PATH has been contributing to Myanmar’s healthcare transformation since 2012 and supports the government’s commitment to achieve universal health coverage by 2030. PATH works with government, non-governmental actors, and private sector to leverage partnerships, policy advocacy, new technologies, and innovative approaches to address inequities in key health areas – nutrition, vaccines and immunization, sexual and reproductive health, infectious diseases, and non-communicable diseases. In Myanmar, PATH works in partnership with Myanmar Medical Association, Medical Action Myanmar, Myanmar Anti Tuberculosis Association, World Health Organization, United Nations, UNICEF, UNOPS, Save the Children, etc.

**Nutrition**

PATH is a pioneer of rice fortification technology. To tackle micronutrient malnutrition and anemia, we work with stakeholders to introduce fortified rice into the government’s food safety net programs. PATH hopes to strengthen the domestic supply chain and increase the availability of fortified rice across countries.
In Myanmar, almost one-third of children are stunted, a sign of chronic malnutrition. And children are not alone: many people do not consume a balanced diet with adequate vitamins and minerals, which has lifelong consequences for their health, productivity, and mental development. PATH supports the National Nutrition Project to introduce fortified rice in Myanmar, supports in developing national policies and guidelines for rice fortification and nutrition, and assists the food industry and private sector in adapting best production practices, assists in engaging both private- and social-sector partners in distributing fortified foods and ensuring that nutrition reaches underprivileged families and vulnerable groups through social safety net programs and generates sustainable consumer demand for nutritious food through marketing, outreach campaigns, and behavior change communication.

**Project – SMART MOVE**

A joint effort led by PATH to enhance migration transitions for vulnerable migrant populations, including factory workers, street vendors, and migrant households, through the introduction of peer-directed networks and services and innovative urban supply chains for nutritious products, including fortified rice. PATH organized discussions with business partners and consortium partners to promote fortified rice, held several meetings with rice millers to launch the subsidy/incentive mechanism process and also facilitated Save the Children, PACT Doh Eain, MAM and SUN CSA partners for fortified rice adoption in their nutrition program.

**Geographic areas** - Hlaing Tharyar Township, Shwe Pyi Thar Township, Yangon Region

**Sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child health**

Through a health system strengthening approach, PATH works to improve maternal, newborn, and child health indicators. We enable and expand equitable access to high-quality interventions; technologies; innovative; and affordable drugs, diagnostics, and devices with a focus on vulnerable populations.

Women in Myanmar continue to face challenges to access sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Only about half of all married women use a modern method of contraception, and rates of maternal and child mortality remain high. PATH supports the government in developing new policies and guidelines; translates and implements policy, plans, and guidelines into practice by training and bringing together decision-makers, health care providers, and communities; and has been instrumental in introducing and scaling innovative tools for identifying childhood illnesses, including a device that measures oxygen level in the blood and digital decision-making tools for health workers, thus contributing to reduction of mortality in children under five years of age.

**Project – SRHR STRONG+**

Under the project, PATH strengthened the knowledge, capacity, and coordination of decision-makers, service providers, and community members to understand SRHR and services and influence the development and implementation of SRHR-related policies.

**Geographic areas**: Nationwide

**Project – WHO GBV**

PATH’s work increased awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) among the migrant community in peri-urban Yangon, provided health and social support services to women and girls, and helped foster partnership with local and international partners for increasing access to updated information and quality services for SRHR, including GBV services. PATH assessed the needs of women migrant workers in access to GBV services and information through consultations with peer educators and aligned project activities to suit the migrant women workers. PATH drafted training materials and developed messages for increased awareness of GBV in the community and workplace and conducted mental and psychosocial well-being workshop and webinar.

**Geographic areas**: Hlaing Thar Yar, Shwe Pyi Thar, Mayangone and Dagon Seikkan townships
Project – Access to Quality Sexual and Reproductive Health Products and Services through the Innovations in Private Sector

PATH’s work focusses on system strengthening to improve access to SRHR products. PATH is supporting the government in guideline development, integration of family planning innovations, technical support for SRHR policy, cervical cancer guidelines for service providers, operational plan for cervical cancer prevention, and is contributing to the country’s first combined Reproductive, Maternal Newborn Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH) full strategic plan. PATH is also supporting in increasing the use of affordable, quality, reproductive health products by women and families in conflict-affected areas.

Geographic areas: Yangon, Mandalay, Sagaing, Kayah, Chin.

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs)

PATH works on mental health, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, and chronic respiratory diseases within the NCDs domain. PATH has been evaluating new screening tools and methods, advance promising treatments, and opened doors to early diagnosis and management of NCDs.

Development and economic growth in Myanmar have brought many opportunities, along with changes to people’s lifestyles. Poor lifestyle choices - alcohol and tobacco consumption, unhealthy diets - and an aging population have led to an increased incidence of non-communicable diseases. The World Health Organization estimates that NCDs account for 40 percent of all deaths in Myanmar. Building on our work in cervical cancer, PATH seeks to support the prevention and treatment of other common cancers in Myanmar. In Myanmar, PATH is also exploring partnership opportunities to address other NCDs, such as hypertension and diabetes.

Project - Community based NCDs screening, treatment provision and health promotion

The project aims to improve access to prevention, treatment, and care for NCDs as part of primary health care through local ownership and engagement guided by digital health and technical support. PATH supports with capacity-building of community-based volunteers and service providers, networking and developing a referral system, including the public and private sector network, for providing referrals to secondary and tertiary services and is developing a system for patient tracking and monitoring of NCDs and mental health services. PATH is also supporting with improving access to standard quality investigations for confirmation of diseases and treatment services for NCDs patients at the primary health care level and other public and private health facilities.

Geographic areas: Than-Lyun and Kyauk Tan Township in Yangon and Loikaw, Demoso, Phruso Townships in Kayah

Environmental health

Improper management of infectious waste and sharp waste objects generated by health care facilities expose health care workers and patients to infection. In addition, waste handlers and communities in developing countries are at high risk of health hazards due to unsafe practices, such as scavenging in waste disposal sites, manually sorting waste, and reusing disposable syringes and needles. To address the challenge, PATH, in Myanmar, has been establishing models for safe disposal of health care waste and needles. PATH provided technical support to the organizations to roll out the health waste management models that will assist in disposing of sharp needle and PPE waste safely and appropriately to minimize risks of infection and injury.

Project - Sharp Needle and PPE Waste Management

PATH is providing technical support to Ethnic Health Organizations (EHO) to roll out the health waste management models that will assist in disposing waste safely and appropriately to minimize risks of infection and injury in their clinics and promote the recycling concept for safe environmental situation.

Geographic areas: Shan North, Shan South, and Kayin State

Way forward

With decades of experience in working towards improving outcomes for family health, we continue to scale up our work to further strengthen health care in Myanmar.