

Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of Myanmar Health Sector Coordinating Committee

Conference Hall, Ministry of Health, Myanmar

Tuesday, 12th of May 2015

10:00-12:30

1. Announcement of reaching quorum

As 23 out of 33 MHSCC members attended the meeting, representing government and non-government constituencies, the M-HSCC reached a quorum.

2. Opening of the meeting by MHSCC Vice-Chair, Prof. Dr Samuel Kyaw Hla (on behalf of the Chair, Union Minister for Health, H.E. Dr Than Aung)

The Vice-Chair welcomed the members to the 4th MHSCC meeting and then read the opening remarks of the Chair, Union Minister for Health, H.E. Dr Than Aung, which are summarised as follows:

Since the formation of Myanmar Health Sector Coordinating Committee in 2013, three meetings of M-HSCC have been organized in September 2013, May and December 2014 respectively and today is the fourth meeting of MHSCC. He expressed appreciation on the existing collaboration and coordination between Ministry of Health, development partners and implementing partners.

The first half of 2015 has seen some very significant changes in health sector - the re-structuring of the Ministry of Health, the start of the Essential Health Services Access Project, the onset of a number of processes to prepare Ministry of Health to take on role of GF Principal Recipient and the continued increase in Government funding for the health sector.

With all the changes, the health sector now requires increased attention and support from the government and all stakeholders to accomplish the health related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. It needs to pay full attention and accelerate efficient implementation of activities, to achieve the goals and to guide the strategic direction for beyond 2015.

In this regard, long term and short term strategic plans, policy reform, inter-ministerial collaboration, necessity of laws, rules and regulations are needed to achieve Universal Health Coverage systematically. The existing efforts should enable Ministry of Health to achieve to goal of ensuring every citizen attain full life expectancy and enjoy longevity of life, and that every citizen is free from diseases.

It is crucial to have effective coordination between and within the health sector partners. The MHSCC is one of the main tools for this and as such is of vital importance to the Ministry. The Ministry of Health will continue to rely on the Technical Strategic Groups for bringing the technical and strategic recommendations to the decision making level either to the MHSCC or its Executive Working Group. So, all the TSGs should move forward in a systematic and strategic manner on a regular basis for making informed decision and monitor the progress.

He then encouraged the three disease control programmes (AIDS, TB and Malaria) for further strengthening of the system to be able to smoothly take over the Principal Recipient role in the next Global Fund grant beyond 2016.

3. Endorsement of agenda and last MHSCC meeting minutes

Dr Soe Lwin Nyein, the secretary of the MHSCC presented the meeting agenda and the minutes of the 3rd MHSCC meeting held on 17 December 2014. There were no comments and the agenda and the last meeting minutes were endorsed.

4. The restructuring of Ministry of Health

Dr Wai Mar Mar Htun, Third Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Health made a presentation on the recent restructuring of the Ministry of Health. She shared the new organization setup and the proposed departmental setup of Ministry of Health and its six departments; duties of the Permanent Secretary; role and responsibility of each division under Ministry of Health; and Permanent Secretary Office. (Please see attached presentation for detail.)

5. Update on Principal Recipient (PR) transition process

Dr Thandar Lwin, Director of Disease Control Unit, Department of Public Health presented the progress of the GFATM PR transition assessment. The presentation included three main sectors: Capacity Review and Planning; Capacity Development and Transition; and Grant Management. The process started with MoH's self-review in late 2014 with assistance from the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI). In March 2015, training was provided to regional/state/district/township health managers on the cash flow mechanism which is part of the health system strengthening carried out by UNOPS in collaboration with MoH. The training was conducted in 9 sets to cover all 330 townships.

The initial structural analysis supported by 5% FEI (the consultancy firm managing the PR transition assessment) was carried out from 16 March to 9 April 2015 in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon. Three consultants with expertise in financial management, M&E and procurement and supply chain management met with key stakeholders in MoH, other ministries, multilateral, bilateral partners, PRs and SRs in assessing 5 key areas of program management, financial management, procurement, supply chain management and M&E. A debriefing meeting with the deputy ministers of MoH was held on 5 and 6 April. The consultants reported that MoH is on track and can achieve PR capacity benchmark set by the GF in the areas of program management, supply chain management and M&E in the middle of 2016 with additional training and strengthening of processes and mechanisms, while the financial management and procurement areas need additional time and efforts to reach the required benchmark.

Next step is the formation of a sub-group for PR transition under the MHSCC ExWG to provide technical assistance to MoH in capacity development and to develop a transition plan based on the recommendations from the structural analysis report. (Please see attached presentation for detail.)

Discussion

- It was decided that the MHSCC Secretariat should schedule a partners meeting on PR transition for members of the MHSCC to review options and suggest modalities to strengthen capacity of the MoH in the areas identified by the Structural Analysis Report. After feedback from the partners meeting, the Sub-Group for PR Transition can be formed.

6. Update on Myanmar Health Forum

Ms Krittayawan Tina Boonto, Investment and Efficiency Adviser, UNAIDS on behalf of Mr Eamonn Murphy, UNAIDS Country Director, updated the MHSCC about the planned Myanmar Health Forum,

scheduled for July 2015. A preparatory meeting, chaired by the Deputy Minister, H.E. Dr Thein Thein Htay was held on 5 May 2015, attended by participants from development partners including UN agencies, bilateral agencies, civil society and Director General and Directors of concerned Departments of the Ministry of Health.

The two-day programme of the MHF will be organized in Nay Pyi Taw (MICC2), initially scheduled 7-8 July 2015 with expectation of opening by the President of the Union of the Republic of Myanmar and audience of around 300 participants. The forum will have interactive panel and parallel sessions with renowned guest speakers (international and national) covering broad topic areas include health and development; importance of investing in health; and achieving impact and sustainability in health.

The organization of the Myanmar Health Forum will be overseen by the Ministry of Health as Chair of the Steering Committee and implemented by partners with support of UNAIDS via the Organizing Committee. The Organizing Committee is comprised of partners including NGOs, civil society, bilateral and UN organizations. UNAIDS provides organization and logistics support in the organization of the MHF with leadership and guidance from the Ministry of Health and the Steering Committee while the 3MDG Fund is the main financial contributor to the MHF. (Please see attached presentation for detail)

Discussion

- Dr Soe Lwin Nyein, Director General of Department of Public Health updated the M-HSCC with the latest changes in the agenda of MHF. The theme of the parallel session part 1 is changed to Health and Development in Myanmar: Closing the gaps through the health reforms - Making the investment case for health. It has 4 parallel sessions: Financing health and development, Improving efficiency in service delivery, Addressing the unfinished health agenda and Meeting the future challenges to health to development.
- The Deputy Minister H.E Dr Thein Thein Htay suggested postponing the dates of MHF but requested inputs from MHSCC members the latest dates that it can be moved to. Partners suggested that it should not be later than end of July. Dr Kyaw Khaing, International Health Division, confirmed that the Minister of Health will be available on 28-29 July 2015. Deputy Minister proposed to confirm the Forum for 28-29 July and suggested the Ministry of Health will issue a confirmation letter upon obtaining final approval from Minister's office.

7. Update from MHSCC Executive Working Group

Mr William Slater, Director of Public Health Division, USAID provided updates from the ExWG meetings and the oversight visit to Shan State. The ExWG had endorsed the APN+ regional proposal and Data System proposal to GFATM; reviewed the PR transition process; reviewed GFATM grants and 3 MDG grant implementation updates; and reviewed progress of the Myanmar Demographic Health Survey and Myanmar Health Forum.

An oversight visit had been undertaken to Kalaw, Aung Ban and Pindaya from 23 to 25 February 2015. The visit was part of MHSCC Executive Working Group's oversight mandate and it covered a mix of public health programmes including vaccination, maternal and child health, HIV, TB and Malaria activities. The team included three government officials from MoH in Nay Pyi Taw, the Taunggyi District Medical officer, one representative from International NGOs, one representative from national NGOs, one representative from the bilateral constituency and one representative from the multilateral constituency. From the findings of the oversight visit, the ExWG recommended the MoH to establish coordination mechanisms at district and township levels to improve coordination across all sectors including between Ministry of Defense and military health facilities. The ExWG also encourage MoH to

fill vacant posts in the public health sector and consider providing motivational/incentive mechanisms for volunteers and auxiliary nurses in both NGO and public health systems. (Please see attached presentation for detail.)

Discussion

- Dr Soe Lwin Nyein commented the oversight visit is the very first visit of MHSCC ExWG to the community and to have a chance to observe the real situation and implementation status in the grass root level.
- With the restructuring of MoH, the new Department of Public Health focus its mission on health promotion and prevention, developing strategies and detail action plans to fulfill the requirement of the community with the people centered approach.
- The Deputy Minister appreciated the ExWG oversight visit and its worthy recommendations. H.E. informed the members of MHSCC, that the new MoH structure will also work through three Task Forces and nine Working Groups to ensure transparency and greater information sharing among all partners working in the health sector. In the near future, the partners will be requested to provide technical and financial support to the MoH workplan.
- Additional information from MoH includes the plan to roll-out comprehensive township microplan and on-going efforts to strengthen in-country vital registration system.

8. Global Fund Principal Recipient Progress Update

Dr Myint Shwe, Director of Non-communicable Disease Unit, Department of Public Health briefed the MHSCC on the progress of the GF PRs (UNOPS and Save the Children).

UNOPS: All three programmes achieved their indicator targets in 2014. The final quantitative rating for HIV is B1, and those for TB and Malaria are A1. The overall progress and achievements are good. Budget absorption is 89% for HIV, 88% for TB, 90% for Malaria and 88% for RAI Malaria. The budget absorption for Inter-country components is 40%. (Please see the attached presentations for details)

Save the Children: The grant rating is B1 for Malaria and A1 for HIV and TB respectively. The data, overview of progress and achievement are good in all three programs. The annual budget absorption for 2014 is: HIV - 90%, TB - 95% and Malaria - 90%. (Please see the attached presentations for details)

Discussion

- Mr William Slater, USAID, shared that the ExWG reviewed budget absorption rate and unspent budgets of both the PRs and requested the three TSGs (HIV, TB and Malaria) to meet to identify any unspent balance in order for TSG and ExWG to decide to re-allocate or re-program any savings including prioritizing efficient use of budgets for high impact interventions. He emphasized any unspent funds at the end of the grant period will be subtracted from the next grants.

9. Update from 3MDG Fund

Dr Paul Sender, Fund Director of 3MDG Fund updated the MHSCC members on 3MDG Fund governance structure; strategic areas; 2014 key results; and 3MDG future support to health sector. He announced that 2014 Annual Report on 3MDG activities will be available on-line on 15 May 2015.

Discussion

- Ms Hnin Hnin Pyne, Senior Human Development Specialist from World Bank shared information about a meeting of the Public Financial Management sector working group to be held this week

at Ministry of Finance in Nay Pyi Taw. JICA and the World Bank will provide presentations. The meeting is a good opportunity to advocate for engagement of non-health actors and to raise awareness about importance of PFM in health services. She expressed World Bank's continued support for PFM in the health sector; establishing linkages of health financing and health services and facilitate dialogue between MoF and MoH on Public Financial Management.

- The Deputy Minister requested World Bank, JICA and development partners to share with MoH updates from other non-health sector dialogues with relevance to the health sector so that MoH can consider what to adapt and integrate with health issues in order to strengthen the health system and develop strategies and detailed plans which will also improve collaboration between different ministries.

10. Update from Community Based Organization and People living with or Affected by Diseases and Disability

Daw Thuzar Win, Secretary of Sex Workers in Myanmar Network, representing the Community Based Organization and People living with or Affected by Diseases and Disability updated the M-HSCC on the recent activities of CBOs.

1. Together with UN, INGO and other implementing partners, National Drug Users Network participated in the Workshop on the revision of 1993 Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substance Law.
2. With the support of GF New Funding Model grant, they are conducting Community System Strengthening project and Human Right project.
3. With the new HIV counseling and testing decentralization process, the HIV networks have a chance to participate in the some decentralized sites in terms of assisting HIV counseling and testing.

11. M-HSCC work plan for 2015 and 2016

Mr Ole Hansen, Senior Project Officer from the MHSCC Secretariat presented about draft MHSCC work plan including the timeline of the meetings of MHSCC, ExWG and seven TSGs as well as the Oversight Visit for 2015-2016. (Please find the attached work plan for detail). He suggested convening two MHSCC meetings in September and December 2015 and four meetings in 2016. The MHSCC work plan for 2015-2016 was endorsed.

12. AOB

The Deputy Minister opened the discussion on the membership of MHSCC by pointing the new structural changes with Ministry of Health. Currently M-HSCC has 35 positions of the member and she suggested considering about expansion of the membership of government constituency, hence the procedure has to follow the MHSCC government manual.

Regarding the selection of the membership, there are different process between government and non-government constituency. Although the members from non-government constituency need to be selected by election process within their constituency, the election procedure is no need for government constituency. The government has the full authority to appoint the appropriate persons for both MoH and non-MoH persons including other ministries and parliament representative.

The MHSCC secretariat informed the acting-Chair and MHSCC members about the letter from Chair of the RAI Regional Steering Committee concerning collaboration between RSC and MHSCC. (Please see the attached letter).

The MHSCC secretariat also shared regional proposals from HIV regional networks that have been submitted to MHSCC for endorsement as required by GF prior to onward submission to GF. The regional proposal contains joint activities to be undertaken by four regional networks covering 11 countries, including Myanmar. As the Global Fund resources for regional funding is in addition to national funding through a separate funding stream and allocation, it has no impact on national funding. The ExWG has reviewed and endorsed this APN+ regional proposal. The Acting-Chair endorsed the regional proposal.

13. Closing

Prof. Dr Samuel Kyaw Hla, as Vice Chair of the MHSCC delivered closing remarks on behalf of the Union Minister for Health, H.E. Dr Than Aung.

The meeting ended at 12:30.