji
Health Education Coord.	Chinwendu Anago-Amanze
Family Planning Coord.	Nora Nwankwor
Referrals in-charge	Dr. Sunhine Chinwendu Anwu
Special needs children Cood.	Ogadinma Ukachukwu
Economic Empowerment	Coord Afuluenu Onu
Head Midwife	Rita Obiakor
Head Driver	Peter Emmanuel

AREA IN-CHARGES

Abakliki LGA	Dr. Onwe Obinna
Ikwo LGA	Dr. Nnadi Ifeanyi
Ohaukwu LGA	Dr. Omogo John
Onitsha LGA	Dr. Ikechukwu Iwuchukwu
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Twins are double joy at Gmelina Health Center