

## Health Research

Department of Medical Research (Lower Myanmar) carried out extensive research in malaria, diarrhoea, anaemia, iodine deficiency disorders, snake bite, viral hepatitis and intestinal helminthiasis. The findings have contributed to the diagnosis, management, prevention and control of these health problems.



*Research on TLC profile of phenolic compounds from tea leaves*

*Research on therapeutic efficacy of anti-malarial drugs in market*

To further expand research activities and traditional medicine research, two new medical research departments have been established, one in upper Myanmar (Pyin Oo Lwin) and the other in central Myanmar (Pyinmana).

With the establishment of new departments of medical research in upper and middle parts of the country, more researches, particularly focusing on Traditional Medicine could be done. A herbal garden established in the Department of Medical Research (Upper Myanmar) could nurture over 300 species of herbal and medicinal plants from all over the country. Up to 9000 herbal and medicinal plants are now being grown by the department. The department could also study effects of these plants on treating malaria, diabetes mellitus, hypertension and diarrhoea diseases in collaboration with Department of Traditional Medicine, Department of Pharmacology of the Mandalay Medical University and Mandalay University of Pharmacy. Moreover, basic, applied and health systems research are being carried out in collaboration with 200 bedded Hospital (Pyin Oo Lwin), Children Hospital, Central Women's Hospital, University of Medicine, University of Pharmacy, Vector Borne Disease Control Programme, National Tuberculosis Programme, Public Health Laboratory in Mandalay.

Current research activities undertaken in Department of Medical Research (Central Myanmar) cover both basic, applied and health systems research. They include therapeutic efficacy of anti-malarial drugs combination, and traditional anti-malarial drug. Behavioural studies relating to common communicable diseases like DHF and TB are also in the list. Study on therapeutic efficacy of traditional medicine formulation and plants on non-communicable diseases particularly diabetes mellitus and communicable diseases are also in progress.



Moreover, the Department of Health Planning, the Department of Health, the Department of Medical Science and the Department of Traditional Medicine are also implementing research activities in addition to their principal functions. Two main types of applied research, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) research and health systems research are conducted by the Department of Health Planning.

Health Systems Research Methodology trainings are conducted for post-graduate students in the medical universities in Yangon and Mandalay and for in-service health staff from states and divisions. Goals, functions and concepts of health systems are also disseminated among township health committees. User friendly health systems research tools are also to be developed to conduct health systems research studies.

Consequent to the urgent need for evidence in the health programme management many researchers had commenced to conduct Health Systems Research (HSR) during the last decade. In Myanmar development of HSR has been attempted through capacity building of health workers, increasing their knowledge and experiences through training, workshops and seminars, and encouraging utilization of HSR in health programme management. Collaboration with both international agencies and other related ministries in the country to conduct health research has also been undertaken.

Research unit under the Department of Traditional Medicine is also conducting studies to assess safety, efficacy and quality of Traditional Medicine. In collaboration with Medical Research Departments, research activities to explore new traditional medicine to treat six common diseases namely diarrhoea, dysentery, malaria, tuberculosis, hypertension and diabetes mellitus are also being conducted.