



Moving through the city: reconstructing women's referral trajectories to emergency obstetric care in Conakry, Guinea

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When obstetric emergencies occur, women move through cities, along roads and across neighbourhoods in ways that modelled accessibility measures rarely capture. In urban areas in west Africa, empirical reconstruction of women's real trajectories remains rare, particularly in the rapidly growing cities of the region. Recent studies have highlighted the importance of examining actual care-seeking trajectories and linking them to urban mobility dynamics to better understand access to healthcare.

To move beyond modelled estimates, we reconstructed the referral trajectories of women referred for obstetric care to Ignace Deen National Hospital (HNID) in Conakry, Guinea. Using primary data on reported movements, trajectories were digitized in ArcGIS Pro, tracing each journey along the urban road network from the referring facility to HNID. Through descriptive spatial analysis, we examined route patterns across 312 reconstructed trajectories, focusing on a key question: do women referred from the same facility follow the same route?

Although referral pathways were largely direct, substantial variability emerged in the routes used to reach HNID. Women referred from the same facility frequently travelled along different trajectories despite sharing the same destination. This spatial heterogeneity, largely invisible to conventional accessibility measures, underscores the importance of empirically reconstructing how women move through urban environments when seeking emergency obstetric care.

