

**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH**



REPRODUCTIVE, MATERNAL, AND CHILD HEALTH DEPARTMENT

**HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO REDUCE PREVENTABLE MATERNAL
MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY**

14th MARCH 2023

Human rights are about the empowerment and entitlement of people with respect to certain aspects of their lives, including their sexual and reproductive health. International human rights law includes fundamental commitments of States to enable women to survive pregnancy and childbirth as part of their enjoyment of sexual and reproductive health rights and living a life of dignity. Sound public health practice is crucial to enable States to fulfill these basic rights, but it must be complemented by broader measures to address women's empowerment. **(Human rights-based approach to reduce preventable maternal morbidity and mortality:**

1. Technical Guidance

Tanzania is committed to achieving Gender Equality and Equity, guided by the Global Convention on eliminating all forms of discrimination against Women (CEDAW). As of 2020, the country doubled the number of FP users as part of the FP2020 initiative and is also committed to achieving the FP2030 commitment. Tanzania collaborates with African regional bodies and member states in ensuring effective implementation of the revised Maputo Plan of Action 2016-2030 on sexual and reproductive health, which is in line with Africa Agenda 2063 which calls for inclusive growth and sustainable development for prosperous Africa. These commitments guide the country to achieve its vision to improve women's and children's health and social well-being as per the human rights approach. (National Plan for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health & Nutrition (2021/2022 - 2025/2026)

The Ministry of Health department of Reproductive Health Maternal and Child utilizes the human rights-based approach in policies and programs to eliminate preventable maternal mortality and morbidity through policy-making, development of guidelines, and supervision with the aim to assist in improving women's health and rights by providing guidance on implementing policies and programs to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity in accordance with human rights standards from Regional to Council Level.

2. Steps in Policy Making

June 2019, Initiated National guidelines for Gender and Respectful Care Mainstreaming and integration Across RMNCH services in Tanzania.

Gender responsiveness and respectful care are two closely interrelated concepts that strive in contributing to improving the quality of care of reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health (RMNCAH). While most of the other interventions for quality improvement are targeted at improving infrastructures, hardware (equipment and supplies), and software (service delivery packages) for service delivery. Gender and respectful care strive to make the process of service delivery client-centered. This is the way that the World Health Organization (WHO) has always urged countries to ensure that health policy, programs, services, and delivery models are responsive to the needs of the health system clients (women, men, girls, and boys) in all their diversity (WHO, 2017). The goal of these guidelines for gender and respectful care mainstreaming and integration into the National RMNCAH interventions is to accelerate access to and

utilization of high-quality, comprehensive, and integrated health services that are client-centered. The core intent is to ensure that, mothers' and children's lives are saved through services that are respectful and gender-responsive. The main focus is on improving RMNCAH outcomes, by reducing barriers related to gender inequity and inequalities at all levels of the health system; from households to the community to the health facility, and across governing bodies. Furthermore, the main emphasis is to improve the availability of quality, respectful, client-centered, and gender-sensitive integrated services for children, adolescents, and adults of reproductive age regardless of their social-economic status.

Key areas of focus include creating an enabling environment for gender and respectful care mainstreaming in policy and guidelines, and integration of gender and respectful care. National Guidelines for Gender and Respectful Care Mainstreaming and Integration Across RMNCAH services in Tanzania in routine service delivery practices across all levels of care, including promoting adherence to the principles of gender-responsive client-centered care and ensuring and monitoring for compliance to updated standards of care. In addition, the integration of gender and respectful care in community intervention packages and making it routine at the community level has been given very high importance.

2.1 A right to safe and respectful healthcare care

As evidenced evidence shows that incidences of physical abuse, non-dignified care, non-consented care, non-confidential care, discrimination, abandonment of care, and detention in facilities discourage clients' health-seeking behavior, Respectful care has become a collective departmental priority in preventing maternal mortality and morbidity and ensuring safety. Is it Important for the Ministry of Health (DRMCH in collaboration with Save The Children developed the On-The-Job training (OJT) packages with advantages over centralized training- cost-effective, conducted at the actual workstation with real practical sessions. The packages are in the final process to be signed by the high-level authorities at the Ministry of Health. (CMO)

The packages of On-the-Job Training:

- Flip Chart
- Learning Guide
- Provider's pocketbook
- Planning Guide

2.3 Objectives of the OJT learning package

- The main objective is to build healthcare providers' capacity to offer RMNCAH services that are gender-sensitive and respectful.

2.4 Specific objectives

- To impart knowledge, skills, and attitude of HCPs offering RMNCAH services that are gender-sensitive and respectful
- To capacitate HCPs in planning, providing, and evaluating of Gender and respectful care services provision
- To prepare and motivate HCPs as advocates and champions of supporting the provision of RMNCAH services that are gender-responsive and respectful

3.0 Buildings

However, Respectful Maternity Care is a National agenda as of 2022 Hon. President Samia Suluhu Hassan launched the CCBRT Maternity wings with RMC. In lake Zone Sekotoure Hospital Initiated by Hon. Philipo Mipango has dependable wings with RMC. Also, in Meta Hospital, Kigoma, and Katavi the practice of RMC is at a high level.

In recent years, efforts have been advancing to promote the provision of gender-responsive and respectful RMNCAH services. Report on RMC formative study dissemination workshop on 8th and 9th November 2022, Centralized training approach has mostly been used to address knowledge gaps among healthcare providers in relation to improving the quality of care. And at the Ministry of Health-DRMCH Focal person on GRM is existing.

The Ministry of Health and President Office (POLARG) Managed to buildCEmONC facilities to enhance accessibilities and affectabilities of services to the communities.

The impact depends on the capacity building to HCWs through OJT and G&RMC guideline dissemination, as to date managed to disseminate six regionals mainland.

4. Challenges in implementing the human rights-based approach in policies and programs to eliminate preventable maternal mortality and morbidity.

Challenge

- Inequality Care ANC & PNC

Steps to be taken

- Disseminate ANC guidelines
- Print and disseminate ANC four booklet with eight contacts
- Update of ANC TOTs and training

Challenge

- The unsatisfactory attitude and skills of HCPS

Steps

- Capacity building through attachment and mentorship
- MPDSR on a daily basis zoom meeting (Monday -Thursday) and on Friday CME
- Orientation of G&RMC guideline
- Training on G&RMC

Challenge

- Inadequate utilization of community structure to address the quality of care

Were taken / to be taken

- DRMCH recruit a community focal person
- Orientation of G&RMC to the community health and strengthen accountability structures such as HFGC and CHSB
- Support CHWs to conduct community dialogue on respectful maternal and childcare
- Emphasize the Use of community scorecard in RMNCAH services

Challenge

- Limited coordination among RMC stakeholders

Steps to be taken

- MoH (DRMCH) to work with partners to establish a Community of RMC Practice in Tanzania, aiming to keep stakeholders together and updated on ongoing RMC initiatives in the country and strengthen coordination.

Challenge

- **Accountability**

Steps were taken /to be taken

- Appropriate monitoring mechanisms from the National level
- Politicians and high-level Ministry authorities attended quarterly zoom MPDSR meetings and come out with the resolution for the action to be taken.
- Training managers on Leadership and Governance.

5. Does the Government regularly collect and analyze disaggregated data and information on maternal mortalities and morbidities including, including in the context of COVID-19? Explain good practice and challenges.

Yes, the Government collects and analyze data

Good practice

- Data collected and analyzed for the Ministry and IPs for the action to be taken in the area with low indicators, research, reports writings, and as a map to understand if the DRMCH aligns in the One Plan III.
- Collected on daily bases, weekly, monthly, quarterly bi-annual, and annual.
- Having an electronic system (DHIS 2) 90%
- Informed decisions through analyzed data
- National-level focal can manage data from low-level facilities

Challenge.

- Few facilities with electronic system 'DHIS' 90% which needs scale up to eliminate paper base.

- Network connection challenges
- Inadequate HCWs based on the data works

5. The main causes that may have led to the poor maternal health outcome in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic in Tanzania?

Describe the impact of covid-19 pandemic response on the availability and accessibility and quality of sexual reproductive health, including maternal health services for women and girls.

Causes of poor maternal health outcomes

- Disruptions of the supply chain for essential commodities
- Equipment/staff involved in the provision of SRHS may be diverted to other services.
- Clinics may close and people may be reluctant to go to health facilities for sexual and reproductive health services.
- Suspend some SRHS that are not classified as essential
- Responses to epidemics further exacerbate gender-based
- Unintended pregnancies
- Unsafe abortions, and
- Maternal and newborn deaths

6. groups of women affected with disproportionately affected by the pandemic and response measures were the women with chronic diseases which tend to have low immunity.

7. Measures are taken to mitigate the impact of covid-19 pandemic on maternal health.

Measures taken

- Ensure sufficient training/refresher training of health care personnel in
- Infection prevention and control (IPC)
- Risk and mitigation of stigma and discrimination
- Engage healthcare personnel in the sensitization of pregnant women on the COVID-19 infection symptoms and related prevention and hygiene messages.
- Ensure pregnant women with suspected, probable, or confirmed COVID-19, including those in isolation, have access to
- Woman-centered, respectful skilled care, including screening and readiness to care for maternal and neonatal complications
- Provision of Vaccine