

World No-Tobacco Day 2010: *Gender and Tobacco*



H.E. Prof Kyaw Myint and dignitaries visiting the mini-exhibition displayed by the National Tobacco Control Programme.

On 31 May 2010, the Ministry of Health, Myanmar, in close collaboration with WHO, organized the official commemoration ceremony of the World No-Tobacco Day, 2010 at the conference hall of the Ministry of Health, Nay Pyi Taw. The ceremony was attended by the H.E. Minister for Health, Prof Kyaw Myint, H.E. Deputy Minister for Health, Prof Mya Oo, Directors-General and senior officials from the Ministry of Health and other ministries, representatives from the Myanmar Women Affairs Federation, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association and other non-governmental organizations. In addition, about 500 people representing the civil society and community members were also present at the occasion.

First, Prof Kyaw Myint, H.E. the Minister gave a speech highlighting the progress of tobacco control programme in Myanmar being carried out by the

Ministry of Health in collaboration with WHO. He gave special emphasis to the activities related to control tobacco promotion and marketing. He also recalled the key successes in the area, including the formulation and passing of the "Control of Smoking and Consumption of Tobacco Product Law". Later, Dr Leonard, Ag WHO Representative to Myanmar, read out the message from Dr Samlee Plianbangchang, the Regional Director for WHO South East Asia Region on the occasion of World No Tobacco Day 2010. The message called attention to the facts and figures on prevalence of tobacco use in the South-East Asia Region and activities being carried out by Member States concerning tobacco control measures and importance of comprehensive tobacco control strategies, including gender-specific tobacco control programmes. After the ceremony, the dignitaries and invited guests viewed the mini-exhibition displayed by the Tobacco Free Initiative Programme of the Ministry of Health featuring various tobacco control activities that took place in the recent years.

The main ceremony was followed by a Technical Seminar on Gender and Tobacco, in which five eminent speakers, including the Ag WHO Representative to Myanmar, made presentations. The presentations mainly focused on topics related to gender and tobacco but also covered various other aspects of tobacco control. The seminar was attended by H.E. Prof Mya Oo, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Health, among others. After all presentations, comments and questions raised by the participants were responded by the speakers. ■

Signing of a new grant between Three Diseases Fund and WHO for scaling up malaria control activities in Myanmar

Since 2006, the prevention and control of Malaria, one of the public health priorities in Myanmar, has been further strengthened through the financial support of Three Diseases Fund (3DF) Programme, along with the technical assistance from WHO. To date 3 DF programme has supported approximately USD 9 million for Malaria control efforts in Myanmar.

On 2 June 2010, a new agreement for USD 2 million, to be implemented in 2 years, under the Round III grant, is signed between 3 DF programme and WHO for further scaling up WHO's support to the national response on malaria control and enhancing contribution towards achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by 2015.

The 3 DF Round III grant will benefit 94 townships in 14 States and Divisions which are not covered by existing 3 DF grants and it will intensify the prevention and control efforts which have been carrying out under existing Round I grant. Furthermore it will focus in scaling up the usage of Long Lasting insecticidal nets with the combination of early diagnosis and appropriate treatment, behavior change communication to better inform the communities, data management and capacity building of concerned staff at township level. ■



Dr Leonard Ortega, Acting WHO Representative for Myanmar signing the round III grant between 3DF fund manager and WHO for scaling up the malaria control activities in Myanmar.

"National Five Year Strategic Plan for Child Health Development (2010-2014)" disseminated



H.E. Minister of Health Prof. Kyaw Myint delivering opening speech at dissemination workshop on five year strategic plan for child health development in Nay Pyi Taw.

Countdown 2015 is approaching and Myanmar is facing a great challenge to achieve MDG4 targets. The new Five Year Strategic Plan for Child Health Development (2010-2014) really becomes an important position to expedite child survival activities.

WHO and UNICEF worked in collaboration with the Department of Health. The process started in September 2009 with a "Short Program Review" of Child Health Activities by Department of Health over the previous six years. All government stakeholders, NGOs and INGOs involved in child survival activities, participated and reviewed for achievements, gaps, shortfalls and inputs to develop the new Five Year Strategic Plan.

With the coordinated efforts of WHO and UNICEF, a Consultant was recruited to help in drafting

the New Strategic Plan. Dr Vijay Kumar, who had a vast experience in the field of child health and who was previously involved in child survival activities in Myanmar, came in October 2009. Drafting of the New Five Year Strategic Plan for Child Health Development (2010-2014) was conducted in Nay Pyi Taw from 20 - 22 October, 2009. It was attended by all stakeholders involved in Child health from the government, INGOs and NGOs and UN agencies. Dr Neena Raina, Regional Adviser CAH/SEARO and Dr Mikael Ostergren, Medical Officer, CAH/HQ provided technical support.

The first draft of the strategic plan then circulated among all the stakeholders. The dissemination meeting took place on 1 June 2010 in Nay Pyi Taw. The main stratification of the new five year strategic plan for child health is the scenario-based intervention model where the interventions will be divided into three scenarios of the country taking DTP3 coverage as a proxy indicator.

Scenario A: Hard to reach townships with DTP3 coverage less than 75%. Implementation will be through family and community efforts

Scenario B: DTP coverage between 75 to 94%. Emphasis will be on family and community efforts and outreach schedulable services

Scenario C: Townships with DTP coverage above 95%. All delivery mechanisms will be universalized

The Department of Health with WHO and UNICEF will continue working on rolling out of activities, identification of indicators, targets and costing of the implementing activities for the first two years. ■

Myanmar eliminated Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus

According to a joint survey conducted during 6-15 May 2010, by the Ministry of Health, WHO and UNICEF officials, it has been confirmed that Myanmar has achieved the milestone of maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination (MNTE) in 2010. The community-based survey using standard WHO and UNICEF methodology performed in the townships of South Okkalapa, Singaing, and Saw confirmed that maternal and neonatal tetanus has been eliminated as public health problem in Myanmar as a whole. ■

Monitoring the survey in Saw Township by external monitor



Methadone Maintenance Therapy Training Mandalay

12-14 May 2010

The objectives of this training are: *i) to improve the knowledge on Methadone Maintenance Therapy (MMT) and increase coordination on MMT provision; ii) to acknowledge on future plans and targets for programme expansion; iii) to assist the program by efficient staffs by building capacity, and iv) to introduce the reporting system with standardize data for the future planning implementation.*

Ministry of Health started the delivery of Methadone Maintenance Therapy for treatment of injecting drug users since February 2006 and launched with 4 methadone centers and now 10 methadone centers have been providing methadone: 2 centers each in Yangon and Mandalay, one each in Lashio, Muse, Tachileik (Shan State) and Myitkyina, Bamaw, Moegaung (Kachin State).

The Substance Abuse Prevention project of the Department of Health with support from WHO and financial assistance from the 3 Diseases Fund organized a three days training in Mandalay for medical doctors, nurses, medical social workers and NGO staffs from the drug dispensing sites on 12 to 14 May 2010.

The agenda included the objectives and principle of methadone substitution therapy with Myanmar drugs abuse history: *i) types of drug used in Myanmar and changing trend of drug used types; ii) brief motivation of interviewing patients; iii) opiate dependent management; iv) amphetamine drugs abuse management; v) HIV prevention and harm reduction; vi) methadone program standardized format for monthly report; vii) urine tests for drug users, and viii) drugs interaction and side effects of methadone.*

During the training, the psychiatrists, clinicians, and nurses from drug treatment hospitals as well as

representatives from NGOs had the opportunity to share their local experiences in implementing the programme, including the successes as well as the challenges faced.

All trainees participated in discussion and added points for programme progress. This training was facilitated by psychiatrists and being valuable from academic point of view, medical students from Mandalay university of medicine attended the training too.

Since its inception, over 1200 patients have been enrolled into the programme until May 2010 and around 70% are still on treatment.

The first patient survey organized in December 2007 showed the positive impact. The programme is having not only the reduction of opioid misuse but also the reduction of injection related HIV risk and positive impact in the quality of life of patients. ■



Participants at the Methadone Maintenance Therapy training in Mandalay.

World Blood Donor Day 2010 “New Blood For the World”

A ceremony to mark the World Blood Donor Day 2010, took place at the meeting hall of the Ministry of Health in Nay Pyi Taw on 14th June 2010. H.E. Professor Kyaw Myint, delivered an opening speech. Next, the WHO Acting Representative Dr Leonard Ortega read out the message of the Regional Director of South East Asia Region.

Also present were Deputy Minister Professor Paing Soe, directors-general, deputy directors-general, directors, professors, medical superintendents, WHO Acting Representative Dr Leonard Ortega, officials and members of social organizations. Medals for outstanding performance in social field are also presented to donors by the government annually on 14th June. ■



The World Health Day 2010 main event in Myanmar was held in the conference hall of Ministry of Health in Nay Pyi Taw on the morning of the 7th April 2010. H.E. Professor Paing Soe, Deputy Minister of Health delivered a speech and Acting WHO Representative to Myanmar, Dr Leonard Ortega read out the message of the Regional Director of WHO South East Asia Region. Also present at the occasion were the Directors General, Deputy Directors General and officials of the Ministry of Health, representatives of local NGOs, United Nations Agencies, staff from health related departments and local press.



H.E. Prof Paing Soe, Deputy Minister for Health, Ministry of Health along with other guests viewing the "Urbanization and Health: Urban Health Matters" mini exhibition at the World Health Day 2010 commemoration ceremony.

The guests then viewed a mini exhibition, in which photos of activities of the Ministry of Health and also information, education and communication materials such as World Health Day magazines, posters and WHO Myanmar's blue color T-shirts and blue advocacy bags, with World Health Day logos, WHO Myanmar quarterly newsletter and factsheet were displayed. WHO Country Office produced five banners in different photos taken by WHO Myanmar staff featuring the World Health Day Theme. These banners were displayed at the entrance of main venue of the World Health Day 2010 ceremony at Nay Pyi Taw.

Congratulations!



Dr Leonard Ortega, Acting WHO Representative for Myanmar gives a plaque to Ms Angela Boey for completing 25 years of service with the World Health Organization.

After the opening ceremony at Nay Pyi Taw a technical seminar on the theme of the 2010 World Health Day was held in the Ministry of Health meeting hall. The seminar highlighted the various issues related to health consequences of urbanizations and measures being taken to deal with them in collaboration with different partners. World Health Day 2010 events were also organized at all States and Divisions throughout the country.

There was also a similar World Health Day 2010 ceremony in Taungyi, Shan State (South), one of the participating cities of 1000 Cities, 1000 Lives Campaign. Shan State (South) Command Commander opened the ceremony with a speech. Health education talks on environmental health, nutrition, child health and diabetes were given after the ceremony. Activities included giving nutritious food to the children at the orphanage, free testing of diabetes and keeping the environment clean. World Health Day 2010 posters, t-shirts and magazines were distributed to the guests. ■

important dates

1-7 August 2010	World Breastfeeding Week
26 September 2010	World Heart Day
28 September 2010	World Rabies Day