



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

WOMEN'S HEALTH AND HEALTH CARE REFORM – G8 SUMMIT 2009

Presented by:

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Women's Health

- **Women's health issues involves complete physical, emotional, mental and social well-being that emphasizes promotion, prevention, treatment & rehabilitation and not only the absence of disease.**
- **It includes health needs during all stages of development - neonatal, ante-natal, adolescent, youth, adult and old age. All special times which need special health services**

Frameworks Guiding Health Services

International and Regional Frameworks

- **Right to Health as enshrined in:-**
 - **UN-AU International Conventions**
 - **Beijing Platform of Action - 1995**
 - **ICPD – 1994, ICPD+10**
 - **MDGs – especially MDG 5**
 - **African Union SRH&R Maputo Plan and CARMMA (Maternal Mortality),**
 - **SRHR Plan of Action of RECs**
 - **National Constitutions**

Rights approach to women's health

The rights are enshrined in six major United Nations international human rights treaties:

- Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT);**
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);**
- International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD);**
- Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC);**
- the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR);**

Rights approach to women's health - 2

- **the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).**
- **In addition to UN Conventions, there are regional treaties such as African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.**
 - **The regional level charters include provisions on —rights to equality, life, liberty, security of the person, health and protection from cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment.**

Characteristics of Health Services

- **Promotive – information access**
- **Preventive**
- **Curative**
- **Rehabilitative**
- **Establish health linkages in all stages of women development - neonatal, ante-natal, adolescent, youth, adult and old age**

Cross cutting issues affecting women's health – issues not in health system

- Sexual and gender based violence**
- Social cultural practices that impede women's access & enjoyment to good health. Early marriage, FGM, teenage pregnancy, women inheritance, dual health systems – traditional & modern services**

Cross cutting health issues cont...

- Poverty**
- Men involvement**
- Peace and security**
- Substance and drug abuse**
- Youth & Adolescent Health**
- Socio-Cultural Factors, e.g:
FGM, Widow Inheritance**

Health care reforms - 1

Health care reform can be defined as major health policy creation or changes which generally involve government policy implementation that affects health care delivery in a place or a targeted group such as women, youth and children

- The aim of health reforms is to broaden access, affordability, quality, & acceptability of services in both private & public sector. It involves empowering individuals, households, families and their communities

Health care reforms - 2

- Goals of health reforms:
 - Health insurance coverage – making care available, affordable, stable & sustainable
 - Investment in infrastructure and qualified human resource
 - Public health investments that are promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and ensure linkages in all stages (surveillance)

Examples of health reforms in Africa

Reforms have started at local, national, regional and international levels:

- **Primary health care extension system/ services**
- **Task shifting – community health workers, TBAs**
- **Cost sharing in health services**
- **Innovative health financing – doing what you can with what you have**
- **Empowering frontline workers**
- **Community dialoguing/discussions on health problems e.g. Ethiopia – DSW & GTZ through peer education dialogued with community on isolation of women during their menstrual periods**
- **Starting alternative rites of passage for girls – in place of FGM**

Challenges to provision of health to women

- Health system factors – infrastructure establishment is poor, distances to facilities, few trained personnel and brain drain, corruption (in construction of facilities, procurement)
- Access to health services due to distance, affordability
- Social cultural factors – parallel health services (traditional & modern services), FGM, early marriage, nutritional practices
- Lack of information access on health

Challenges in health cont...

- **Poverty**
- **Rapid population growth – stretches health services**
- **Emergence of new strains of diseases – malaria, Ebola, swine flu, bird flu, ... etc**
- **Not prioritizing reproductive health as an essential women's health component**

Addressing SRH Health in EAC as component of Women's Health – the statistics

Status of selected RH indicators in the EAC Region

COUNTRY	IMR	NNMR	MMR	HIV Prev.	ANC 4-Visits	Delivery by SHP	CPR	TFR
Burundi	79	37	855	3.3	42	25	7	6.0
Kenya	77	29	414	7.1	54	42	39	4.9
Rwanda	86	---	750	3	13	39	17	6.1
Uganda	76	24	435	6.4	47	42	24	6.7
Tanzania	68	32	578	7	62	46	26	5.7

Sources: collations from National Demographic and Health Surveys^[1] and National Bureaus of Statistics compilations

^[1] Uganda Demographic and Health Survey 2006 [Preliminary Report]; Kenya Demographic and Health Survey 2003: Key Findings; Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey 2005; Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey 2004..

Addressing Health in EAC, the main SRH Components

- *Maternal, Neonatal & Child Health*
- *Family Planning*
- *Reproductive Health Commodity
Security*
- *Adolescent Health*
- *Sexually Transmitted Infections
including HIV/AIDS*
- *Nutrition and Lifestyle Diseases*

Addressing Health in EAC, the main SRH components cont..

- ***Cancers of the Reproductive System***
- ***Gender Issues and Harmful Traditional Practices***
- ***The Reproductive Health of Migrant Populations in East Africa***
- ***Unsafe Abortion***

Areas of action – recommendations

- **Male involvement in women health services**
- **Strengthening programmes addressing health needs at neonatal, ante-natal, adolescent, youth, adult and old age**