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**MATRIC NO: 17/MHS08/001**

**DEPARTMENT: PUBLIC HEALTH**

**COURSE: INTERNATIONAL HEALTH**

**ASSIGNENT; Write on the contributions of World Health Organisation on the following;**

1. **Promoting Maternal/infant health**
2. **Prevention and control of communicable diseases.**
3. **Achievement of sustainable development.**
4. **Improvement of Healthcare services and facilities.**

**PROMOTING MATERNAL/INFANT HEALTH**

One woman dies per minute in childbirth around the globe. Almost half of these deaths occur in Sub Saharan Africa. Despite the progress made in many countries in increasing the availability of maternal healthcare, the majority of women across Africa remain without full access to this care. Countries face a variety of obstacles to improved maternal health: insufficient data prevents ministries from implementing programmes most effectively, while cost and other access issues prevent women from using the available resources. There are known, cost effective interventions that can dramatically reduce maternal mortality. Investing in maternal health is a political and social imperative, as well as a cost effective investment in strong health systems overall.

Investing in the health of women and children is a vital part of the right to health, encompassing reproductive and maternal (prenatal and postnatal) and child health care.

As one step towards achieving these results, there are proven cost-effective interventions that can dramatically improve maternal care in Sub Saharan Africa’s health systems. Money alone will not solve the problem, but three key approaches can have a dramatic positive impact on the health of women in Africa:

* health systems interventions: health workers
* efficient financing mechanisms
* political partnerships.

Investing in maternal health is urgent: not only because giving life should not result in death, but also because women are important economic drivers and their health is critical to long-term, sustainable economic development in Africa. Furthermore, investing in maternal health is a way to improve health systems overall, which benefits the entire population of a country.

**PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES.**

Public health laws may authorize the isolation of individuals and groups who may have been exposed to an infectious disease, as well as the closure of businesses and premises and the confiscation of property. The exercise of these powers must be based on public health considerations, without discrimination on grounds of race, gender, tribal background, or other inappropriate criteria. Public health laws should provide for the fair compensation of those who have suffered economic loss due to a public health order affecting their property or facilities. Minimizing the transmission of infectious diseases is a core function of public health law. Clearly defined legal powers are needed to respond to outbreaks of contagious and serious diseases at national level. The appropriate exercise of legal powers will vary according to the seriousness of the disease, the means of transmission, and how easily the disease is transmitted. Some diseases are entirely preventable by vaccination (e.g. measles and polio), or by access to improved sanitation and clean drinking water (e.g. diarrhoeal and parasitic diseases). Others are treatable when detected in a timely manner (e.g. tuberculosis and malaria). The epidemic of HIV can be substantially reduced through laws supporting access to treatment, combined with measures to educate and support individuals and communities to implement proven strategies for preventing transmission. As discussed in Section 11.1, States Parties to the International Health Regulations (2005) have an obligation to assess and notify WHO of all events occurring within their territories that may constitute a public health emergency of international concern.

Transmission of infectious diseases can be prevented majorly by:

1. Immunization: Immunization avoids about 2–3 million deaths each year, as well as serious disability from vaccine-preventable diseases including Yellow fever, diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis, rubella, rotaviruses, polio, pneumococcal diseases, mumps, measles, human papillomavirus, polio, hepatitis B, and Haemophilus influenzae type b. To maximize immunization coverage, national vaccination plans should provide free or affordable immunizations that are available from most health care providers.
2. Screening: Screening individuals to determine if they have been infected with or exposed to an infectious disease is a core public health strategy. Screening enables health care providers to begin treatment in a timely manner, to manage co-morbidities more effectively, to encourage patients to reduce high-risk behaviour and, in certain cases, to identify the need for compulsory treatment. In addition to reducing the severity of illness, early treatment may also reduce transmission rates.

**ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.**

Transforming our world: the 2030 agenda for sustainable development*outlines* a transformative vision with 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) for economic, social and environmental development. While only SDG 3, to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages, focuses on human health, all goals are interrelated. This issue of the Bulletin of the World Health Organization examines the relationship between health and the SDGs. Universal health coverage could therefore contribute to achieving the SDGs by producing equitable and sustainable health outcomes. Many health disparities between people with different socioeconomic status are compounded by gaps in good governance. For instance, corruption makes access to health services, medication and information much more difficult for the vulnerable. In addition, factors such as ethnicity, gender and disability can further exacerbate these health disparities. Hence, tracking indicators that measure the health of vulnerable groups are essential. Monitoring the status of equitable access to health care could also shed light on the status of human rights and social equality within states. Those people not receiving adequate health services are probably also disadvantaged in other social aspects. A better understanding of factors contributing to access to health services will help shape policies to attain SDG 3, and support the achievement of other SDGs such as attaining gender equality, reducing poverty and improving education.

Currently, robust data on health-related targets and indicators is lacking in many countries; developing better implementation and measurement tools, and linking data across sectors, is a cornerstone of the SDGs and should be a priority in global health policy dialogue.

The 2030 agenda also places emphasis on the environmental determinants of health. The 2016 World Health Organization report; Preventing disease through healthy environments estimated that 23% of all deaths could be attributed to environmental issues such as air pollution, poor sanitation, exposure to radiation and other environment-related causes. Progress on the SDGs that target environmental improvements will also improve health indicators.

This framework can assist in ensuring that Member States are able to collect, monitor and report on such progress. The United Nations and its specialized agencies, should work collaboratively to address social, commercial, economic and environmental determinants of health and to strengthen health systems, contributing to the attainment of all SDGs.

**IMPROVEMENT OF HEALTHCARE SERVICES AND FACILITIES.**

The adoption of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) placed additional emphasis on improving overall human development by 2030. Improving health outcomes is at the forefront of this global commitment, with Goal 3 calling on all stakeholders to “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”. The SDGs also reaffirm a global commitment to advancing universal health coverage (UHC). Its focus is to ensure that all people and communities have access to the quality health services they need, without facing financial hardship. The momentum towards UHC is rooted in the principles of the Alma-Ata Declaration which identified health as a human right. International Conference on Primary Health Care, Alma Ata, USSR, 6-12: World Health Organization (WHO) Framework for Integrated People-Centred Health Services (IPCHS) calls for a fundamental shift from health systems designed around diseases and health institutions towards health systems designed for people.

**Goal and objectives:**

The overall goal of this document is to provide a resource for countries seeking to improve the quality of their health service delivery. The documents:

* collates existing WHO tools and resources on quality improvement; and
* outlines the use of the tool or resource as applied in service delivery.

The primary inclusion criteria for the tools and resources included in this document is that they must be applicable for country support. Thereby, the document provides practical examples of how the tool was applied in-country, including relevant links with other areas, such as measurement. The document focuses on tools and resources developed within the WHO Service Delivery and Safety Department. It is not, therefore, an exhaustive list of service delivery and safety tools and resources across WHO or beyond. Of particular note, the document is not designed as a standards setting tool. The categorization of the tools and resources in this document has been informed by the WHO publications categorization system. Types of tools include training and capacity-building tools, along with text books and guidance documents. Resources include advocacy documents, country reports, meeting reports and technical reports. Documents listed as guidelines have all gone through the WHO Guideline Review Committee process. Target audience The target audience for this document are ministries of health, facility quality improvement teams, researchers and development agencies. WHO technical programmes, regional and country offices can also use the document in their technical cooperation work with the identified audience. Those working to improve the quality of health service delivery can also make good use of this resource.