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No Mother Shall Die While Giving Life : Ethiopia



Safe motherhood month

No woman Should Die While giving Life!

09 January—07 February 2010

11 January 2010, Addis Ababa. The Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Health launched a month long safe motherhood campaign under the title “No mother shall die while giving life”. This campaign runs from 09 January to 07 February 2010. Safe motherhood is ensuring that all women receive the care they need to be safe and healthy throughout pregnancy and childbirth.

On the occasion the Ethiopian federal Democratic Republic President Girma Woldegiorgis called on all Ethiopians to synchronize efforts toward reducing the existing mother and child mortality rates in the country. The Ethiopian government has already designed and implemented various policies and programs in a bid to improve provision of public healthcare services and improve the livelihood of the society, the president noted. “Thus”, he said, “the country was able to achieve remarkable achievements in the health sector that attract the attention of the international community”.

Health Minister, Dr. Tewodros Adhanom pointed out that Ethiopia is striving to reduce mother and child mortality rates as enshrined in the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) number 5. Dr. Tewodros said implementing the rural and urban health extension programs across the nation will contribute a lot in reducing mother and child mortality rates. He said his ministry has organized a series of awareness-raising orientations on reducing mother and child mortality rates in a bid to create national movement towards the same goal.

Dr. Fatoumata Nafu-Traoré, WHO Representative in Ethiopia, on her part recognized Ethiopian Government’s effort as saying “I’m really proud and impressed by your level of commitment for this Cause”. Dr Fatoumata stressed that maternal health is not the battle of a woman alone, but all. “In my Country when a woman dies while delivering, people say “She has lost a woman’s battle. I’m sure it is the same in many cultures and coun-





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tries. Our fight should be to insure that it is no longer a women’s issue, but rather a family, community, state and continental fight issue,” she said. Dr Fatoumata as a Co-chair of Health Population and Nutrition Group in Ethiopia reiterated the commitment of the partners to go all the way with the government of Ethiopia until every woman in the Country is given the care she deserves throughout pregnancy, child birth, the puerperium and beyond.

Speaking at the occasion, Women’s Affairs Minister Muferiat Kamil urged stakeholder to integrate efforts toward reducing mother and child mortality in Ethiopia since it is unfair that that a mother shall die while giving life. Low level of women’s awareness on the availability of women and child healthcare services, failure to seek prenatal and postnatal medical services, and other related problems contribute adversely in reducing mother and child mortality in the country, according to the minister.

Panelists on the occasion include religious leaders from: His Holiness Abune Paulos Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Representative of His Holiness Abune Brihaneyesus Arc-Bishop of the Ethiopian Catholic Church, Dr. Wakseyoum Idosa President of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church and Sheik Ahmedin Abdulahi Cello President of the Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council. All religious leaders unanimously pointed out that

woman are the backbone of a family who deserve to be treated with care and that religious doctrines advise so.

It was noted on the occasion that 3 women per hour or 68 women per day die in Ethiopia out of maternal health complication. To this effect Ethiopia, supported by the global community, has been implementing the Making Pregnancy Safer Strategy to address the health sector requirements for a safe motherhood. With significant achievements over the past years, but still far from achieving what is required to make every pregnancy wanted and safe. Despite the efforts, the unmet needs for FP services is still high (at 34%); only 7% of women deliver at a health facility, more than 60% assisted just by a relative or even no one at all.

In recognition of the grim realities worldwide, four UN Agencies, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and the WB have started an initiative called the Health-4 (H4) to coordinate their efforts to tackle the challenges facing maternal and newborn health. The United Nations Country Team in Ethiopia is also working to implement a large scale joint program on MNH through the country offices of the H4 Agencies in partnership with the Ministry of Health.

