

# Morogoro Women's Training Centre



Participants and hosts at training



Nwakahoja, Mwanza



Mbula



Morogoro. This training included several Maasai.

## Maternal Health Training Programs

2015

Every one of us has had a direct experience with a child. We all know of pregnancies with happy outcomes. Most of us have friends and families who have experienced illness or death of a child or mother.

Supported by the United Church Women (UCW), Morogoro Women's Training Centre (MWTC), in collaboration with the Tanzanian Ministry of Health, has been running training programs for Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) since 2011.

### Training Reduces Mortality

MWTC notes that Traditional Birth Attendants play a significant role in the reduction of maternal and infant mortality. The TBAs live in the same communities as pregnant mothers. They are able to confirm pregnancy at an early stage, accompany pregnancies, and conduct home deliveries. Increasingly important is their role in referring mothers at high risk to hospitals and clinics.

As a result of initiatives like this and other Tanzanian government strategies, the rates of infant and maternal mortality have dropped significantly between 2005 and 2015. But there is still room for improvement. While the goal of the Tanzanian government is to have every woman able to deliver her babies in a clinic, community health centre, or hospital, the infrastructure within Tanzania is still many years from achieving that goal.



Participants role-play an abdominal examination, an essential part of TBA training.

In 2015 MWTC was able to conduct three maternal health training courses.

Course No.	Course Name	No. Trained
14	Mbulu, Manyara Region September 2015	43
15	Nyakahoja, Mwanza October 2015	37
16	Maasai Training at MWTC December 2015	36

Since the beginning of the program, the UCW has supported **16 courses**, and **494 Traditional Birth Attendants** have been trained! (The original plan had been 200.)

This was achieved by implementing training programs regionally rather than centrally. The maternal health training curriculum is provided by the Tanzanian Ministry of Health. The ministry also names trained facilitators to implement the program.



# Some Inspiring Women

## Meet Maria.

Maria has been working as a TBA since 1988. She began her work by helping a neighbour deliver twins, with complications. In spite of challenges the twins were delivered safely. Maria then met another pregnant woman on her way to a clinic. Maria helped her to deliver her baby, beginning her long career as a TBA.



## Meet Rebeca.

Rebeca is the mother of 10. She began work as a TBA in 2006, assisting her mother-in-law. The first child she delivered is now in Standard Five!

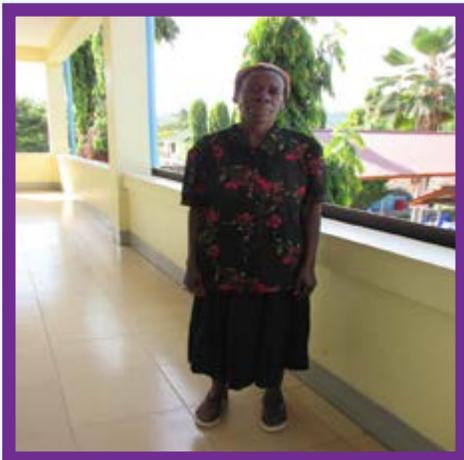


## Meet Juliana.

Juliana is 63 and has worked as a TBA since 1984. She lives in a community with no health services, and is part of a tribe that traditionally did not go to health facilities. In her work Juliana has dealt with many complications. She is currently mentoring Sisilia Joseph (who also attended the training), to eventually take her place as TBA in the community.

**Meet Ester.**

Ester began assisting a nurse midwife in 1974. In 1989 she was called for an emergency by her neighbour. The neighbour was delivering a stillborn child. The delivery was extremely difficult, but Ester was able to save the mother. She was then named by village elders as a health worker and TBA.



**Meet Catherine.**

Catherine began her work as a TBA in 1973 when she delivered her first-born child herself. Gradually more women began to ask her for help and her village named her to attend a TBA training in 2000.

These are just a few of the many incredible women who attended the Maternal Health Training. Their skill and experience, their courage, and their commitment to community, mother, and baby is inspiring.





Preparing for a group assignment

## Challenges

Courses are designed to be participatory and are conducted in Kiswahili, Tanzania's official language. Some participants did not speak Kiswahili and translation to local language had to be provided. Some participants were not able to read or write so course materials and methodologies had to be adjusted. A few TBAs had to bring their own small children. (Organizers noted the need to provide child care facilities for the course.) All TBAs brought the trust and confidence of their communities and their lived experience.



## Who Comes

Who has benefited from the training? The women who come to the course are recommended by their community. Most have been working in the role of Traditional Birth Attendant and have the trust and confidence of the community. Some have been working as a TBA for decades and bring a wealth of practical experience and knowledge to the course. Some have received maternal health training before and this training is an update and refresher. For some this is their first introduction to the role of Traditional Birth Attendant. Many learned from their mothers and grandmothers who had also been TBAs. At the Mbulu training, five TBAs brought the younger women they were training to take over their role in the community.



### LOCATIONS

**Mwanza**  
*(northern region, on the shores of Lake Victoria)*

**Mbulu, Manyara Region**  
*(south of Arusha)*

**Morogoro Women's Training Centre**  
*(Morogoro)*

## Financial Report

	Participants	Average cost per participant	2016	2015	2011 to 2014
Projected					
Fetal scopes & replenish birthing kits			\$16,000		
Evaluation and follow-up to 2014 and 2015 trainings			\$1,000*		
Training programs & birthing kits	116	\$415		\$48,000	
Training follow-up from 2014					
Training programs & birthing kits	378	\$550			\$200,000
Evaluation					\$9,000
	494				

\*from Mission & Service

## Follow-up and Evaluation



A welcome addition to participants' birthing kits is a fetal scope.

One of the key recommendations coming out of the evaluation in 2014 was the importance of follow-up with previous participants in maternal health training and the replenishment of birthing kits.

MWTC plans to do six follow-up trips in 2016. Fetal scopes will be provided to add to birthing kits already distributed, and there will be some modest replenishment of other supplies. Three follow-up trips are planned in 2016 for trainings conducted in 2014 and three for trainings conducted in 2015. A total budget of \$18,000 is proposed for this follow-up. MWTC will source other funding for the balance of funds.



## Thank You...

Morogoro Women's Training Centre continues to express their gratitude for the financial support provided by United Church Women and by The United Church of Canada. Says one organizer:

"It is not possible to mention all who made this training successful, may the Living God bless them."

## Looking Ahead

Morogoro Women's Training Centre continues to be a Mission & Service partner of The United Church of Canada. They believe the Maternal Health Training Programs are important for the women of Tanzania and plan to continue in 2016. They will allocate 2016 Mission & Service funds to support two more training workshops.

