

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Country Report on “The 11th ASEAN & Japan High Level Officials Meeting(HLOM) on Caring Societies”

Background on Taking Care of Older Persons in Myanmar

1. The estimated population of Myanmar is nearly 60 million and the population of older people over 60 and above is estimated to 9.1% of the total population. It is expected to be increased 30 % in 2030 and 50 % in 2050 by United Nations. According to the statistics, 10% of the total population of the older people which is 5.6 million in need of social protection.

2. Nowadays, the population of older peoples increasing all over the world because of decreasing birth rate, good nutrition and improved medical treatment. The increasing number of older people is not only the challenges but also the opportunities. However, it became the challenges especially in developing countries which do not have the sufficient social protection system. In Myanmar, Ageing problem is not a serious issue on which the whole planet is concentrating. Nevertheless, Myanmar will certainly face Ageing problem in coming decade. Accordingly, there is a need to take care of older persons by using the methods of International bodies which is suitable for Myanmar context.

Home Based Care Service

3. Myanmar practices Extended Family System since many years ago. Myanmar initiated Home Based Care for vulnerable older persons in 1915. Daw

Oo Zun, silk merchant, established Min Gun Home for the Aged for older persons in Sagaing town-ship and being taken care. At present, over (70) Homes for the Aged have been established and over (3000) older persons are being taken care.

4. The Department of Social Welfare recognizes Homes for the Aged and assists financial assistance and technical assistance as follows yearly;

- Level 1

- Cash for rice 30000 Ks (per head)

-Level 2

- Cash for rice 30000 Ks (per head)
- Cash for food 30000 Ks (per head)
- Cash for clothing 13000 Ks (per head)

-Level 3

- Cash for rice 30000 Ks (per head)
- Cash for food 30000 Ks (per head)
- Cash for clothing 13000 Ks (per head)
- Salary for In-charge 360000 Ks (per year)

5. Generally, the older persons over 60 years in any rate of race and religion who are facing social problems are being taken care. In every Home for the Aged, Supervising Committee has formed and has been providing food, shelter

and health care for older persons. There are (64) recognized Homes for the Aged throughout the country. They are;Kachin(1),Kayah(2),Chin(2),Sagaing(2), Tanintharyi(2),Bago(9), Magway(5), Mandalay(11),Mon(3), Rakhine(2), Yangon (11),Shan(4) and Ayarwaddy(8).

6. Moreover, in order to take care of the older people systematically, the voluntary care givers and administrators in respective states and regions are being trained at the Social Welfare Training School in Yangon.

Community Based Care Service

7. Myanmar initiated ROK-ASEAN Home Care for Older People Project in 2004. The main aim of the project is to take care of health and social welfare of the aged persons who are poor and lonely due to various reasons to get them for a better living. In fact, the essence of the activity is to take care of the lonesome by the well trained volunteer through home care system. Caring model is Social Caring Service and Primary Health Care service as like First Aid.

8. The National YMCA in collaboration with Department of Social Welfare (DSW) carried out the ROK-ASEAN Home Care for Older People Project Phase I (2003-2006) in 2004 in two townships of Yangon Region. Similarly, the project phase II (2006-2009) was also successfully implemented in (17) target townships of (7) States and Regions. The project phase II was carried out by NGOs such as Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAFF), Myanmar Maternal and Child

Welfare Association (MMCWA), National YMCA and INGO, World Vision (Myanmar).

9. In order to successfully carry out the project, Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was formed. The PAC was able to compile and distribute volunteer based home care curriculum and manual books for volunteers.

10. In keeping the momentum of success, the phase III of the project (2009-2012) is being implemented in (154) targeted townships of (14) States and Regions by above- mentioned Organizations of phase II and new partners such as Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), National YWCA, Global Vision, Help-Age International (Myanmar), Caritas Thailand and Myanmar Baptist Churches Union respectively, coordinating and cooperating with one another under the leadership of Department of Social Welfare.

11. Moreover, Older People Self Help Groups(OPSHGs) have been established byDSW collaboration with Help Age International (Myanmar),the objective of older people get self-confidence and they involve taking active participation in community works. Targeting 93 villages in 115 OPSHG's have established in Yangon, Ayeyarwady, Mandalay Regions , Kayin and Mon States to improve livelihoods among older persons and their families by creating job opportunities and income generating.

12. And also OPSHG's were formed in 55 villages and Older People Lead Rural Development Programs are being implemented in Mandalay, Sagaing and

Ayeyarwady Region. The main programmes are providing training on agricultural technology, small business, building tube well and building water storage tanks for the dry zone.

Opening the Day Care Center for the Aged

13. As a result of changing family system, the elderly people face the social loneliness. In order to reduce the social vulnerability and to have the healthy and active ageing life, the Department of Social Welfare has made the arrangement to open the Day Care Center for the Aged at No(64), corner of Kabaraye Pagoda Road and Parami Road, Mayangone Township, Yangon.

14. The services such as social and health care, old aged development , recreation program for Elderly, Life Long Learning for Older People, Advancing health and well-being of the elderly people, and nutrition programs will be provided for the elderly people in the Day Care Center.

15. National Plan of Law (draft) is drawn up and submitted to give social assistance concerning with financial support for the elderly in their respective age who are in community.

Implementation of International Plan of Action on Ageing

16. Myanmar is now observing the Older People Laws enacted by the Thailand and SriLanka to develop the Myanmar's Older People Law in accordance with the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing(MIPAA)

which include the older people and development, advancing health and well-being of older people, ensuring and enabling the supportive environment. Also the National Plan of Action on Aging focusing on the following nine sectors are being drafted;

- (a) Income security
- (b) Health and health care
- (c) Natural Disasters and other Emergencies
- (d) Security of Care during Periods of Dependency
- (e) Home and Environment
- (f) Care and Support
- (g) Education and Advocacy
- (h) Implementation System
- (i) Monitoring and Evaluation

Challenges (Difficulties)in Health Sector

1. National elderly health care programme is not implemented yet.
2. Low awareness on active and healthy aging concepts.
3. Strengthening of Geriatric Medicine is needed.
4. Only over 8000 senior people are cared and needs more senior people.
5. The amount of home for aged and needs to extend.
6. To promote more resources and to expert for communities based elderly care.
7. In New Pension Law (2012), Article 34 enacted as follows:

The age for superannuation of the insured shall be as stipulated by the Ministry of Labour in Coordination with the SSB with the approval of the Union Government.

8. But no enforcement and no implementation.
9. The elderly employment is not policy.

Lesson Learnt

1. Continuous support is important for sustainability of elderly health care activities.
2. Awareness raising for development of healthy public policy.
3. To strengthen for elderly care volunteer.
4. To build capacity for elderly care volunteer.
5. To ensure the Senior People future.
6. To ensure the enforcement and implementation.
7. Need the elderly employment policy and law.