

AMURT NIGERIA UPDATE AUGUST 2018



Abakaliki, 6th August 2018

Dear Friends,

Greetings from Abakaliki. We are at the height of the rainy season with multiple heavy rains almost every day. AMURT's vehicles are getting stuck in the muddy roads and all our construction sites are flooded. Still..... The AMURT staff struggle on, encouraged by the overwhelming response we have had this year. Every time we stop to study the numbers we are reminded about the gravity of our mission, to bring primary healthcare to neglected and remote rural here in Ebonyi State.

10,000 DELIVERIES !

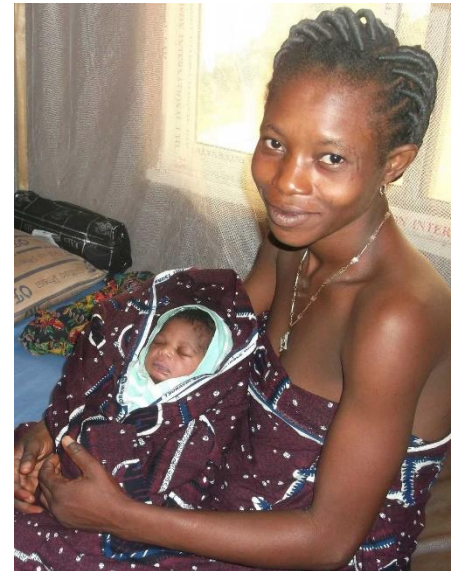
On 19th July we reached a milestone: 10,000 deliveries since we started the project. Here deliveries count as one, so including twins and triplet births, we are now around 10,200 – 10,300 babies born. It took us three years to reach the first 1000 births and six years to reach to reach 5000, and then just two more years to reach 10,000. It's been a great privilege to welcome so many babies to the world and to help save lives.

NEW HEALTH CENTER OPENED IN ULOANWU, EBONYI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

From December 2017 to March this year we visited many communities in different local governments around Ebonyi State to select a new project area. When we came to Enwudiinago Ward in Ebonyi Local Government Area, it did not take us long to determine that this would be our new project area. The community has no access to primary healthcare, the roads are very bad and the population neglected and marginalized. In one of our first meetings, when we inquired about maternal mortality, we had seven names of women who had died recently in childbirth. Uloanwu village was selected because of its central location and because the community had already taken initiative to start construction to replace the broken mud house used as a government health post. AMURT set out, together with the community to complete the new building first. Government assigned additional health workers and others were recruited from the community. On 2nd August the first ante-natal check up day was held with 134 pregnant women attending receiving free ultrasound scan and with four doctors available to check and a small laboratory for investigations. Two children seen on opening day were rushed to Gmelina Health Center for emergency surgery. The health workers are now on duty 24 hours every day at Uloanwu. The work on the proper clinic building has started and we hope to complete it in time. A borehole for the new health center has been completed, along with boreholes for to villages in the project area, Obegu and Njiogbu.



10,000 births Ghelina baby



Mother and baby at Odeligbo



**Opening of Uloanwu Health center 2 August.
134 pregnant women**

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF BIRTHS

In the first six months of 2018 we had an increase in births of 49 % compared to the same period in 2017 for a total of 1540. Due to the growing AMURT's growing reputation, mothers are now coming from outside the project area. They come to benefit from services that are otherwise unavailable in the rural areas, like doctor's presence, qualified midwives, diagnostic laboratory, and unfailing 24 hour service, and crucially; ambulances and support for emergency interventions. The AMURT assisted health centers have become referral centers for deliveries that encounter complications at home, with chemists or traditional birth attendants, or other health centers.

CHILDREN SURGERY SUPPORT HAS INCREASED SHARPLY

During the first six months of 2018, AMURT assisted in 15 surgeries for children, most of them life saving interventions. We sponsored two surgeries for babies with birth defects of spinal bifida and hydrocephalus and both were successful. Onyekachi became world famous in April when her photo and story went viral, reaching 1,248,000 people on Facebook and receiving 45,000 comments of prayers and good wishes. Onyekachi was discharged on 29th July and is now back home in Onuani, Onicha LGA.

AMBULANCE EMERGENCY REFERRALS SAVING LIVES

With AMURT's reputation growing, we get more and more serious cases presenting in our health centers, particularly at Odeligbo. In the first six months of 2018 we had 186 ambulance referrals, and 45 more referrals in the month of July. We rely on private donations to assist the referrals, as nearly everyone in our project areas are poor farmers. Thanks to sympathizers in USA, UK, Switzerland, Australia, and Italy who supported us to save lives.

FAMILY PLANNING DOUBLE UPTAKE

The AMURT health education and family planning team had good results so far this year. The number of people receiving family planning counseling rose to 3502 and women accepting implants was 692, over double the number for the same period last year. Health rallies were conducted in five villages in the Mgbalukwu Project Area in Onicha LGA.

NEW BIG WATER PROJECT PARTNERSHIP WITH ROTARY

So far this year we have drilled 15 more boreholes. Six village boreholes in Onicha LGA, five in Izzi LGA, and two in Ebonyi LGA and two clinic boreholes, Ephuenyim and Uloanwu. In August we are starting two projects financed by Rotary Foundation. The Rotary Club of Casalmaggiore, Viadana and Sabbioneta in Italy support the 20 village boreholes, 13 in Onicha LGA, 5 in Afikpo North and 2 in Ikwo, and The Rotary Club of Cupertino, California, USA supports 16 village boreholes in Effium Community in Ohaukwu LGA. The project, comprising of sensitization, survey, drilling, WASHCOM training and installations will keep the AMURT WASH team very busy until April 2019.

CONSTRUCTION IN FOUR PROJECT AREAS

The AMURT Construction Team, got the use of a new Toyota Tundra truck and was super busy with construction projects in four different project areas. The new staff quarters in Ephuenyim Health Center is close to completion, they are at the stage of plumbing and electrical wiring. At Mgbalukwu the construction of gutters and concreting of the grounds were completed and the building of the staff quarters is underway after long delays. As already told, one small building for Uloanwu health center was completed and is now in use, while the big hospital building is still under construction. In Odeligbo Health Center, construction has started on a new staff quarter.



Baby Miracle operated for spinal bifida and hydrocephalus



Baby Onyekachi operated for spinal bifida and hydrocephalus. At discharge



Baby Uchechi operated for intestinal obstruction.

OBSTETRIC EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE and CESAREAN SECTIONS

The most important work AMURT does in Ebonyi state is to intervene in obstetric emergencies. During the first six months of 2018, our ambulances had 96 obstetric emergency referrals. We did 76 cesarean sections, 28 at Odeligbo and 48 at referral centers. Our overall C.S. rate was 4.7 %, up from 4.1 % last year. We managed dozens of serious complications and even some near misses in the health center. Still we lost 10 women in pregnancy/childbirth this year, including six after referral. The high number can be traced to late presentation of un-booked women from outside project area. These deaths are a strong reminder of the seriousness of the situation and the great responsibility we carry.

BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS SAVE LIVES

In the first six months we did a total of 167 blood transfusions in the AMURT assisted health centers. Many more pints of blood were supplied to the 48 C.S. in the referral centers and other referral cases. Many of these patients would not have made it without the hard work of our laboratory scientists. The AMURT staff: doctors, health workers, midwives, drivers and M&E etc, donated blood on 26 occasions to save lives. We started a Blood Donor Club with university students and we hope to open our own AMURT blood bank soon.

THANKS TO ALL FRIENDS and SYMPATHIZERS! With your support so many lives were changed, so many mothers and children and babies in need were reached and assisted.
DEEPEST THANKS TO OUR MAIN SPONSORS: Philippe and GMT-NIGERIA LTD. Who make all this work possible.

And biggest thanks to the dedicated AMURT Team members, including all the health workers in the health centers. Your work is a big inspiration. Your sacrifice sets a beautiful example and your spirit is what is needed to create better tomorrow, not only for Nigeria, but the whole planet.

Sincerely yours,

Dada Daneshananda

Dada Daneshananda Director

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Monthly medical team meeting at AMURT office in Abakaliki



Training for Family Planning Focal Persons at the AMURT office in Abakaliki



Installation of borehole at Obegu Village in Ebonyi LGA.



Midwife Rita watching a baby receiving photo therapy for jaundice at Ephuenyim Health Center.



Ephuenyim Health Center ante-natal days draw over 200 women some weeks.