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Major factors that impact on women's health in Tanzania: the way forward

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Abstract

Tanzania's health policy is to improve the health of all Tanzanians with a focus on those most at risk. One of the major objectives is to reduce infant and maternal morbidity and mortality and increase life expectancy. The life expectancy in Tanzania is 49 years for males and 53 years for females. Maternal mortality is recorded at 300–400 deaths per 100,000 women. The main causes are haemorrhage, sepsis, rupture of the uterus, anaemia, and others. The risk factors associated with the above causes include maternal height, age, child spacing, and number of births per woman; malaria and anaemia; imbalance of energy and food intake; HIV/AIDS; women's workload; and female genital mutilation (FGM). To address issues of women's health, the government has put in place many strategies, for example, a ministry to look after women's issues, the safe motherhood initiatives, improvement of the knowledge and skill of health care providers, as well as collaboration with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and private agencies. The health sector reform is important because it has negatively affected women's access to health care. To improve the health of women in Tanzania, health and health-related sectors should cooperate and collaborate in order to empower women in the areas of education, social status, and technology. Policies must also address poverty, nutrition, adolescent health, and violence and sexual abuse.