PATH's work in Myanmar

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 the 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.

PATH develops and implements new approaches to prevent, manage, and eliminate infectious diseases; detection and control of emerging infectious diseases; prepare for potential pandemics, address the challenges of Tuberculosis (TB), HIV, Viral Hepatitis, COVID-19, and Neglected Tropical Diseases such as visceral leishmaniasis, lymphatic filariasis, dengue, malaria; and reduce mortality due to acute encephalitis syndrome.

PATH provides technical support to implement innovative solutions, institutionalize sustainable engagement models, strengthen surveillance, track, and train healthcare workers, and collect and analyze data for these diseases. This helps to generate accurate and reliable data for decision-making that policy makers can use to improve program management towards elimination or control of these diseases.

Myanmar has a high prevalence of infectious diseases, with rates of HIV and TB the second highest in Southeast Asia. To strengthen digital health and lab/diagnosis system, PATH is developing digital tools and innovative systems to enable more consistent HIV and TB prevention, testing, and treatment.

PATH has optimized artificial intelligence (AI)-augmented chest X-rays to facilitate TB screening and developed gender responsive interventions for TB care and control. PATH introduced new diagnostics tools like TrueNat in primary care settings and hard-to-reach areas and designed and deployed private sector engagement (PSE) models in HIV/TB service provision.

Eradicating infectious diseases in Myanmar
introduced the Japanese Encephalitis vaccine in Myanmar and facilitated integration of the vaccine into national routine immunization.

Under diagnostics development, PATH has been instrumental in developing diagnostics for malaria elimination and point of care diagnostic for detection of G6PD deficiency and advancing several different types of rapid diagnostic tests for G6PD deficiency, including quantitative biosensor.

Projects under Infectious Disease Program

**Project – Partnership for Vivax Elimination (PAVE)**

PATH is supporting Myanmar in adopting new and existing tools and approaches of the new P.vivax and helped optimize radical cure (ORC) tools and G6PD testing and vivax adherence strategy. PATH completed a review of the pharmacovigilance system to understand the changes needed for tafenoquine (TQ) adoption. PATH supports the malaria civil society organization (CSOs) in the country to implement tools to support better radical cure, determine the feasibility of use of G6PD analyzers in the private sector. PATH also ensures market analytics and learning to make data-driven and well-informed decisions by undertaking malaria commodities procurement, supply chain, and distribution analysis mapping.

**Geographic areas:** Nay Pyi Daw (Central)

**Project – President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI) - Digital Community Health Initiative (DCHI)**

PATH is supporting PMI Mission to improve malaria service delivery using appropriate digital technologies and data collection processes. PATH is developing Myanmar’s country profile for digital health, roadmap for transition of paper-based malaria reporting into digital, and optimized data flow for malaria surveillance and case management through existing digital health applications.

**Geographic areas:** Nationwide

**Project – PMI Eliminate Malaria**

PATH is developing and deploying new approaches and tools to support burden reduction and elimination for Malaria. PATH digitized the malaria elimination surveillance activity and facilitated private sector engagement in malaria elimination.

**Geographic areas:** Rakhine, Kayin, Sagaing, and Tanintharyi

**Project - HIV/TB AIS**

PATH is providing technical assistance to AIS partners for TB and innovation in HIV; designing delivery models with implementing partners to optimize TB case detection, management, and care; and facilitating revision and updating of existing TB diagnosis and treatment guidelines to fit with the global advancement.

**Geographic areas:** Yangon, Mandalay, Sagaing, Kachin and Shan

**Project - TB REACH Wave 7**

The goal of the project was to increase and accelerate detection and treatment of household contacts of TB patients and reduce transmission of TB by optimizing existing diagnostic algorithms and by engaging and empowering women in TB control.

PATH optimized TB screening through AI-augmented chest X-ray which further increased and expedited screening and investigation of household TB patients. PATH developed gender responsive interventions and empowered women to accelerate TB control.

**Geographic areas:** Yangon

**Project - COVID-19 and Influenza Epidemiological Surveillance**

PATH supported Global Health Security (GHS) through implementation of programs and activities that focus on protecting and improving health globally. PATH reviewed the existing guidelines and procedures of COVID-19 and the national surveillance system for COVID-19 and Influenza.

**Geographic areas:** Nationwide

**Way forward**

With decades of experience in working towards tackling infectious diseases, we continue to advance measures to improve testing, detection, and prevention of infectious diseases. We look forward to work with our partners to accelerate progress towards eradicating these diseases in Myanmar.