

SUCCESS STORY

Burma



Photo 1: Feedback session during post-training follow-up between Daw Ng Kham Noom (right), midwife, and a member of the township training team (left) visiting the Man Phai Sub-Center, Mong Yai Township.

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SUMMARY

This story follows Daw Ng Kham Noom, a midwife with 4 years of experience at the Man Phai Sub-Center in Mong Yai Township, following the BHS cascade training in Mong Yai. Daw Ng Kham believes that the training helped her improve her capacity in reducing neonatal, infant, and under-5 child mortality rates, and that the updated forms and hand bills have also improved her skills in disease classification and effective treatment referral. Follow-up supervisions further reinforced the skills and knowledge of the BHS staff on IMNCI practices—a life saving child health and newborn training for health staff in Burma.

Updated IMNCI Guidelines and Training Improves Efficacy and Effectiveness of Basic Health Staff in Northern Shan

Proper management of childhood illness via early case detection, using both curative and preventive measures, is essential for reducing neonatal, infant, and under 5 child mortality rates. In order to improve management of childhood illnesses in Burma, the Ministry of Health and Sports (MOHS), with the support of the USAID funded Maternal and Child Survival Program (MCSP), organized cascade trainings for Basic Health Staff (BHS) on the updated Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness (IMNCI) strategy in Mong Yai Township in the northern region of Shan State. Twenty BHS participants were trained across the township. One month after the conclusion of the trainings, the MOHS and MCSP conducted follow-up supervision activities with the BHS to assess the retention of the lessons learned during training. These visits also provided an opportunity for the BHS to ask any additional questions post-training and to discuss any concerns they might have regarding IMNCI practices.

Daw Ng Kham Noom, a 30 year old female midwife, has been working at the Man Phai Sub-Center health facility for 4 years, under the supervision of the Man Mone Rural Health Center in Mong Yai Township. After attending the cascade training in Mong Yai, Daw Ng Kham believes that her knowledge and skills in the treatment of childhood illnesses has greatly improved, saying that she “felt satisfied with the contents of the training, and that the updated technical resources presented during the training will be helpful in providing effective health care service to under-5 children. The patient record form in particular has been very helpful during the assessment of patients for major diseases, as it improves the accuracy of diagnosis and treatment.” Daw Ng Kham also said that she felt more confident in her clinical care management abilities after following the guidelines for disease screening procedures.

Daw Ng Kham highlighted the fact that, in accordance with the updated IMNCI guidelines, the BHS at the Man Phai Sub-Center provided counselling sessions with the mothers of patients to explain the assessment process and discuss the outcomes and findings. Most of the mothers that received counselling were satisfied with the information that the BHS provided on their children’s nutritional status, development milestones, and immunization status. These counselling sessions increased the level of discussion between the health care providers and the mothers in the community, improving their communication and relationship.

Daw Ng Kham expanded on her appreciation of the new patient record form and disease classification hand bill, stating that "by using the updated patient record form, I was able to accurately assess my patients on common childhood illness. The hand bills also helped the other BHS and me with disease classification, suggesting effective treatments and arranging follow-up appointments." She explained that the patient record form also made her aware of additional assessments for children that were necessary to rule out common childhood illnesses, ensuring that her diagnoses are more accurate. Finally, when providing treatment, Daw Ng Kham is now able to easily refer to the handbills when choosing the best medication for her patients, declaring that "The IMNCI hand-bills are easy to use and perfect for providing for under-5 children's health care."



Photo 2. Under the guidance of a member of the township training team (blue), Daw Ng Kham (red) as she fills out the new patient record form (Man Phai Sub-Center, Mong Yai Township)

Regarding the follow up supervision visit, Daw Ng Kham felt that it was a chance for her and the other BHS to learn more by discussing challenging health issues with the trainers and supervisors. In return, the supervisors became aware of the needs and requirements of health institutions, such as the shortage of drugs. The post-training supervision visits also provided an opportunity for the supervisors and the implementing health staff to build relations and strengthen management skills.

Daw Ng Kham's story shows the important and positive impact that the MOHS-led and MCSP supported IMNCI trainings, tools, and follow-up visits had on the technical knowledge and abilities of BHS in Burma. With further support from similar trainings and supervisions, the BHS in Mong Yai, Northern Shan, and across Burma could continue to develop their skills in IMNCI application, and continue to reduce the neonatal, infant, and under 5 mortality rates for children, creating an opportunity and supporting environment for Burma's children to survive and thrive.



Photo 3: Daw Ng Kham (red), and a member of the township training team (bleu) conduct a child weight assessment at the Man Phai Sub-Center, Mong Yai Township