

Honorable Permanent Secretary MoHCDGEC, Dr. Mpoki

Honorable Deputy Permanent Secretary of the PORALG, Dr. Zainab

Permanent Secretary from the MoH, Zanzibar (if present)

Chief Medical Officer,

Government officials of the United Republic of Tanzania

Representatives of CSOs and the private sector

Fellow Development Partners,

Invited guests,

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Habari za Asubuhi

I feel privileged to be with you today to speak on behalf of the Development Partners Group in Health and be part of this year's Technical Review Meeting. I would like to extend our respect and encouragement to those involved in Tanzania's SWAp, who are dedicated to work together to help provide essential health care to all Tanzanians.

We acknowledge that for the last two years the **health sector budget** has increased. However, if you look at the percentage of the health budget in relation to the total budget, the numbers have unfortunately gone down. Also, budget analysis for FY 2016/17 and FY 2017/18 indicates that disbursement of fund from the treasury to respective ministries and its agencies is still a challenge. This **gap between allocation of budgets and their expenditure** of course affects important interventions and implementation and ultimately achievement of desired health outcomes. We are concerned about this and we

therefore call on the Tanzanian government to ensure timely and transparent disbursement. In this context, also we Development Partners need to take all measures possible to ensure timely and reliable disbursement from our side.

We acknowledge the **substantive increase of budget for pharmaceuticals** from TZS 60 billion in 2015/16 to TZS 260 billion in 2017/18. Despite of this increase, challenges remain in addressing the stock-out and reaching the last mile.

The **Health basket Fund** has grown this fiscal year by US\$ 20m and the development partners involved are looking forward to continuing and improving the cooperation in this context. We also commend the PORALG to have been bold in rolling out direct facility financing during this 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the HBF MoU.

The Government of Tanzania has made remarkable achievement in addressing some key health challenges such as in the field of **Maternal, Newborn and Child health**. Due to this effort we have now seen the decline in infant mortality, under-five mortality, the growing number of women who deliver in health facilities and also the growing number of pregnant women who seek antenatal care services at least once. Unfortunately we have not seen the same progress - and we should redouble our efforts - with regards to maternal and newborn mortality and reproductive health of **adolescent girls**. Also, despite of the achievements more effort and resources are still necessary in addressing these issues particularly in rural areas and hard to reach areas. Moreover, as Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health is a cross cutting issue, we call for MoHCDGEC to join efforts with other key ministries such as Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Water and Ministry of Roads and Infrastructure and others to ensure they address those challenges.

From what we have seen during the **Joint Field Visit**, I would like to particularly stress the importance of adequate pre-service training for all health care workers, catering for the environment they will find in rural areas. We are all aware of the need to put much more emphasis on recruiting, training, distributing and retaining **qualified staff**, ensuring higher satisfaction and motivation of health workers through better training and mentoring (esp. in regards to midwives) as well as an improved availability of medicines and technical equipment in the area of RMNCH but as a matter of fact across the sector. The need for sufficient availability of medical specialists, e.g. obstetricians, anesthesiologists and pediatricians, is still very grave in all regions. These medical specialists would be able to bring the much needed support to other cadres through mentoring visits or by using mobile technology as well as during clinical attachments, especially in regards to surgical skills. The **inequitable distribution** of medical specialists and qualified health workers poses a massive challenge. I would like to stress that human capital is a highly important element for sustainable development. A lack thereof will leave any initiative futile.

This year we witnessed the launching of two important health initiatives: the **National Action plan for Health Security** as well as the **Health Data Collaborative**. We welcome the **National Plan for health security** that aims at helping the country to strengthen health security in terms of controlling emergencies such as diseases and natural disasters. It is important to ensure now that the plan is put into effect. Health emergencies such as Ebola, the recent spread of Plague disease and national emergencies including the Bukoba earthquake and ongoing cholera outbreaks in the country underline the importance of having an effective health emergency preparedness plan, system and budget. We therefore call for the government through the MoHCDGEC and

Prime Minister Office to join efforts and ensure enough budget allocated for Emergency Responses in the upcoming Financial Year.

The launching of the **Health Data Collaborative** in September 2017 culminated the series of efforts that have been made in Tanzania in setting up a monitoring and evaluation system that create an enabling environment for the timely and comprehensive collection of high quality data and for effective reporting systems. We support the government's efforts in strengthening the health data system and we urge all stakeholders to turn commitments into action and define a clear path toward implementing, monitoring and document the progress of the Tanzania Health Data Collaborative.

This year we were all hoping to see some progress on the way to achieve **Universal Health Coverage** (UHC). We DPs are committed in supporting the Tanzanian government to achieve universal health coverage so that all people have access to quality health services. Achieving Universal Health Coverage will help to increase health life expectancy, reduce poverty, and promote equity that are necessary for sustainable development.

We noted the recent shift in the position of the Tanzanian government regarding the **Single National Health Insurance**. We would be grateful to receive more detailed information what the envisaged Way forward is and what the recent shift means for the implementation of the improved CHF.

Let me conclude by reiterating our **support** and **continued cooperation** in this important sector. We are committed in remaining strong partners at your side with you, the Tanzanian government in the lead - in the spirit of the newly adopted Development Cooperation Framework of the Tanzanian government which we will also be discussing today.

Asanteni kwa kunisikiliza.