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**Matric No: 18/mhs08/001**

**Department: Public Health**

**Course Title: International Health**

**WHO contributions on Promoting maternal and infant health**

Improving the well being of mothers, infants and children is an important public health goal for the World Health Organization ( WHO). Their well being determines the health of the next generation and can predict future public health challenges for families, communities and the health care system.

According to WHO, 810 women approximately die from preventable causes related to pregnancy and child birth. Also, 94% of all maternal deaths occur in low and lower middle income countries.

Many factors can affect pregnancy and childbirth, including;

* Preconception Health status
* Age
* Lack of access to appropriate preconception, prenatal and interconception Health care
* Poverty

WHO has assisted in the promotions of maternal and infant health by:

* Increasing knowledge/ creating awareness of interventions important for:

—increasing community support for maternal and new born health

—increasing access to, and use of, skilled care

—improving the care provided with the household by women and families

* WHO is supporting countries to deliver integrated, evidence-based and cost effective care for mothers and babies during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum period.
* By investing in health system- especially in training midwives and in making emergency obstetric care available round- the- clock is key to reducing maternal mortality. New born deaths may be substantially reduced through increased use of simple, low cost intervention, such as breastfeeding, keeping new borns warm and dry, and treating severe newborns infection.
* Ensuring quality midwife care for mothers and newborns
* Generating high quality epidemiological information and monitoring and evaluation data to strengthen the uptake and Implementation of maternal, newborn child and adolescent health guidelines, policies and programs
* Strengthening quality midwifery for all mothers and newborns
* By empowering parents and enabling breastfeeding. World breastfeeding day is celebrated every year from 1st to 7th of August, to encourage breastfeeding and improve the health of babies around the world. WHO is working with UNICEF and partners to promote the importance of family- friendly policies to enable breastfeeding and help parents nature and bind with their children in early life, when it matters most.

However, recent efforts to address persistent disparities in maternal, infant and child health have employed a “life course “ perspective to health promotion and disease prevention. At the start of the decade, about half of all pregnancies were unplanned. Unintended pregnancy is associated with a host of public health concerns such as delayed initiation of prenatal health initiatives have been aimed at improving the health if women and infants before and during pregnancy through a variety of evidence based interventions and attentions to emerging public health concerns.

**WHO contributions to the Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases**

The five most common causes of death in emergencies & disasters are diarrhea , acute respiratory infection, measles , malnutrition , in endemic zones , malaria . all except malnutrition are communicable diseases directly related to environmental health conditions.

The control of communicable disease has been the major advance of the 20th century in scientific medicine. It reflects the combination of improved environmental conditions & pulse health together with development of immunization, anti microbial chemotherapy, and the increase ability to identify new pathogenic organisms. Currently , bacterial vaccines are licensed if the control of 29 common communicable disease worldwide.

WHO has helped in prevention and control of disease through:,

* Immunization- This is a successful and cost effective Public health strategy that saves millions of lives each year. They help support vaccination coverage by ensuring that vaccination is free or affordable, by ensuring that all children are vaccinated and that vaccination are documented.
* Screening individuals to determine if they have been infected with or exposed to an infectious disease . They help with early treatments. For example people receiving treatment for tuberculosis and HIV infection are less likely to transmit the infection to others . Routine , voluntary HIV testing benefits both affected individuals and their inmate partners by facilitating easy access to prevention , care and treatment services
* True health laws that has helped improve the success of voluntary screening programs by including counseling requirements , ensuring the confidentiality of test results , and protecting individuals diagnosed with particular disease from discrimination. This laws help protect the confidentiality of a persons HIV status authorizing disclosure to third parties only in a limited circumstances where a third party is at significant risk of HIV transmission
* By provision of testing facilities .
* By creating awareness to the population on how this disease are spread , how to prevent the spread , and how to detect early signs of the disease.
* They help in reducing discernment of infections associated with health care, by assisting with the assessment, planning , implementation and evaluation of national infection control policies.

**WHO contribution on the achievement of sustainable development**

The sustainable Development Goals are the blue print to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.

Implementing the 2030 agenda requires a multi stake holder, multi- actor response. Innovations and development in policy, technology and research must include dialogue between governments, the private sector, civil society organizations and non governmental organization; most importantly strong community involvement is needed.

WHO has contributed to achievement of sustainable development by;

* Ensuring access to health services by introducing protection against catastrophic health expenditure. Obstacles and financial hardship associated with weak health systems and inadequate financing mechanisms not only exacerbate health inquisitives, but also jeopardize the achievement of SDGs
* By introducing Universal Health Coverage which could therefore contribute to achieving the SDGs by producing equitable and sustainable health outcome. Many health disparities between people with different socioeconomic status are compounded by gaps in good governance
* They help in tracking indicators that measure the health of vulnerable groups. In addition, factors such as ethnicity, gender and disability can further exacerbate these health disparities. Monitoring the status of equitable access to health care should 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
* They give awareness on how personal individuals can also contribute to sustainable development. These are

—reduce the material intensity of goods and services

—reduce the energy intensity of goods and services

—maximize sustainable use of renewable resources

—enhancing material recyclability

—extend product durability

**WHO contribution on the improvement of health care services and facilities**

Maintaining and improving the health of the population means providing equitable access to health services for all individuals and providing quality services for majority of health issues. Several factors could be at the root of problem. To cite a few:

1. Patients who do not always make use of existing health services/ particularly due to a lack of trust
2. Insufficient number of health care workers, who are fully trained, demotivated and poorly pained
3. Medical products which are sometimes unavailable and of poor quality
4. Services and care data which is sometimes not shared, managed or exploited

However, WHO has played roles in improving the health care facilities;

1. Improving health behavior through health promotion activities
2. Improving links between public providers community organization
3. Making accessible a health service provision which is appropriate of high quality, effective, efficient and permanent and which addresses priority health care issues within the context of limited resources
4. Improving the accessibility of essential tests in health care facilities
5. Ensure medical products are consistently available and promoting the proper usage of medical products among health care workers and patients
6. Giving information on water conservation, safe on site water storage and rain water harvesting.

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