

Country Statement for Myanmar's Commitment towards Family Planning 2020 at the Press Brief of International Conference on Family Planning 2013, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies & gentlemen,

It is indeed a great privilege and an opportunity for me to be here with you at this great capital of Ethiopia to share our Country Statement on behalf of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar towards Family Planning 2020.

As you are aware of the fact, family planning is well recognized tool of improving the health and well-being of women and families around the world. With Myanmar in transition on the path of development backed by affirmed political commitments our emphasis on social and human development as time moves on has been expanding within the context of our national health plans. Towards this endeavor, we are marching forward on the track of inclusive development while ensuring that benefits of family planning reach across the country benefitting all segments of society irrespective of their gender, economic and social and geographical status. Our destiny is nothing but more progress for betterment of our entire populace.

Let me give you a rundown of our efforts. Family planning service has been provided in Myanmar both in private and public sectors since the onset of health system even during socialism period when the country had practiced centralized and pro-natalist policy. Adhering to the emergent needs of our people, we launched a family planning program under the name of 'Birth Spacing'. It gives me immense pride and pleasure to announce that the program remains a success story and a model worth studying for our effort to provide quality family planning services in Myanmar. I must underscore that this remarkable achievement would have not been possible without the untiring efforts of our health workers and other development partners. In recognition of their valuable services, I sincerely convey my appreciation to all our collaborators and development partners, some of you are with me in this remarkable event and still many out there back in Myanmar, who are working at all levels, especially to the midwives and health volunteers, working in the villages at their health centers and community health posts. Not the least, my special thanks are due to our communities, which have been cooperating with our public programs.

Official program for family planning was launched in 1991 with the financial and technical assistance from Family Planning International Assistance (FPIA), an international branch of Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA). Initially, it was implemented in one pilot township and then replicated in 6 more townships during its later phase. After the official launch, the program was expanded into 20 more townships in 1992 with financial assistance from UNFPA. In 1997, additional 52 townships were expanded with the substantial assistance from UNFPA. In later phase, MOH's programme covered over 140 townships under the public sector. Yet, many other townships across the country were reached by the most significant key INGOs such as PSI, MSI and IPPF and national NGO, Myanmar Maternal & Child Welfare Association (MMCWA), which came on board in offering family planning services in Myanmar with their diversified modalities reaching to scores of target beneficiaries. Capitalizing on the previous efforts and looking towards the opportunities and tasks ahead, it is high time now to reinvigorate

our commitment and dedication to reach to the unreached, to serve the underserved and to ensure privileges for the under-privileged for family planning services. Given the kind of elevated commitment at all levels, I am sanguine that we will succeed in reaching our goals through our people-centered approach.

Ladies and gentlemen, based upon these developments in Myanmar, we are ready to start our new journey towards FP2020 by committing the followings:

Myanmar is here to ensure that-

- Policy makers would acknowledge the critical role of family planning that would leverage the “demographic dividend” in Myanmar leading towards economic growth and development.
- Ministry of Health will work towards increasing the resources allocated to family planning in state budgets. It will also seek to boost partnerships with the private sector, civil society organizations and other development partners for service delivery on a wider scale.
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration would be strengthened through concerted efforts to expand the forum of family planning under the umbrella of Myanmar-Health Sector Coordinating Committee and create EWG (executive working group) on Family Planning as a branch of MNCH-TSG (Maternal newborn and child health- technical strategic group).
- Continue to strengthen RHCS (reproductive health commodity security) and LMIS (logistics management information system) and capacities at all levels for improved projection, forecasting, procurement, supply, storage, systematic distribution, inventory control and uptake by the end users of life-saving medicines for maternal and newborn health and contraceptive supplies as part of SCMS (global project on supply chain system management)
- Health sector reform has ensured results-based management through new initiatives for effective fund flow mechanism and internal audit scheme.

Objectives

1. Increase CPR from 41% to 50% by 2015 and over 60 % by 2020
2. Reduce unmet need to less than 10% by 2015 (currently 12%).
3. Increase demand satisfaction from 67% to 80% by 2015
4. Improving method mix with increased use of LAPMs (long acting permanent methods) and decentralization to the districts

Policy & Political Commitments

Myanmar aims to strengthen the policy of provision of clinical contraceptive methods by trained/ skilled nurses, midwives and volunteers through better collaboration among multi-stakeholders within the context of Nay Pyi Taw Accord. It also pledges to

implement people-centered policies to address the questions of regional disparity and inequity between urban and rural and rich and poor.

Financial Commitments

Myanmar has committed to include budget line for family planning starting from 2011-2012 fiscal year and we have used US \$ 1.29 millions equivalent kyats to purchase contraceptives during 2012-2013 financial period. In an effort to make adequate resources available for FP services, the Government of Myanmar pledges to spend more health budget annually as now being budget deficit is 50%. Myanmar commits to increasing health budget to cover nearly 30 millions eligible couples cumulatively by 2020.

Program and Service Delivery Commitments

Myanmar commits to increasing user-friendly SRH and FP services at all health services outlet both in public and private. Myanmar will monitor to ensure quality of care is strengthened, providing informed consent and choice, and extending support to women to continue use of FP and constellation of services. We will also review and develop the next cycle of five year strategic plan for reproductive health through consultative process based upon our experiences and future needs.

We hosted the national workshop on formulating country roadmaps of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health (COIA) in February 2013. It is planned to host FP/RH Best Practices national Conference in 2014 and 8th APCRSR national Conference in 2016.

With substantial assistance from UNFPA, Myanmar has become one of the 46 RHCS countries that would be providing broader support for family planning services in Myanmar utilizing the existing workforce at its optimal capacity.

Realizing the crucial role of family planning in health and population development, Myanmar is here to reiterate its commitment for Family Planning 2020 through Full Access, Full Choice.

Ladies and gentlemen, my statement would be incomplete without paying compliments to the organizers and hosts who have made this conference as historical event. On behalf of the Myanmar, I sincerely appreciate them for making this gathering wonderful and informative.

Thank you all for listening so carefully and making this event interesting.