



The Republic of Zambia

THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA STATEMENT ON AGENDA –INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL FOR THE SEVENTY-SEVEN WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Chairperson,

The Republic of Zambia is grateful to make a statement on 'Infection Prevention and Control'. Recognizing the critical importance of infection prevention and control in the prevention and control of diseases in human and animal health sectors. Infection Prevention and Control is a clinical and public health discipline based on a scientific approach, providing proactive, responsive, and practical preventive and control measures grounded in infectious diseases, epidemiology, social, engineering, and implementation science, and health systems strengthening that requires a dedicated specialist health work force;

Zambia, like other lower middle-income countries has a high disease burden due to inadequacies in our infection prevention and control measures where the country has recorded cases outbreaks of Covid 19, Cholera and other health care associated infections during their stay in acute care hospitals. This is coupled with inadequate basic water services. The situation that lead to exposing 1.8 billion people, including health care workers and care givers attending to patients to infections.

Chairperson

The government working with various partners prioritized infection Prevention and control in line with the global IPC strategy. In addition, the government with support from partners has developed the national IPC strategy and revised the National IPC guidelines with a view to improve Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in the health facilities which will ultimately assist in addressing the insufficient WASH facilities by providing safely managed and reliable water supplies with sufficient and accessible sanitary facilities for patients, care givers and staff. Additionally, Infection prevention and control in Zambia has established a national roadmap and targets in order to reinforce the improvement of WASH in HCFs and IPC standards by integrating selected indicators in health programming and monitoring. With the basic needs well addressed in all our Health Care Facilities in terms of IPC and WASH the lives of the patients, care givers and staff are to be at lower risk from water and sanitation-related diseases such as cholera, polio and typhoid as well as Healthcare associated infections.

Chairperson,

The country is in the process of developing the monitoring framework to ensure full implementation IPC/WASH minimum requirements, Antimicrobial resistance monitoring and Health care associated infections for all levels of care. This is in line with the global IPC strategy for practical steps. In addition, the Ministry of Health has developed strategies to ensure WASH is mainstreamed in all other health programs to realize SDG 3 and SDG 6 on health, water and sanitation respectively.

Further, the Government of the Republic of Zambia through the Ministry of Health has developed a Health in All Policy strategic framework that brings on board all key Institutions in addressing health impacts arising from the implementation of policies in a multisectorial manner. The Ministry has a strong partnership with stakeholders involved in Infection Prevention and Control and water, sanitation and hygiene which provides a platform for resource mobilization and technical support

The Government has also prioritized the recruitment and training of health workers in the midst of ongoing measles and cholera epidemics aimed at strengthening the implementation of WASH and Infection Prevention Control (IPC) in the health care settings. Further, the Government has placed primary Health Care high on its agenda through the decentralized policy with a view to attain Universal Health Coverage and the realization of SDG 3 and SDG 6. This has been reinforced with the political will to transform the service ladder from ordinary basic services to modernization and converting into water schemes, handwashing stations and connecting sanitation facilities into water convention system, solar empower water system (abstraction from boreholes, pumped into water reservoirs for easy treatment and distributed in to public places such health care facilities, school, markets and bus stations) that are potentially drivers of infections.

The Government of the Republic of Zambia, therefore, calls for increased investment in Infection Prevention and Control, water and sanitation from domestic funding and all stakeholders in order to accelerate the gains so far.

May I quote borrow the words of Dr. Maria who said "Hygiene facilities and practices in health care facilities are non-negotiable. Their improvement is essential cholera epidemic recovery, prevention and preparedness. Hygiene in health care facilities cannot be secured without increasing investments in basic measures which include safe water, clean toilets and safely managed health care waste".

Chairperson,

The government remains committed to the resolutions of WHA 74 resolutions and the global strategy on Infection Prevention and Control to address issues of Health care associated infections, antimicrobial resistance and provision of access to adequate, safe water supply, sanitation and hygiene practices for patients, Health care providers and caregivers at all levels of Care.

Thank you Chair