

Community Support and Reproductive Health Behaviour

In Myanmar community, there is an aged old tradition where inter-personal interactions are based on intimacy and amiability. This traditionally upheld kinship has provided a social network through which neighbours and friends, growing together and knowing each other, exchange mutual help and support in times of need. Correct knowledge and attitudes are essential yet insufficient for practices and behaviours conducive to health. Ability to make right choice and environment favouring to do so are additional requirements. Generating community support encouraging correct behaviours and impeding unwholesome ones goes a long way in making individuals' practices health promoting.

In this context making reproductive health education programmes realistic and in conformity with real life circumstances will need community support. Support of the community members willing to volunteer will provide mechanisms to bridge the gap between technically oriented initiatives of health workers and customary and culturally imbued beliefs and practices of the clients in the community.

In collaboration with UNFPA and JOICFP, Ministry of Health (Central Health Education Bureau) has launched a Reproductive Health Behaviour Change Communication programme in 2002, which now covers 34 townships. Through establishing correct reproductive health behaviour in the community the programme aims to contribute in reducing maternal mortalities one of the goals included in the MDGs, in the country. The activities included in the programme are formation of Community Support Group (CSG), providing health education, timely referral of maternal cases to hospitals and clinics and providing support for patients lacking assistance.

Collaboration of township authorities, township health departments and basic health staff play important roles in sustaining the activities. The programme after a considerable period of implementation has gained momentum and made substantial achievements thanks to the concerted efforts of all partners.



Establishing Youth Information Corners and Community Support Groups