

Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) initiated the formulation of the WHO Country Cooperation Strategies (CCS) in 1999. In 2001, Myanmar was among the first Member countries of the WHO South-East Asia (SEA) Region to complete its CCS, covering the period 2002-2005. In keeping with WHO global and regional policy frameworks, and following an assessment of WHO's comparative advantage in supporting Myanmar's health development, this updated CCS presents the directions and priority areas that WHO will focus on during the period 2008-2011. It outlines WHO strategic approaches and operational principles to support Myanmar in achieving its national health-sector development goals and objectives. In this, the Organization will adhere to the functions that have been mandated by its governing bodies — those of providing policy and technical support; catalysing change and building sustainable institutional capacity; engaging in partnerships; monitoring the health situation and assessing health trends; setting norms and standards and monitoring their implementation; and shaping research and disseminating knowledge. The CCS will serve as the guiding document for the development of the WHO country workplan.

The Country Cooperation Strategy for Myanmar for 2008-2011 was reviewed in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and development partners by a team comprising members of the WHO Country Office, the South-East Asia Regional Office (SEARO) and WHO headquarters. Key informant interviews were held with national and international partners in health and other sectors. A workshop was conducted reviewing the collaborative programmes with the Ministry of Health, along with briefing and debriefing sessions that were held with the Minister of Health and Directors-General of the ministry. The team reviewed national, rural, sectoral and subsectoral health plans, implementation progress reports and the latest available information. A briefing session with the main stakeholders provided useful feedback to the review team.

The Country Cooperation Strategy for Myanmar of 2002-2005 had identified six areas of priority: the health system, excess burden of disease, women's health and reproductive health, child and adolescent health, health and environment, and major risk factors hazardous to health. Following the revision process and consultations

during the mission, the priorities of WHO in Myanmar for the period 2008-2011 have been identified as follows:

- (1) Improve the performance of health system.
- (2) Bring down the burden of disease.
- (3) Improve health conditions for mothers, children and adolescents.

WHO Myanmar wishes to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by all partners in health. We express our sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Health of the Government of the Union of Myanmar for their valuable time and useful inputs, as well as partners in the UN system and national and international stakeholders.