

SUCCESS STORY

Burma



Photo 1. Ko Maung Tun speaking with MCSP staff members about his TB diagnosis and the support he received from the village ICMV.

AUTHOR

Dr. Thu Naing

ROLE

Program Officer, Kayin State

LOCATION

Kayin State, Burma



SUMMARY

The Story of Ko Maung Tun, a timber worker in Myawaddy, who was diagnosed with Tuberculosis (TB) by an MCSP supported MOHS trained ICMV. With the help and support of the ICMV, Ko Maung Tun was able to overcome his depression over the initial diagnosis, and continue with his treatment. After his experience with the ICMV and improved management of his TB, Ko Maung Tun has become an advocate for early detection and treatment of TB in his community

Integrated Community Malaria Volunteer Provides TB Diagnosis, Support, and Hope to Family in Myawaddy

Kwe Lay is a village 40 miles away from Myawaddy with a total population of 406. The population of Kwe Lay is composed primarily of migrants coming from other parts of the country to work in agriculture and timber production jobs. Often, the rainy season makes transportation for the timber production jobs difficult.

Ko Maung Tun is a 40 year old timber worker and father of three living in Kwe Lay village, Myawaddy Township. Three months ago, he suffered from coughs and dyspnea for over two weeks. With no Direct Observed Treatment Provider (DOTP) in the village, Ko Maung consulted the local Integrated Community Malaria Volunteer (ICMV). Based on his symptoms, the ICMV suspected that Ko Maung had either Tuberculosis (TB) or some other lung problems. This assessment was only possible due to the Maternal and Child Survival Program's (MCSP) ICMV training in Myawaddy, which included training on TB prevention. The ICMV referred Ko Maung to Myawaddy township hospital for a sputum test to confirm his initial suspicions. When his sputum was found to be AFB positive, Ko Maung was diagnosed with TB.

After Ko Maung received the news of his diagnosis, he became depressed, as he is the family's sole financial provider. He was worried for the wellbeing of his three sons, and how TB might affect his work. However, his spirits lifted when the ICMV explained that TB is treatable, and that treatments are free of charge. The ICMV explained the importance of anti-TB treatment, and how the medicines must be taken regularly to ensure the success of treatment. The ICMV explained the necessary preventive measures to be taken by a family with a TB patient, life style changes to ensure the success of treatment, and the importance of the support of family members for the mental health of the TB patient. Some health information pamphlets on TB were also given to Ko Maung Tun and his family.

During the initial two weeks of treatment, Ko Maung Tun suffered some side effects of anti-TB drugs, including dizziness, nausea, vomiting and loss of appetite. Every morning, the ICMV came to Ko Maung's home to check-in on him and provide support. At the same time, he explained to Ko Maung's eldest son how to care for his father during the treatment period. Thanks to the support of the ICMV and Ko Maung's family, the follow-up treatments went smoothly and he is feeling much better, side effects now gone.

Due to the easy spread of TB, Ko Maung's feared his children might also have TB. A month after the diagnosis of Ko Maung Tun, his children were sent to the hospital for TB screening test to determine if they were infected with TB. When all three tests came back negative, Ko Maung Tun was greatly relieved.

Ko Maung Tun has been receiving treatment for three months. He receives regular care and guidance on drug adherence from the ICMV. After taking the anti-TB treatments, his coughs and dyspnea have ended, and Ko Maung's appetite has increased, allowing him to gain weight. He believes that he will recover completely, and can start work again after completing his treatment, thanks to the support of the ICMV.



Photo 2. Ko Maung Tun (Background) explains his experience with treatment for TB. Two of his three children (Foreground), were present. These children were not only screened for TB, but the eldest was also trained by the ICMV to assist his father with

Ko Maung Tun has also decided to quit smoking to prevent his condition from worsening, and is eager to share his experience with his colleagues to highlight the importance of early diagnosis and treatment. Ten years ago, TB patients in the village were often discriminated against. However, Ko Maung Tun's experiences has emboldened and encouraged him to share his experience as a TB patient. He recently attended a health education session led by the ICMV on TB knowledge and treatment, where he shared his story. He highlighted the importance of early detection, and encouraged consultation with the ICMV. He will never forget the support of the ICMV in saving his life and family, and sees them as a lifesaving human resource that provides hope for the country.



Photo 3. Ko Maung Tun (pointing) discusses his efforts to promote early detection of disease among the members of his community with MCSP representatives