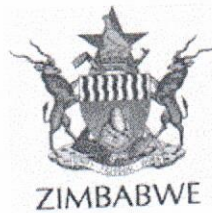


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Telegraphic Address:
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(702293 FHP)
Telex: MEDICUS 22211ZW



Reference:

Ministry of Health and Child
Care
P. O. Box CY1122
Causeway
HARARE

23 August 2021

Rt Hon. Helen Clark
PMNCH Board Chair
20 Avenue Appia, CH-1211 Geneva
Switzerland

Re: Government of Zimbabwe's commitment to prioritize women, children and adolescents within its COVID 19 response and recovery plans.

The above matter refers.

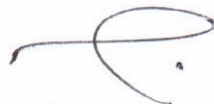
I write to appreciate your correspondence to His Excellency the President Comrade Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa on the call to action on COVID 19. Indeed the pandemic has led to a serious loss of human life the world over and has affected public health, food security and livelihoods at all levels.

We commend you and your board for coming up with this timely initiative to protect women, children and adolescents from the pandemic.

On behalf of the government of Zimbabwe and the Ministry of Health and Child Care, I am pleased to share with you our commitment to prioritize women, children and adolescents within our COVID 19 response and recovery plans.

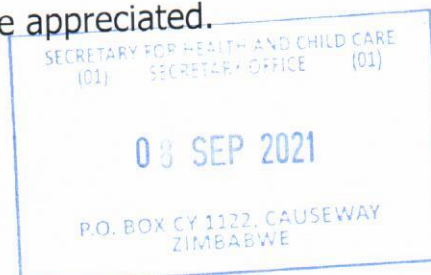
Your support will be appreciated.

Thank you



Air Commodore Dr. J Chimedza

Secretary for Health and Child Care





Commitment to prioritize women, children and adolescents withing COVID 19 response and recovery Plans

Background

- The first COVID-19 case in Zimbabwe was confirmed on the 20th of March 2020 and a nationwide lockdown was effected for 21 days, from the 30th of March to the 19th of April 2020. It was further extended to the 17th of May 2020. Subsequent lockdown restrictions would be pronounced throughout 2020 into 2021 based on the resurgence and severity of new infections/variants of COVID1-19.
- Standard national guidelines to ensure continuity of essential health services (including Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Nutrition -RMNCAH&N services) and operational plans to address the COVID 19 situation in the country were developed between May and July 2020
- A national COVID 19 vaccination programme was launched in Harare on the 22nd of February 2021 and was rolled out to all the provinces in March 2021.
- National COVID 19 statistics:
 - As at 19 August 2021, a total of 121,902 cases had been recorded with a national recovery rate of 85% (104,034 cases) and a case fatality rate of 3.4% (4,198 cases).
 - Half of the cases (49.6%) were women and 11% were children below 20 years of age.
 - Pregnant women were about 1% of the total cases reported (1528 cases) and there were 64 covid related maternal deaths
- National COVID 19 vaccination statistics:
 - As at 19 August 2021, a total of 2,233,565 people had received their first dose and 1,386,752 their second dose.

The government of Zimbabwe makes the following pledges/commitments to advance the health of women, children and adolescents in the context of the national COVID 19 response and recovery plans:



Commitments

1. Sixty percent increase in domestic financing to the RMNCAH&N programme by 2022. (PMNCH Call to Action Ask #1)
 - This will contribute to improvements the delivery and utilization of essential RMNCAH services by women, adolescents and children during the COVID 19 period and beyond
2. Establish an Obstetric Fistula repair and management center at the United Bulawayo Hospitals by 2022. (PMNCH Call to Action Ask #3)
 - This will be a center of excellence in managing and repairing women with Obstetric Fistula in the southern region of the country. The country currently has only one such center and is located in the northern region.
3. Review and update national policies, guidelines and strategies on the continuity of RMNCAH&N essential services in the context of COVID 19 pandemic to include guidance on COVID 19 vaccination during pregnancy and lactation by 2021. Also to accelerate implementation of the vaccination programme to reach 60% of the population by 2021. (PMNCH Call to Action Ask #2)
 - Review of guidelines is meant to standard service provision, empower health care professionals to respond to the COVID 19 pandemic and to reduce inequalities (among pregnant and lactating mothers) to access essential health services
4. Revitalize the Primary Care Nurse (PCN) training programme and train 1000 Primary Care Nurses by 2022 to improve the Human Resources for Health (HRH) situation in health facilities. The PCNs will also be trained as State Certified Primary Care Maternity Nurses so that they will be able to provide maternity services in primary level facilities across the country. (PMNCH Call to Action Ask #4)
 - Training and deployment of PCNs in health facilities across the country will address HRH challenges caused by staff attrition (eg shortages and burnout of staff)