

# **MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE**

## **HOW INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRANSPORT AFFECT THE NATIONAL HEALTH TARGETS**

# INTRODUCTION

- Infrastructure is one of the 3 essential elements in the delivery of health services. The other elements are: Human Resource and Funds.
- Tanzania has made appreciable achievements in constructing infrastructure which enable the provision of health services. However more infrastructure are needed.
- There are more than 10,000 villages which are served by about slightly more than 700 Health facilities.
- Transport for the general population and for people seeking health care in particular is a persisting problem.

# Introduction...

- Transport is operated by the private sector and there is no working policy for transport for the sick.
- Infrastructure for transport, particularly in the rural areas is still poor. It is worse in the rain season where some parts of the country are completely inaccessible by vehicles.

# AVAILABILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE FOR HEALTH IN TANZANIA

- Presently there are a total of 7,477 health facilities, of which, 6,505 (4,514 Govt., 1991 Prvt.) are Dispensaries; 721 (508 Gvt., 213 Prvt.) are Health Centres and 251 are Hospitals (111 Govt., 140 Prvt.).
- With the exception of the dispensaries, Health Centres and some faith based hospitals, most of the hospitals are situated in the urban areas.

# AVAILABILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE FOR HEALTH IN TANZANIA...

- A considerable number of health facilities are in need of some or major repairs
- Most of the facilities, particularly those which provide inpatient services are most of the time overcrowded.
- A considerable number of health facilities do not have adequate essential equipment and staff.
- The Government is at the moment implementing the Primary Health Services Development Programme (popularly known as MMAM) 2007 - 2017. In this programme the Government will build a dispensary in each village and a Health Centre in each Ward. There has been appreciable achievements since implementation began.

# AVAILABILITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE FOR HEALTH IN TANZANIA...

- The accessibility of some of the health facilities is limited by conditions of roads particularly in rainy seasons.
- The Geographical location of some health facilities is so remote that it is difficult to retain health workers, send medicines, other supplies and refer patients timely ..

# HOW INFRASTRUCTURE AFFECT NATIONAL HEALTH TARGETS

- Infrastructure being one of the essential elements in the provision of health services has significant effects in:
  - ✓ Influencing utilisation of the facilities by the users
  - ✓ Motivating/demotivating the service providers
  - ✓ Enabling the Government to meet set health targets including immunizations, reduction of maternal and infant morbidity and mortalities etc.
- If the Geographical location of the facility is suitable for the purpose of its establishment, more people will be served and it will contribute to meeting the National health targets as planned.

# HOW INFRASTRUCTURE AFFECT NATIONAL HEALTH TARGETS

- Health infrastructure situated in favourable areas, particularly in urban or periurban areas tend to be better staffed, better stocked with medicines?? supplies??, has better situation as regards equipment and is usually better supervised.
- However these facilities practically do not function as expected and they do not contribute significantly in achieving National health targets as one would expect compared to the remote facilities. Inadequate supervision is more responsible for the situation.

# HOW INFRASTRUCTURE AFFECT NATIONAL HEALTH TARGETS

- However the effects of Geographical location can have two negative effects;
  - If it is in remote areas, it may not attract and retain the required staff without extra incentives. This will have negative effects on National health targets.
  - The referral system may not work well in a remote health facility, because often this is coupled with lack of transport, poor roads, which may in addition cause the facility to have inadequate medicines, other supplies, equipment and infrequently supervised, this situation has negative effects on achieving National health targets. The situation is worse for the disadvantaged people, including the older people

# HOW TRANSPORT AFFECTS NATIONAL HEALTH TARGETS

Transport is also an important element in the delivery of health services and therefore in achieving National Health Targets. In health it has 2 parts:

- i. Availability of vehicles, vessels, aircrafts, etc.)
- ii. Availability of infrastructure for transport (roads, bridges, ports etc.

# AVAILABILITY OF VEHICLES IN HEALTH FACILITIES

- In most of the Government and private hospitals there is at least one vehicle which is used for all transport purposes which include:
  - ✓ Ferrying referred patients
  - ✓ Caring hospital purchases
  - ✓ Caring Staff who go for supervision of lower level facilities, meetings and to provide outreach services
- In general transport is inadequate in all health facilities.
- Some Health Centres have vehicles for facility use.
- Transport was non existent in Government Dispensaries, until recently when the MoHSW sent about 470 specially designed tricycle ambulances. However despite their availability, in some places they are still not used due to various reasons.

# AVAILABILITY OF VEHICLES IN HEALTH FACILITIES

- Transport is necessary to ferry supplies from Dar es Salaam Medical Stores Department (MSD) to Zonal Stores and from there to the regions and councils. The new approach of MSD delivering medicines and supplies directly to facilities makes transport even more important. Any problem with transport will have adverse effects on National health targets.

# ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

- Good passable roads are essential in making transport possible
- Many roads in the rural areas are not passable through out the year. This makes transport difficult and actually discourages transport operators who are from the private sector to put their vehicle on those roads. This has the negative effects on:
  - Timely referral of patients
  - Timely delivery of medicines and other supplies to health facilities
  - Transport to health workers
  - Supervision of health facilities
  - Delivery of outreach health services

**Thank you for your attention**