

Myanmar: updated country profile and HRH activities

Source of information: Myanmar AAAH focal point; Dr. Nilar Tin



Myanmar (population 57 million) is a Union of 14 States and Divisions, and a country of significant geographic and ethnic diversity, made up of 135 national groups speaking over 100 languages and dialects. Myanmar's Fourth Short-Term Five-Year Plan has set out the nation's main development objectives, one of which is to extend education and health sectors for human resource development. The country is networked by 1,492 Rural Health Centres and 6,663 Sub Rural Health Centres under the administration of the

Township Medical Officer (TMO) and Township Health Team⁽¹⁾.

Townships (n = 325) having a catchment area of 100,000 - 200,000, are responsible for management of all secondary and primary care services, which includes within its jurisdiction 1-2 station hospitals, and 4-7 rural health centres. Each RHC has 4 sub-centres covered by a midwife and public health supervisor grade 2 (PHS 2) at the village level. In addition there are voluntary health workers--community health workers (CHW) and auxiliary midwives (AMW)-- in outreach villages providing Primary Health Care to the community⁽²⁾.

The Township Health Officer (THO), Township Health Assistant (THA), Township Health Nurse (THN) and Health Assistant (1) (HA-1) assist the TMO for monitoring and supervision of urban and rural health services in the community as well as for training of health personnel within the

township.

Myanmar, despite of progress in health achievements through primary health care approach, is still beset with significant communicable disease and health system access problems, particularly as affecting mothers and children in hard to reach areas.

Barriers that are seen in Human Resource entail especially to the Basic Health Staff (BHS) that are serving the 70% of total population in rural areas. The numbers, distribution, and mix of health staff at the most peripheral level of the health system such as midwife and Public Health Supervisor grade 2 (PHS 2) at the sub rural health centre are the most significant resources challenged. Since 1988, the number of medical graduates has doubled, but at the same time the absolute numbers of midwives have increased by only 10%⁽³⁾.