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Muslim Khutbah Guide For Reproductive and Child Health: A Toolkit for Tanzanian Religious Leaders



المجلس الأعلى للشؤون الإسلامية بـتنزانيا

THE NATIONAL MUSLIM
COUNCIL OF TANZANIA

BAKWATA



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Foreword

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW), through the MAISHA Program, led by Jhpiego and its partners – IMA World Health, Save the Children, T-MARC Company and White Ribbon Alliance/Tanzania – are collaborating in the implementation of the program to deliver critical, evidence-based health interventions on a national scale, to reduce maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality, thus contributing to the achievement of the national targets set in the; One Plan for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health, the Health Sector Strategy Plan 3 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Four and Five.¹ At the community level, MAISHA is also working with the faith-community, specifically the religious leaders, to increase awareness and knowledge of maternal, newborn and child health issues, to bring about behavior change in the community.

The objective of this Khutbah Guide is to increase the knowledge of Religious Leaders on Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) issues and assist them in developing Khutbah on MNCH for Friday worship. In addition, the Religious Leaders can use this knowledge for premarital and couple counseling, as well as, to educate the general population on maternal, newborn and child health issues. This is also a good educational tool for Women's, Men's and Youth Groups in the Mosques.

The key messages for MNCH are aligned with the Communication Strategy of the Reproductive and Child Health Section of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare. The Qur'an verses provide rationale from the faith perspective, in support of the evidence based messages that are promoting reproductive and child health. Hearing these messages from their trusted religious leaders it helps the faithful to practice healthy behaviors. The Khutbah Guide discusses how to prevent maternal and newborn health problems, in women, who are in a reproductive phase (pregnant and post delivery women) of their lives, as well as, newborn and children under five. It provides clear direction to women, men and communities, on how to attain and maintain good health during pregnancy, and post-delivery and care for the newborn child.

The verses used in this Khutbah Guide, are only used as examples, to express and elaborate the key messages for maternal, newborn and child health. Religious leaders can decide to use additional or other verses that speak to them more strongly, to express the intended good health message without distorting its meaning. Although this Khutbah Guide has used Qur'an verses, to express the key messages for maternal, newborn and child health, people of other faiths can adapt and use it according to their faith. The Khutbah Guide has been written by Tanzanian religious experts, and reviewed by national and international experts.

This Khutbah Guide has been adapted from the International Khutbah Guide and developed under the ACCESS Program, and has been contextualized for use with and by the Tanzanian communities.



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¹ MDG 4 – Reduce neonatal mortality from 32 to 19 per 1,000 live births (Mainland) and from 29 to 23 per 1,000 live births (Zanzibar);
MDG 5 – Reduce maternal mortality from 578 to 193 per 100,000 live births (Mainland) and from 377 to 251 per 100,000 live births (Zanzibar)

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List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	Antenatal Care
BAKWATA	National Muslim Council of Tanzania
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
IPT	Intermittent Preventive Treatment
IMA	IMA World Health
ITN	Insecticide Treated Net
MAISHA	Mothers And Infants, Safe Healthy Alive
MNCH	Maternal Newborn and Child Health
MOHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
PBUH	Peace be Upon Him
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
RCH	Reproductive and Child Health
SP	Sulphadoxine Pyrimethamine
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

Introduction

Praise be to Allah the Cherisher and Sustainer of the World

The National Muslim Council of Tanzania (BAKWATA), in collaboration with IMA World Health within the Mothers and Infants, Safe Healthy Alive (MAISHA) Program developed this Khutbah Guide. The Guide comprises of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) Khutbah messages for Religious Leaders.

One of the best ways to prevent maternal and newborn morbidity and mortality and improve maternal health is to increase the knowledge of the community on MNCH issues. As a faith-based organization, BAKWATA is dedicated to providing sustainable maternal and newborn health education to mitigate maternal and newborn mortality.

This Khutbah Guide has two (2) purposes. The first is to educate Religious Leaders about MNCH issues and the second is to provide Khutbah starter information for Religious Leaders and guide them in teaching their religious discourses and counseling of couples on MNCH issues.

The Qur'an verses will be used to illustrate what God says about the protection and care of pregnant women, newborn infants and children. Hadiths of the prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) have been also used to uphold the themes.

What is safe motherhood?

Safe motherhood means that all women and their newborn children receive the appropriate care to be as healthy as possible throughout pregnancy, child birth and the post-partum period.

What are Hadith and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)?

A Muslim has three (3) sources of knowledge to obtain answers to the questions concerning various aspects of human life. These sources are:

- The Holy Qur'an
- Sayings (Hadith) and acts (Sunnah) of the Holy Prophet (pbuh); and
- The views of the leaders or juristic schools qualified to interpret the teaching of Islam.

In Islamic terminology, the Hadith means the report of statement or action of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) or of his approval of something said or done in his presence; whereas Sunnah means the living habits of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) including his actions and practices.

Khutbah 1: Antenatal Consultation During Pregnancy

Message

- **At least four (4) Antenatal Care (ANC) visits beginning as soon as you realize you are pregnant. Encourage pregnant women to have a minimum of four (4) ANC visits before the time of birth.**



The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW) recommends that a pregnant woman attends four (4) ANC visits as scheduled by her local health care provider since the development of the unborn child needs appropriate care and follow-up throughout the pregnancy period.

A woman should be aware of the changes that occur to her body as soon as she feels that she is pregnant, therefore the consultation with a health care provider is crucial. During ANC visits an expectant mother will receive the proper and recommended care for herself and her unborn child. The health of the expectant mother and that of the unborn child are closely followed and the appropriate advice is given at the

appropriate time.

The ANC visits are paramount for the health of the unborn child because it is during these visits that the mother is provided with health information that is necessary for her to assure the growth and development of her unborn child. Moreover, the pregnant woman and service provider discuss the birth preparedness plan and the importance and need to deliver at the health facility. She learns about the vaccination schedule of mother and child and how to breast feed the child among many other issues.

Islam commands us to take care of both our own health and the health of our family with a special emphasis on the health of pregnant women.

Our Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: *No disease God created but that He created its treatment* (Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Number 582)

And also Allah said: *Man we created from a quintessence (of clay): then we placed him as (a drop of) sperm in a place of rest, fixed; then we made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot we made (fetus)Lump; then we made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh: then we developed out of it another creature: so blessed be Allah, the best to create* (Qur'an 23:12-14)

According to the verse, it is evident that development of the child in the mother's womb is a very delicate process which needs special attention as soon as the woman feels that she is pregnant.

Khutbah 2: Disease Prevention, Allah's Armor

Message

- **Take two (2) doses of SP tablets which are given by and swallowed in front of an ANC service provider to prevent Malaria in Pregnancy.**
- **Sleep under an Insecticide Treated Net (ITN) to prevent Malaria.**
- **Take nutritional supplements as recommended by the health care worker can help to prevent low birth weight and congenital malformations in the newborn.**



Malaria is the number one killer disease among children in Tanzania. Approximately 1.7 million pregnant women in Tanzania suffer from Malaria each year. Most health care facility out-patient visits are due to Malaria - 32.4% of all attendances and 37.7% under five year old visits. Twenty percent (20%) of maternal deaths in Tanzania are due to Malaria.

Pregnant women should sleep under an insecticide treated bed net to help prevent Malaria. When a pregnant woman attends her ANC, she should swallow Sulphadoxine Pyrimethamine (SP) as prescribed by the local health care provider as an Intermittent Preventive Treatment (IPT) against Malaria. Malaria infection during pregnancy can result in a wide range of consequences to the pregnant woman, the developing fetus and the newborn infant.

Facts on Malaria during Pregnancy from Focused Antenatal Learners Guideline 2010:

- The malaria parasites hide in the placenta; therefore routine finger prick blood sample testing may not detect the parasites. The parasites may thus still be present and cause damage to the placenta and fetus.
- The parasites rarely pass into the blood circulation of the baby but can obstruct the passage of nutrients and oxygen to the unborn baby hence slowing down its normal growth.
- Initially malaria infection can occur without symptoms. Anaemia may be the only recognizable clinical feature.

Why Pregnant Women are More Vulnerable to Malaria

The symptoms and complications of malaria during pregnancy differ with the intensity of malaria transmission and thus with the level of immunity the pregnant woman has acquired. While these settings are presented as two distinct epidemiologic conditions, in reality the intensity of transmission and immunity in pregnant women occurs on a continuum, with potentially diverse conditions occurring within a country.

- In areas of epidemic or low (unstable) malaria transmission, adult women have not acquired any significant level of immunity and usually become ill when infected with *P. falciparum* malaria. Pregnant women resident in areas of low or unstable malaria transmission are at a two-or threefold higher risk of developing severe disease as a result of malaria infection than are non-pregnant adults living in the same area. In these areas maternal death may result either directly from severe malaria or indirectly from malaria-related severe anaemia. In addition,

malaria infection of the mother may result in a range of adverse pregnancy outcomes, including spontaneous abortion, neonatal death, and low birth weight (LBW).

- In areas of high and moderate (stable) malaria transmission, most adult women have developed enough immunity that, even during pregnancy, *P. falciparum* infection does not usually result in fever or other clinical symptoms. In these areas, the principal impact of malaria infection is associated with malaria-related anaemia in the mother and with the presence of parasites in the placenta. The resultant impairment of foetal nutrition contributing to low birth weight is a leading cause of poor infant survival and development. In areas of Africa with stable malaria transmission, *P. falciparum* infection during pregnancy is estimated to cause as many as 10 000 maternal deaths each year, 8% to 14% of all low birth weight babies, and 3% to 8% of all infant deaths.

Despite the toll that malaria exacts on pregnant women and their infants, until recently this was a relatively neglected problem, with less than 5% of pregnant women having access to effective interventions. The promising news is that during the past decade potentially more effective strategies for the prevention and control of malaria in pregnancy have been developed and demonstrated to have a remarkable impact on improving the health of mothers and infants. Malaria prevention and control during pregnancy has a three-pronged approach:

- intermittent preventive treatment;
- insecticide-treated nets; and
- case management of malaria illness

The fact that in most African countries over 70% of pregnant women make multiple antenatal clinic visits provides a major opportunity for prevention of malaria, along with other priority diseases affecting pregnant women.

In areas of stable *P. falciparum* transmission, prevention of asymptomatic malaria infection through a two-pronged approach of IPT and ITNs will result in the greatest health benefits.

- Intermittent preventive treatment (IPT) involves providing all pregnant women with at least two preventive treatment doses of an effective antimalarial drug during routine antenatal clinic visits. This approach has been shown to be safe, inexpensive and effective. A study in Malawi evaluating IPT showed a decline in placental infection (32% to 23%) and in the number of low birth weight babies (23% to 10%). It also found that 75% of all pregnant women took advantage of IPT when offered.
- Insecticide-treated nets (ITNs) decrease both the number of malaria cases and malaria death rates in pregnant women and their children. A study in an area of high malaria transmission in Kenya has shown that women protected by ITNs every night during their first four pregnancies produce 25% fewer underweight or premature babies. In addition, ITN use benefits the infant who sleeps under the net with the mother by decreasing exposure to malaria infection. ITNs should be provided to pregnant women as early in pregnancy as possible, and their use should be encouraged for women throughout pregnancy and during the postpartum period. Health education programmes, social marketing and lobbying to reduce the prices of ITNs and re-treatments are helping to encourage the use of ITNs by pregnant women.

In areas of unstable *P. falciparum* transmission, non-immune pregnant women exposed to malaria require prompt case management of febrile illness. Although at present there are no fully

effective tools to prevent malaria among non-immune women, ITNs will decrease exposure to infective mosquito bites and thus would be expected to provide benefit in decreasing symptomatic infections. Essential elements of the antenatal care package should, therefore, include malaria diagnosis, where available and needed, and treatment with antimalarial drugs that have an adequate safety and efficacy profile for use in pregnancy.

Roll Back Malaria, in partnership with Making Pregnancy Safer, has brought a new emphasis to the burden of malaria in pregnant women within malaria control efforts. However, there remain obstacles to implementing effective programmes and reaching women who will benefit the most from them, particularly high risk adolescents in their first pregnancies. Many women in Africa lack access to medical care and may have limited access to effective tools such as ITNs, especially in remote areas. Delivery of cost-effective malaria prevention to pregnant women will require:

- increased awareness of the problem among communities most affected by malaria;
- integration of malaria control tools with other health programmes targeted to pregnant women and newborns;
- strengthened antenatal care systems and involvement of traditional birth attendants where they are part of health service delivery; and
- financial investment.

The prize for doing so will be safer pregnancies and a reduction in newborn deaths in these settings.

Effects of Malaria in Pregnancy

Malaria infection with *P. falciparum* during pregnancy results in a wide range of adverse consequences to the pregnant woman, the developing fetus and the newborn infant.

Adverse consequences of Malaria during Pregnancy

On the Pregnant woman

- Anemia
- Hypoglycaemia
- Cerebral malaria
- Febrile illness
- Puerperial sepsis
- Death

On the fetus

- Abortion
- Intrauterine growth retardation
- Restriction
- Still birth
- Congenital Infection

On the Newborn

- Low Birth weight
 - Prematurely
 - Growth retardation
- Congenital neonatal malaria
- Death

How to Reduce Morbidity and Mortality from Malaria in Pregnancy

- Intermittent Preventive Treatment (IPT) of Malaria with Sulfadoxine/Pyrimethamine (SP)
- Preventing Malaria transmission due to mosquito bites by sleeping under Insecticide Treated Nets (ITNs)
- Early diagnosis of Malaria and prompt case management
- Quality focused ANC

By swallowing the SP, women can be protected from contracting the disease during pregnancy. Using SP as an IPT method is effective in reducing placental Malaria and improving birth weight. When swallowed as recommended by the health care worker SP is safe for the pregnant woman and her unborn baby.



Muslim believers are obliged to take all steps to protect themselves against diseases. This saying complies with the following from the Hadith of Abu al Zubayr and from Jabin bin Abd-Allah (R.A) it relates as follows: *For every sickness that Allah created, He also created remedy, and when the remedy to the diseases is found the patient is cured by permission of Allah* (Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7, Number 582).

Allah said: *and make not your own hands contribute to (your) destruction* (Qur'an 2:195).

Allah puts no burden on any person beyond what he has given him. After a difficulty Allah will soon grant relief (Qur'an 7:65).

The impact of Malaria on pregnant women is tremendous. Health care providers should ensure that pregnant woman attend ANC visits, are counseled on early detection of diseases, early health seeking behaviors and health promotion, as well as to supervise and direct pregnant women to swallow SP in their presence.

Inadequate nutrition can cause micronutrient deficiency in pregnant women and subsequently to the unborn/newborn child. The deficiencies are caused by a diet with inadequate nutrients and an increasing demand on the mother's body by the unborn child.

Pregnant women are advised to eat a balanced diet and increase food intake. They should be encouraged to have three (3) daily meals and a snack between meals to increase energy. Pregnant women are also advised to avoid harmful habits such as drinking tea or coffee.

Micronutrients play a crucial role in infant development, and pregnant women are encouraged to follow their health care providers' recommendation on micronutrient supplements. Good nutrition for pregnant women is essential throughout the pregnancy for the good health of the mother and the unborn child.



Diet

- Advise the mother on a balanced diet that includes proteins, high calorie content, fruits and vegetables for preventing anemia and ensuring proper growth of the fetus.
- Encourage the pregnant woman to eat three (3) meals and a snack every day to increase energy.
- Encourage the pregnant woman to have a diversified diet based on locally available foods.

- Encourage regular taking of iron and folic acid tablets daily throughout pregnancy and post partum period.
- Avoid drinking tea and coffee while taking iron because these drinks contain iron absorption inhibitors. Tea or coffee should be taken at least one hour apart after taking the tablets or meal.
- Encourage the pregnant woman to take Vitamin C rich foods such as oranges, guava, papaya, baobab fruits etc. to enhance absorption of iron.
- Avoid overcooking vegetables.
- Use iodized salt only.
- Avoid eating non-food substances such as clay, ashes, charcoal etc.
- Encourage women to take sweet energy drinks when in labour.

Note: *The advice needs to be realistic, based on the foods that are available locally.*

Rest and Activity

- Encourage the mother to rest.
- Avoid overworking and exhaustion.
- Encourage the mother to carry on with light household work and light exercises such as walking.
- Avoid lying on back and right side to prevent complications. Instead the mother should be encouraged to lie on left side with legs slightly elevated.

Note: *Partners, family and community members to give support to pregnant mothers.*

There are number of verses which Allah says about various types of food for good nutrition.

He created cattle which provide you clothing, food and other benefits (Qur'an 16:5)

It is who sends down rain from the sky from it you drink, and out of it (growth). The vegetable on which you feed your cattle (Quran 16:10)

It is he who subdued the sea from which you eat fish (Qur'an 16:14)

It is who has made the sea the subject that you may eat there of flesh.

The mother of a child should take enough nutrients she needs during pregnancy, as it is illustrated in the Qur'an, that Allah has provided plenty of nutrients and urged us to eat them. Pregnant women have to eat enough and nutritious food because the life of the growing fetus depends on mother's health.

Khutbah 3: The Ark, the Giant and the Gift: Preparing for the Baby

Messages

- **Access appropriate information, develop and implement a birth preparedness plans for a safe delivery outcome**
- **Seek health care from the health facility immediately if there is any sign of complications during pregnancy, child birth and post natal period**

Pregnant women are advised and encouraged to use medicine and medical treatment when necessary and to take care of themselves throughout the pregnancy. A pregnant woman should plan accordingly and encourage her husband/spouse/partner to plan for the birth.

At the health facility, a pregnant woman will receive appropriate information which will help her to be healthy throughout her pregnancy. All pregnant women are encouraged to develop an Individual Birth Plan (IBP) with their health care provider. An IBP should include the basic information for the pregnant mother including:

- **Birth Place Identification:** This is very important in order to be aware and understand where the birth will take place including:
 - Date expected delivery to take place
 - Location of the selected health facility for delivery, distance from home to the health facility, time that will be taken to reach the health facility, if the expecting mother has never gone to the health facility previously will she know how to reach there.
 - If there are any transport arrangements that need to be made in case of emergency, which means of transport is she going to use to reach the health facility, transportation costs, where will the mother get money for transportation.
- **Family Care:** To identify, if necessary, someone who will take care of her family in her absence.
- **Birth Preparedness:** To collect the essential items necessary for a clean birth such as a kitenge, kanga, soft towels and baby wrap etc.
- **Emergency Preparedness:** To identify at least two (2) appropriate blood donors in case of emergency.
- **Accompaniment:** To select one of family member who is able to make decisions should the need arise, to accompany the mother to the hospital.
- **Resource Preparedness:** To identify resources such as available funds and transport within the community in case of an emergency, and preparation of other important items that will be needed e.g. food, firewood, kerosene, etc



The IBP will help the mother and her partner to recognize the importance of delivering in a healthy facility where there are skilled personnel.

If a pregnant woman and her family have a birth plan, many maternal deaths can be prevented since many women and children die due to failure in arranging and implementing the above steps.

In Islam, it is obligatory for the male partner to be prepared and save money for his female partner (wife) during the pregnancy, delivery and post-partum period as what Allah says in this verse: *Let the rich man spend according to his means and the man whose resources are restricted, let him spend according to what Allah has given him, Allah will grant after hardship; disease* (Qur'an 65:7).

Also the prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: *A man spending on his family is a deed of charity* (Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 5, Number 343).

For some women, pregnancy can be an uncomfortable time. Complications during the pregnancy may cause harm to mother and her developing fetus. When a pregnant woman is more uncomfortable than usual, she should be encouraged to visit the local health care facility. The signs must be taught to the women and their families including the husband/spouse/partner during their ANC visits. Some of the common pregnancy complications include:

- Vaginal bleeding
- Difficulty in breathing
- Fever
- Severe abdominal pain
- Severe persistent vomiting (with pain or fever)
- Severe headache (with blurred vision, slurred speech and numbness)
- Convulsion/loss of consciousness
- Swelling of face, ankles and hands
- Leaking of greenish/brownish fluid from the vagina
- Foul smelling from the vagina
- Decreased in/or absence of movements of the baby.
- Anemia
- Unusual or severe fatigue
- Pain when urinating

After delivery, the mother and her newborn baby have to visit the health care facility as advised and scheduled by the health care provider. The aim of these visits is to ensure that the mother and newborn infant are in good health after birth, and receive the appropriate health care follow-up according to guideline and standards.

According to Ziyad bin Alaqa from Usama bin Sharik: *I was with prophet (peace be upon him) when some Bedouins came to him and asked 'O' messenger of Allah should we treat the sick? He replied yes o servant of Allah treat your sick for Allah the Glorious one did not make any Disease without making a cure for it, all except one. And which one is that? To which he replied 'old age* (Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7 Number 582).

Pregnant women are urged and encouraged to use medicine and medical treatment when necessary and to take care of themselves throughout their pregnant period.

Khutbah 4: Worth the Wait – Proper Spacing of the Birth of Children

Message

- **Using a family planning method of your choice, wait at least three (3) years to have another child**

Family planning is often thought of as birth control. However family planning does not just involve contraception but planning the birth of children for certain times by spacing out births three (3) years apart and planning for a child or children when there are difficulties in conceiving.

Family planning has both health and financial implications to the family. It is important for the health of the mother and children and for the economic situation of the family. Having children less than two (2) years apart can have negative health consequences for the mother and her unborn children.

Several reasons for practicing family planning are:

- A woman can rest between pregnancies;
- For the sake of a women’s health if she is already breast feeding a child, it will be damaging to both the woman and the child to have another pregnancy;
- It helps a husband who cannot afford to support more children.

According to Islam, there is no text which forbids the use of contraception, however there are Qur’an verses which prohibit infanticide and these are used by some Muslims to discourage birth control.

Muslims are asked to practice family planning using natural methods and the spouses in marriages are encouraged to use of condoms. Natural family planning methods teach women and their partners how to chart the woman’s fertile and infertile periods. There are sufficient verses from the Holy Qur’an which support the importance of having a manageable number of children. However an abortion can be done if the life of the mother is in danger.

Allah said: *Let those (disposing of an estate) have the same fear in their minds as they would for their own if they had left a helpless family behind: let them fear Allah and have appropriate words* (Qur’an 4:9).

Coitus interruptus is permissible as long as it is performed with mutual consent of both husband and wife, this is based on the Hadith of Jibril (R.A.) who said: *We used to practice coitus interruptus during the life time of Allah’s messenger while the Quran was being revealed* (Sahih Bukhari Volume 7; Hadith No. 136).

Family Planning Method after Delivery:

Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM)

- Modern, temporary postpartum contraceptive choice of women who breast feed
- Based on natural infertility resulting from certain pattern of breast feeding
- Advantages: can be used immediately postpartum; with no cost and by any woman who fulfills the criteria
- Three criteria must be met to practice LAM safely:
 - Infant less than 6 months
 - Amenorrhea (menses has not returned)
 - Fully breastfeeding
- If any of these three factors change, the client has to switch to another method to prevent pregnancy. It is useful to begin planning for another type of method to be used before the end of six (6) months

Khutbah 5: The Guardian

Message

- **Husband/spouse/partner to provide support for pregnant woman during pregnancy, delivery and postpartum period.**



During the pregnancy, the husband/spouse/partner has to assume a number of responsibilities including taking care of his wife when she falls sick as well as be prepared to escort her to hospital and provide moral or financial support when needed. The responsible husband/spouse/partner has to extend love and compassion to his partner throughout the pregnancy, delivery and post-partum period.

He must avoid family disputes which may result into depression and other psychological effects to his partner. Most importantly the male partner has to ensure availability of nutritious food for mother since the fetus health is linked to the mother.

The husband/spouse/partner is encouraged /advised to pray for the mother and their newborn child while giving birth. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said, *The most perfect of believers in the matter of faith is he whose behavior is best; and the best of you are those who behave best towards their wives* (Hadith; Ibn-Hanbal, 736). This Hadith illustrates that a pregnant woman needs extra care and attention throughout her pregnancy period, during the onset of labor and after birth.

Allah said: Men are the protectors and maintainers of the women because Allah has made one of them to excel the other and because they spend (to support them) from their means (Qur'an 4:34).

Let the man of means spend according to his means, and the man whose resources are restricted let him spend according to what Allah has given him (Qur'an 65:7).

Khutbah 6: Be Wise, Responsible and Watchful

Message

- **Family and community will take responsibility for the health of the woman during pregnancy, delivery and post-partum, as well as the health of the newborn baby**

Men should be involved in caring for their female partners throughout the pregnancy period. They have to escort their partners to their ANC visits and participate in any medical procedures that require their participation for example, voluntary counseling and testing for HIV, Syphilis and any other illness that may need testing. Pregnant women need to be fully supported by their male partners with basic needs such as nutritious food and clothing for the newborn baby. Neighbors and close relatives should be aware and ready to provide assistance when needed.

During pregnancy, delivery and the post-partum period complications can happen. It is necessary to understand and pay attention to precautions regarding the body. Pregnant mothers should be aware of the potential symptoms or danger signs may be. The following are the most recognized danger signs:

- Vaginal bleeding
- Difficulty in breathing
- Fever
- Severe abdominal pain
- Severe persistent vomiting (with pain or fever)
- Severe headache (with blurred vision, slurred speech and numbness)
- Convulsion/loss of consciousness
- Swelling of face, ankles and hands
- Leaking of greenish/brownish fluid from the vagina
- Foul smelling from the vagina
- Decreased in/or absence of movements of the baby
- Anemia
- Unusual or severe fatigue
- Pain when urinating

Allah says: and if they carry, then spend on them until they deliver their burden; and if they suck your offspring, give them their recompense (Qur'an 65:6-7).

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: *A man spending on his family is a deed of charity (Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 5, Number 343).*

According to Islamic tradition, men and women have their rights and obligations for the well-being of their children with men carrying more responsibility. A woman's primary role is to act as a wife and mother whereas the man's role is to financially support his family. The husband/spouse/partner has to ensure money is available in his family to meet family needs, and if he fails to do so, he will be punished and, if he fulfils, he will be rewarded. However both parents must pay utmost attention to their duties toward their expected children.

Allah said: And among all his signs are that he created for you wives from among yourselves that you may find repose in them and he has put between reflect (Qur'an 20:21).

Father of the child shall bear the cost of their food and clothing on equitable terms (Qur'an 2:233).

Khutbah 7: Children – Reward from Allah

Message

- **Babies should be delivered with assistance from skilled service providers at a health care facility**

Women are encouraged to deliver at the local health care facility in the presence of skilled health care workers with the appropriate equipment to facilitate the delivery process if necessary. Should anything arise, the skilled health care professional has the skills and equipment to provide the appropriate care to the mother and newborn.

Many women and newborn infants die due to the lack of timely and appropriate medical care and assistance during child delivery. In Tanzania (51%) are delivered by a health professional and almost the same proportion (50 %) are delivered in a health facility, slight increases compared to 2004-05 (46% delivered by a health professional and 47% delivered in a health facility).

There are many reasons why women face difficulties in reaching the health care facility for a safe delivery such as: poor infrastructure development, financial problems, delays in decision making and inadequate skilled staff. However, the government is taking measures to improve and build health care facilities in an effort to improve overall service delivery including MNCH.

In Islam, Shariah (law) urges the mother to safeguard her unborn child and do all she can to protect the child. Health care for children and mothers should begin with conception, and continue through delivery, post-partum and as a child grows.

In Islam, it is believed that a human being should not be arrogant by attributing cure to themselves and not Allah. In the same way humans cannot refuse to take measures to cure diseases claiming that Allah will take care of it. It is true that Allah cures, but in some cases, the cure operates through the human being. Every Muslim is obliged to take care of her/his health and family.

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said *O people of God consult the physician for your health because every disease has cure except one which is old age* (Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 7 Number 582).

Khutbah 8: The First Food – From the Hand of Allah

Message

- **Breast feeding of the newborn child should begin within one hour of delivery**
- **The newborn child will suck the colostrums in the mother's breast milk**



Breast feeding of the newborn should start within one (1) hour after birth because breast milk is the ideal food for stimulating the growth and development of the newborn. Breast milk contains a yellowish substance known as colostrums which is rich in Vitamin A and antibodies for the protection of the newborn against common illnesses, and for a quicker recovery during illness. Colostrums are very nutritious for the newborn child. Although it is often thought to be harmful to the newborn, colostrums are rich in nutrition and mothers should be encouraged to feed their infants with this milk.

Breast milk is the natural first food for newborn children. It provides energy and nutrients that an infant needs for the first months of life and as the child grows and develops.

The colostrums in the mother's breast milk provide natural immunity to the baby. It is recommended that a baby starts breast feeding immediately after birth and continue with exclusive breast feeding for six (6) months (no other liquids or solid food), and complementary foods may be added after that time.

To enable mothers establish and maintain breast feeding for the first six (6) months of their child's life, it is recommended that:

- Breast feeding is initiated within the first hour of life;
- Exclusive breast feeding for the first six (6) months of the child's life;
- Breastfeeding on demand as often as the child wants a day; and
- Discourage pre-lacteal feeding (feeding anything other than breast milk before breast milk was regularly given).

The National Guideline on Focused Antenatal Care explains breastfeeding as follows:

Breastfeeding

- Early and exclusive breastfeeding is beneficial for mother and baby therefore the mother needs to be prepared psychologically and physically.
- Benefits of breastfeeding to the mother and infant:
 - Breast milk is the best for the baby because it contains adequate water and nutrients that the baby requires.
 - First yellowish milk (colostrum) protects the baby from diseases and it is rich in Vitamin A and antibodies
 - Is cost-effective/affordable
 - Promotes mother-baby bonding
 - It is a method of family planning as it prevents the normal status of the reproductive system.
- Successful breastfeeding depends on diversified diet and increased food intake (three meals and two snacks/bites), adequate fluid intake and rest.
- Health care providers should provide support to mothers for early initiation of (within 1 hour after delivery) and proper positioning and attachment during breastfeeding.

- Emphasize on exclusive breastfeeding up to six (6) months of age and add complimentary feeding while continuing breastfeeding up to two (2) years and beyond.
- Breastfeeding on-demand stimulates adequate production of breast milk and prevents breast engorgement.
- Advise the mother to breastfeed from one breast until it is empty before offering the other so that the baby gets both form of milk (high content of water) and hind milk (rich in fat and nutrients).
- For HIV + Mothers counsel on infant feeding options; exclusive breast feeding or replacement guided by AFASS as per guideline.

Note: For successful breastfeeding partner, family and community support is needed.

In Islam, the first food of the newborn is exclusively breast milk as it is demonstrated in this verse: Allah says: *the mother shall give suck to their children for two whole years (that is) for those parents who desire to complete the term of suckling but the father of the child shall bear the cost of mother's food and clothing on reasonable basis* (Qur'an 2:233).

Khutbah 9: Cleansing, but with the Blessing of Natural Protection

Message

- **Do not bathe the newborn child 24 hours after birth to protect the child from infection**
- **Skin to skin care for stable preterm and low birth weight babies increase their survival.**

Most women prefer to wash their newborn babies soon after being discharged from the health care facility; however it is advised to wait for 24 hours before bathing the baby. During this time, the mother or caregiver may give the child a sponge bath. Delaying the first bath for 24 hours helps to keep the baby warm and allows the umbilical cord to easily detach and for boy's circumcision wound to heal. Bathing a newborn boy child is potentially causing infection in the circumcision cut, thus it is advisable that this should remain dry to heal. The umbilical cord is an open wound; therefore it is recommended that regular washing of hands be encouraged as well as minimal handling and touching of the cord to help prevent local infections.

Bathing is a new experience for a newborn and the environment in mother's womb is quite different from the new environment to the baby after birth; and therefore particular attention is to be given to the body temperature of the infant. Therefore, do not bath the newborn child for the first 24 hours, since the newborn needs time to adjust to the new environment. The delayed bathing helps to keep the baby warm. When the time comes to bathe the child, always ensure that the temperature of the water is tested and adjusted accordingly.

In order to maintain the body temperature of the infant, it is recommended that the mother and baby should be kept in skin-to-skin contact, covered with a clear, dry blanket. If the child is born preterm or with a low birth weight the mother or father should carry the baby without clothes on the chest, while covering the head of the baby and socks. Mother should now cover herself and the baby all the time. This is called Kangaroo Mother Care.

Islam encourages every means of protection from infectious diseases such as immunization. When the Prophet (pbuh) was once asked whether such protective measures prevent Allah's fate he (pbuh) said it is a part of Allah's will. The Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) said: *Do not let those infected transmit their diseases to those who are healthy.*

Preterm babies are those babies who are born before the term. They are at risk of developing long problem such as:

- Vision problem;
- Breathing difficulties;
- Learning problem;
- Walking difficulties;
- Infections; and
- Problems of maintaining body temperature.

Preterm babies need to be touched, stroked and talked to while they are inside the incubator. When the baby is strong enough, the parents may be encouraged to have skin to skin contact which is called Kangaroo care. The skin to skin contact allows the newborn child bond with the caregivers though the hearing and feeling of the heartbeat.

Low weight babies are newborn babies born with a birth weight of less than 2.5 kg or 5½ lb. They may have similar complications as the preterm babies, thus a mother is encouraged to have skin to skin contact. This keeps the baby warm and encourages breast feeding.

In Islam, child protection is very crucial as it was commended to take care of the newborn and all human being when Allah says from this verse: *And Allah says: Do not make your own hand contribute to (your) destruction* (Qur'an 2:195).

Khutbah 10: Care for the Weak

Message

- **The use of HIV prophylaxis among HIV exposed babies, help to reduce risk of HIV infection**

A new born child can have a number of complications after birth due to various reasons. The complications might be serious or minor. Every Muslim woman is obliged to protect and take care of her newborn and ensure that the infant is brought to the health facility immediately as it was commended by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

O people of Allah, consult physician for your health because every disease has a cure except one which is old age And also Allah says; And do not make your own hand contribute to (your) destruction (Qur'an 2:195).

If a mother is HIV+ during delivery, there is potential possibility that she passes infection to the newborn infant and it is important to test as well as to treat HIV+ children as recommended by the health care provider. Early initiation of appropriate treatment in an infant with HIV can save a life.

All Muslims are obliged to seek early medical care and treatment of a sick child from a recognized health care facility. Every Muslim is obliged to take care of his/her health including his family and seek treatment when she/he gets sick as it was commended by the Prophet of Allah.

Khutbah 11: Child Growth and Development

Message

- **Weaning from breast milk at the right time with the quality and quantity of complementary food to ensure normal growth and development**

Although breast milk provides large quantities of vitamins and nutrients, after the age of six (6) months, the infant needs additional nutrient sources to continue to grow and develop. It is recommended that a child should be weaned at six (6) months of age and nutrient rich foods are slowly introduced to the diet. Nutrient rich foods are available locally and are easy for the infant to eat.

To begin weaning the infant, the caregiver should slowly introduce supplementary foods that are specially prepared for the child to swallow easily. Muslim believers are obliged to ensure that children receive the necessary nutritious food to grow and develop.

Allah says: *The mother shall give suck to their children for two whole years .For those parents who desire to complete the term of suckling but the father of the child shall bear the cost of food and clothing on reasonable basis* (Qur'an 2:233).

The weaning food should have the following characteristics:

- Balanced - food that contains carbohydrates (rice, maize, sorghum, cassava, etc), protein (fish, meat, milk, eggs, beans, etc) vitamins and minerals (green vegetables, fruits, etc) and oils;
- Consistency – regular soft food can be prepared by adding fats and oils;
- Locally available and low cost;
- Culturally acceptable;
- Clean and safe;

Any responsible Muslim is obliged to ensure that his children receive nutritious food throughout the entire life until when they become self dependable to sustain their life.

Allah says: *"The mother shall give suck to their children for two whole years. For those parents who desire to complete the term of suckling but the father of the child shall bear the cost of food and clothing on reasonable basis"* (Qur'an 2:233).

Khutbah 12: Protect the Body Against Disease and Abuse

Messages:

- **Full vaccination within the first year of life protects the child against serious childhood diseases**
- **Stop harmful practices that are not necessary and endanger children's life**



Infectious diseases are easily preventable if all children receive proper and timely vaccinations as scheduled by the local health care provider. Vaccinating a child helps to stop the spread of illnesses.

Islam encourages every means of protection from infections. *"One day the Prophet of Allah mobilized people to go for vaccination against epidemic and there was a day Prophet refused to greet the person who had a skin disease, the essence being to educate his followers on the danger of contracting infection. The prophet further said to his followers that; Do not let those infected transmit their diseases to those who are Healthy".*

Female Genital Mutilation is a traditional ritual that is practiced in various communities across Tanzania. There are different reasons given for the practice including reduction of sexual desire and a manner to search for a suitable husband/spouse/partner. The process is very painful and dangerous as it involves unsanitary procedures which can lead to infection and severe bleeding.

The removal of the baby teeth may also cause severe bleeding and pain to children. Uvulectomy is viewed as possible means of lessening snoring problems and reduce vibration in the throat sometimes to tonsils and uvula. It is the process of removing uvula. In Tanzania the process is handled through traditional medicine. Traditional practices are not always sterile and may be based in rituals.

Religious leaders are obliged to educate their believers and community at large on the dangers of these harmful practices. There are Qur'an verses and Hadith which forbid Muslims to harm one another.

There shall be no infliction of harm on oneself or others the Prophet said as Narrated by Al-Darqutni following Abu Saeed al- Kudri. (R.A.)

And Allah says: There is no altering Allah's creation (Qur'an 30:30).

It is Allah who has made for you the earth as a resting place and the sky as a canopy and has given you shape and made your shape beautiful (Qur'an 40:64).

Islam encourages every means of protection from the infections. *"One day the Prophet of Allah mobilized people to go for vaccination against epidemic and there was a day Prophet refused to greet the person who had a skin disease the essence was to educate his followers on the danger of contracting infection".*

Conclusion

May Peace be Upon Muhammad the messenger of Allah (pbuh). He who came as a messenger and brought valuable messages about life to man. The Holy Qur'an is indeed the holy book as has been illustrated through verse (6:38) which says "*Nothing we have omitted from the Qur'an*".

The health of the pregnant woman and of the baby is clearly explained by the holy book of Qur'an. It also further explains about men's responsibility towards their wives/partner during pregnancy and after birth. We believers have a special responsibility to learn from this guide the good practices of safe motherhood as these messages also have been reflected in our holy book the Qur'an Majid. Muslim leaders will take concerted efforts to educate believers about maternal, newborn child health using various improved techniques. A Woman's life is the family's life since woman plays a very important role within the family.

It was narrated from the prophet of Islam that: When the woman becomes pregnant, all the angels of heaven would pray for her forgiveness as well as the creatures of the sea everyday Allah would write in her account the reward of one thousand good deeds and forgives one thousand misdeed.

Wabilah Tawfiq

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