**Sexual and reproductive health in Myanmar**

Myanmar is in a time of unique political and social transition. However, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) outcomes in Myanmar remain among the poorest in the region.

The pregnancy-related mortality ratio in Myanmar is 282 deaths per 100,000 live births; 10 percent of all deaths among women are maternal deaths. Only 60 percent of births were delivered by a skilled provider and 37 percent in a health facility. Just over half of all married women in Myanmar use modern methods of contraception, while the percentage of all women in Myanmar using modern methods is estimated to be 32 percent. There is no official data available on contraception usage among unmarried women and little documentation on sexual behavior of youth.

**An updated policy framework**

Existing national-level policies on sexual and reproductive health are limited to the 2002 Reproductive Health Policy, which was not explicit in stating that sexual and reproductive health services and rights are for all people of all ages.

PATH is supporting Myanmar’s Ministry of Health and Sports (MOHS) to review and expand on the 2002 Reproductive Health Policy to reprioritize areas of need based on emerging global normative guidance. The new National Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) Policy aims to provide an inclusive policy framework for SRHR and SRH services for people of all ages.

**Our approach**

**Informed by global experience.** The National SRHR Policy is informed by global normative guidance, such as the World Health Organization’s Global Strategy on Reproductive Health. PATH has also helped the MOHS to conduct a literature review of lessons learned from other countries’ experiences in SRHR policy development and implementation. In doing so, PATH draws on years of experience in providing technical assistance to countries in developing evidence-based health policies.

**Reflecting local needs.** PATH and the MOHS collaborated with local experts to conduct an analysis of current Myanmar legislation and relevant policies to provide context for the new policy. To ensure that the policy is rooted in the current needs of the Myanmar population, PATH also supported the implementation of a reproductive health needs assessment of service provision, barriers, and areas to address and prioritize in the National SRHR Policy.

**Multi-stakeholder consultations.** PATH is supporting the MOHS in convening an inclusive network of stakeholders for policy development and consultation. The MOHS has established a core working group composed of MOHS staff, UN agencies, INGOs, and local NGOs, organized into advisory groups for six key areas—adolescents’ SRHR, inclusivity and special groups, gender, maternal newborn and child health, family planning, and reproductive health-related morbidities.

**Building the foundation**

The National SRHR Policy, set to be finalized and launched in 2018, will establish an overarching policy framework that will guide the development of subsequent strategic plans, clinical guidelines, care pathways, service standards, and data collection that take a rights-based approach to SRH service delivery. By clearly outlining fundamental principles of SRHR in such a critical time in its democratic transition, Myanmar is making a bold commitment to improving the health of people of all ages and genders for generations to come.

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