



MINISTRY  
HEALTH  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Rt Hon. Helen Clark  
PMNCH Board Chair  
20 Avenue Appia,  
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Email: [pmnchboardchair@who.int](mailto:pmnchboardchair@who.int)

Dear Rt Hon Clark

**RE: INVITATION TO JOIN THE CALL TO ACTION ON COVID-19.**

Many thanks for your correspondence addressed to President Ramaphosa and copied to me. Covid-19 has devastated many countries economies and affected social and community life. Women, children and adolescents have been significantly affected. We know for example that more women globally have lost employment compared to men.

We applaud the PMNCH Board under your leadership for launching this call to action to protect women, children and adolescents from the impact of Covid-19. On behalf of the Ministry of Health I commit to joining the Call and will do everything I can to promote the health of women, children and adolescents during this campaign and beyond to also ensure that we meet the goals of the Sustainable Development Goals.

On behalf of myself and the Department of Health I commit to ensure that we prioritise women, children and adolescents in both our communication and actions. Any assistance that the PMNCH team can provide to my team will be highly appreciated.

Kindly accept my appreciation for the excellent work done by the Board and members of PMNCH.

With kind regards,

Dr ZL MKHIZE, MP  
MINISTER OF HEALTH

DATE: 06/05/2021



## The government of South Africa commits

### Policy development

Review of Covid-19 national policies and guidelines for adolescent and youth sexual and reproductive health (AYSRH) to ensure that the interventions targeting women and young people are responsive to their needs; minimise the transmission and reduce mortality due to direct or indirect complications of Covid-19, track guidelines implementation by 2022 [PMNCH Call to Action Asks #2]

### Financial resources

Government dedicated resources to address violence against women and children. Additional resource allocation has been pledged to manage circumstances that perpetuate GBV such as poverty and lack of education. National Student Financial Aid Scheme (ZAR37.3 bn) and Skills development levy institutions (ZAR21.3 bn) which constitutes 10% of the total learning budget.

District health services is allocated ZAR105.5 bn of R248.8 bn which is above 40% of health budget. Strengthening access to person centred and integrated services through the initiatives such as Thuthuzela victim support centres has been prioritised [PMNCH Call to Action Asks #7].

### Service delivery

Accelerate the Covid-19 vaccination program by reaching 1.2 health care workers by June 2021. National Treasury has allocated ZAR4 billion to procure Covid-19 vaccine. Phase 2 of the Vaccination Programme starting from 17 May 2021, will be rolled-out to the vulnerable groups starting with over sixty and older then followed by the over 18 years. [PMNCH Call to Action Asks #4]

### Nutrition

Food and Nutrition Security plan 2018-2023 which facilitates collective response by Various Government Departments with the aim of addressing food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition is being implemented. The Plan has six strategic objectives (SO), Strategic objective 4 is specific to Nutrition which, is to '**Scale-up high impact nutrition interventions targeting women, infants and children**'. The desired outcome is: Improved access, coverage and effectiveness of high-impact, nutrition-specific interventions targeting nutritionally vulnerable groups across the life course, with a focus on the first 1,000 days. Specific indicators are to:

- (i) Increased coverage of micronutrient supplements (folic acid and iron, calcium) for pregnant women and multiple micronutrient supplementation for undernourished; and
- (ii) Increased coverage of micronutrient supplements (vitamin A) in children and Improved deworming coverage in children.

### Education and Advocacy in Department of Health

Commits R100 million for 21/22 Financial Year to raise public awareness and to educate youth and adolescents on sexual reproductive rights to enable their productive economic participation for achievement of gender equality and women empowerment.