

COUNTRY PROFILE

SIERRA LEONE

2020



**DOCTORS
WITH AFRICA**
CUAMM



OUR WORK IN SIERRA LEONE

**Doctors with Africa
CUAMM operates
in Sierra Leone since
2012, when it started
its activities in Pujehun
District.**

The main aim of CUAMM is to promote maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health, focusing on reducing maternal and pediatric mortality rate of Sierra Leone, which is one of the highest in the world.



2012 PUJEHUN DISTRICT

Since 2012 CUAMM has been supporting the Maternity and Pediatric Complex of Pujehun Government Hospital.

2015 LUNSAR

CUAMM supported the private-not-for-profit institution, Saint John of God Catholic Hospital, from January 2015 until the end of 2020.

2016 FREETOWN

Since March 2016, CUAMM has been supporting the Princess Christian Maternity Hospital (PCMH): the national maternity referral hospital has the only C-EmONC (Comprehensive Emergency Obstetrics and Newborn Care) center recognized for the entire Western Area Rural and Urban district.

2017 BO, MAKENI, BONTHE

Since February 2017, CUAMM has expanded its presence to the regional hospitals of Bo and Makeni, and to the Bonthe Governmental Hospital.

2018 ALL COUNTRY - NEMS

Since March 2018, CUAMM has supported at national level the implementation of the National Emergency Medical Service (NEMS).

TODAY SOUTH REGIONAL LEAD

Since the 1st October 2018, CUAMM has implemented "Saving Lives" project, supporting the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) to reduce maternal, neonatal and under-5 mortality and morbidity by increasing utilisation of quality Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) services.

PUJEHUN DISTRICT



Doctors with Africa CUAMM has operated in Pujehun district to strengthen health services and the referral system for obstetric and paediatric emergencies. In **Pujehun Maternity and Paediatric Complex**, CUAMM ensures the 24/7 presence of expatriate health professionals:

- 1 senior surgeon working in the maternity ward;
- 1 public health specialist working alongside the district health management team (DHMT) supporting data management and community engagement.

Moreover, specific trainings for **strengthening Community Health Workers capacities** have been held.

Beyond the intervention in the hospital, CUAMM supports the whole District to guarantee the availability of the referral system and quality services in the B-EmOC centers and the major PHUs.

In 2014, CUAMM started a **voucher-based scheme for paediatric emergencies**, free of charge for users, involving motorbike owners "Okada men". Furthermore, the National Emergency Medical Service (NEMS) - triggered by CUAMM in 2018 to provide an efficient ambulance referral system - has resulted in a significant increase of referrals.

In 2017 an operational research on breastfeeding has been carried out involving 200 women in the whole district, advocating for exclusive breastfeeding up to the 6th month of child's life. The research was presented in September 2019 at the 11th European Congress on Tropical Medicine and International Health (ECTMIH) in Liverpool.

In conclusion, the hospital's **Blood Bank** has been supported through the provision of tests and blood bags to prevent cases of stock out. Blood donation campaigns have been promoted among the communities.

MATERNITY AND PAEDIATRIC HOSPITAL 2020



397,170
Population served
59
Beds

OUTPATIENTS

5,558
Visits Outpatient



MATERNITY

1,086
Total deliveries
351
Cesarean sections



PAEDIATRICS

2,067
Paediatric admissions



ANC VISITS

2,308
Antenatalcare visits



REFERRAL

968
N. of ambulance referrals for obstetric complication

WESTERN AREA RURAL & URBAN DISTRICTS – PCMH



In 2016 Doctors with Africa CUAMM, upon local authorities' invitation, accepted to intervene supporting the **Princess Christian Maternity Hospital (PCMH)**, the main maternity in the country. The hospital is located in Freetown city center, and has a catchment area of more than 1,5 million people.

The **rate of direct major obstetric fatality rate (DMOF)** is currently 1.50% (2.41% in 2016) and this indicates an improvement from a qualitative point of view.

CUAMM has mainly implemented the following activities at PCMH:

- support to local staff through the provision of 1 technical advisor and 1 senior gynecologist
- **training** of operating theatre nurses and midwives

- rehabilitation of the hospital **triage**
- startup of a **High Dependency Unit (HDU)** to improve the management and treatment of pregnancy or obstetric complications
- activation of the **ultrasound service**
- training on **EPC** for the prevention of hospital-acquired infections
- startup of the **gestational diabetes screening** service
- support to the creation of the **maternity ward**
- support to **blood bank** services

Furthermore, CUAMM played a key role in supporting the Ministry of Health and WHO to revise and define **Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) guidelines** and protocols with the aim of providing medical and health personnel with essential skills to manage common childbirth-related complications.

PCMH HOSPITAL 2020



2,076,354
Population served
119
Beds

OUTPATIENTS

7,162
Outpatient visits



MATERNITY

7,885
Total admissions
6,397
Total deliveries
3,045
Cesarean sections



ANC VISITS

22,688
Antenatal
Care visits



MORTALITY

9.5%
Still birth rate
1.6%
Hospital maternal mortality
due to direct obstetric
causes



REFERRAL

2,886
N. of ambulance referrals
for obstetric complications

HDU

379
Admissions
14,2%
Death rate

BO AND BOMBALI DISTRICTS



photo Nicola Bert

In 2017 Doctors with Africa CUAMM, started a new intervention in **Bo Governmental Hospital**, the second largest hospital in the country with 40 beds. The aim of the project is to improve access to quality obstetric and newborn care among people living in the District of Bo.

The activities focus on:

- Increasing the **availability** of quality obstetric and newborn care
- Strengthening the **referral system** for obstetric emergencies from peripheral health and community networks to the next level of care through NEMS
- Support to **blood bank** services
- Startup of the **HDU** of the triage
- **Prevention** of hospital-acquired infections
- Support hospital **management** by working closely with the hospital management team
- Support to the hospital local staff through 1 doctor and 1 midwife
- Increasing the demand for a **community involvement**
- Improvement of the capacity of District Health Authorities and Hospital Team to **plan, coordinate and monitor** quality of maternal

Furthermore, in 2017 Doctors with Africa CUAMM, has started an intervention in **Bombali district** (606,500 population served), particularly at Makeni Governmental Hospital which has 38 beds. The focus of intervention is the improvement of quality of healthcare for mothers and children through:

- Provision of specialists to ensure **technical assistance** and to support the local medical staff (1 gynecologist and 1 midwife)
- Support to the **management** of the hospital by working closely with the hospital management team
- Support to **district referral system**
- Support to Makeni hospital's **blood bank**
- **Rehabilitations** of Maternity ward and Operating Theatre and provision of equipment
- Support to the **Monitoring & Evaluation** unit with the aim to improve the quality of data collection. and newborn health care services.

¹ Major Direct Obstetric Complications.

BO HOSPITAL 2020



MATERNITY

4,151
Total admissions
3,210
Total deliveries
1,081
Cesarean sections
1,211
MDOC¹ treated



REFERRAL

1,217
N. of ambulance referrals for obstetric complication



TRAINING

20
Trainings for health staff

MAKENI HOSPITAL



MATERNITY

3,050
Total admissions
2,478
Total deliveries
659
Cesarean sections
1,403
MDOC¹ treated



ANC VISITS

7,160
Antenatal visits



REFERRAL

493
N. of ambulance referrals

SAVING LIVES PROGRAMME



Since the 1st October 2018, Doctors with Africa CUAMM has been implementing the **“Saving Lives” programme (SLP)**, aiming to support the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) to reduce maternal, neonatal and under-5 mortality and morbidity. This will be achieved through a **multifaceted approach** to build the demand for reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health (RMNCAH) services by strengthening quality and increasing access to them. The programme includes interventions at national, district, health facility and community level.

CUAMM provides specialised services in **emergency obstetric and new-born care** (EmONC) with an EMOC adviser deputed to provide clinical mentorship to the district clinical

mentors, along with strengthening the obstetric and paediatric **emergency referral system**. Moreover, CUAMM supports the district health management team (DHMT) to improve their **technical and operational capacity** to design, implement, and monitor the effectiveness of district health plans. Finally, CUAMM provides technical support to the **Blood Bank system**, providing **on the job mentorship** to district hospitals on management of blood, cross-matching, ANC checks and liaising with the district delivery managers for the blood donation drives planned in each district every month. Finally, rehabilitation and construction of different parts of health facilities have been supported both in Bonthé and Pujehun districts.

SAVING LIVES PROGRAMME (Bonthé and Pujehun Districts)



TRAINING

14

N. of health facilities covered by mentorship

14

N. trainings on maternal and child health

30

N. of mentees trained

7

N. of trainings on COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control



REFERRAL

256

Boat referrals

756

Ambulance referrals from supported facilities



BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS

1,834

N. of blood transfusions supported

NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE - NEMS



On the 15th of October 2018, Doctors with Africa CUAMM contributed to start **the National Emergency Medical Service (NEMS)**, a national network of ambulances coordinated to provide aid and medical assistance in the pre-hospital setting, involving personnel trained in rescue, stabilization and transport of traumatic and medical emergencies.

The NEMS service, initially operational in Pujehun district, has progressively expanded throughout all the districts becoming **operative at national level on the 27th of May 2019**.

A national operations center has been established in Freetown and **81 ambulances** have been dispatched all around the country, resulting in a considerably greater access to hospitals and health services.

The project, from September 2020, has entered in a new phase: CUAMM stepped aside in terms of managerial and financial responsibility but it remains available to support NEMS management with **technical assistance**.

NEMS OPERATIONAL SERVICE



BENEFICIARIES

The entire population of Sierra Leone



MAIN FEATURES

81

Ambulances currently dispatched

1,677

Ambulance drivers, paramedics and OC operators trained

RELEVANT DATA

43,564

Emergency calls received by NEMS Operation Centres

41,819

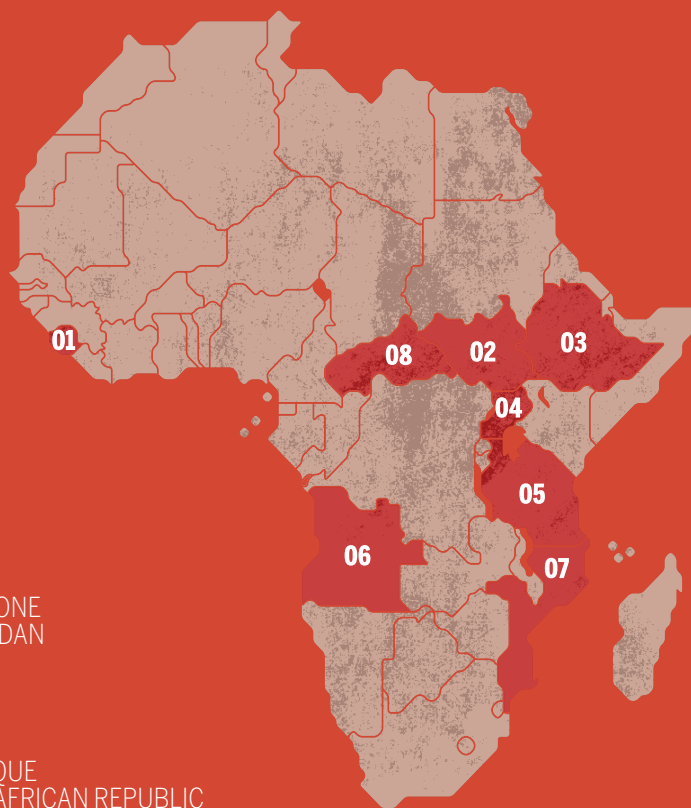
Ambulance missions

36,450

Patients referred

Data collected from the 15th of October 2018 up to the 31st of May 2020.

DOCTORS WITH AFRICA CUAMM



- 01 SIERRA LEONE
- 02 SOUTH SUDAN
- 03 ETHIOPIA
- 04 UGANDA
- 05 TANZANIA
- 06 ANGOLA
- 07 MOZAMBIQUE
- 08 CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

TODAY

Doctors with Africa CUAMM is currently operating in:

23

Hospitals

127

Districts

3

Nursing schools

1

University (Mozambique)

4,777

Human Resources, of whom 605 international professionals

A 70-YEARS HISTORY

2,000

People have left Italy and other countries to work on projects

232

Hospitals served

43

Countries of intervention

OUR MISSION

Doctors with Africa CUAMM was the first NGO working in the international health field to be recognized in Italy and is the largest Italian organization for the promotion and protection of health in Africa.

We work with a long-term developmental perspective.

In Italy and Africa, we are engaged in training, research, dissemination of scientific knowledge, affirming the fundamental human right to health.

AREAS OF FOCUS



MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH



NUTRITION



INFECTIOUS DISEASES



CHRONIC DISEASES



TRAINING



HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE



MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND RESEARCH

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Cover photo

A young pregnant woman waiting for her baby.
photo Valeria Scrilatti