

## **Health and Human Rights Education and BMA**

There were two occasions of Health as Human Rights awareness and conceptualization workshops, one in the year 2000 and another in 2002. These produced outcomes of promotion to commitment of many health workers along border areas. And regarding on Health as Human Rights issue, BMA sees further details as mentioned in below.

Over 50 years ago in 1946, the Constitution of WHO projected a vision of health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well being –a definition that has important conceptual and practical implications. Rights relating to discrimination, information, education and participation are integral part of the achievement of the highest attainable standard of health.

Recently, health professionals begin to recognize the importance of the protection and promotion of human rights as necessary precondition for individual and community health. It is now clear that regardless of the effectiveness of technologies, the underlying civil, cultural, economic, political and social conditions have to be addressed as well. There are two approaches to analyzing the relationship between health and human rights that help to illustrate their connection and to provide a framework for considering the implications of the health and human rights relationship.

The first approach examines how violations or lack of attention to human rights can have serious health consequences. For example, health impacts of certain human rights violations such as torture causes not only immediate and direct harm to health of the victim, but also have impact on the health of families and of entire communities and on the trans-generational damage.

The second approach focuses on the ways in which health policies and programs can violate rights in the ways they are designed. A state's failure to recognize health problems that particularly impact a marginalized group, or to consider the impacts of particular health issues on all members of a population is a violation of the right to nondiscrimination. The absence of HIV-related services and education can have resulted in a disproportionate burden of health consequences that could have been prevented through simple and effective prevention messages and/or screening blood supplies.

Concerns for human rights and health share the common goals of alleviating suffering and promoting the well-being of all people. Using human rights concepts, one can look at the extent to which the government is respecting their obligations for all rights – civil political, economic, social and cultural – and how the government actions influence the patterns of mortality and morbidity within a country. The WHO health care ratings of Burma as second to the last, and the increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS, the highest

infant mortality rate of Burma amongst the Southeast Asia region are strong evidences of negative health impact of violations of human rights.

There is increasing evidence that public health efforts that respect, protect and fulfill human rights are more likely to succeed than those that neglect or violate rights. It is imperative that health professionals and health care workers of Burma understand the fundamental linkages between health and human rights and the way in which those linkages can influence the course of health practice in Burma.

Building and strengthening the information and education about health and human rights is required in order to implement the concept. When people are sufficiently knowledgeable about the linkages between health and human rights, they will be able to identify the issues for which the synergy of human rights and health is critical, and act accordingly. Health and human rights is the fundamental approach that may positively improve the lives of oppressed people in Burma.

### **Organizing of TOT for Health as Human Rights**

The organizing committee for TOT for health as human rights was found with BMA members including with its some executive members and as main facilitators for this training are Dr. Khin Saw Win, U Aung Htoo (Burma Lawyer Council) and Dr. Thein Win.

The 20 participants from different geographical regions in consideration of equity in gender and ethnic back ground would be invited to attend this training. The ones who finished one of the Health as Human Rights workshops finished in the past would be prioritized to invite for this training.

### **Aims and Objectives**

#### Aims

This module is designed to teach aspects of health and human rights to trainers involved in health and health related fields and to those who are devoted to promote - and encourage others to promote - the right to health as a fundamental human right; and to identify good practices for the taking actions of the right to health at the community, national and international levels.

#### Objectives

1. To be able to acquire a basic understanding of the history, sources and contents of international human rights law and treaties, including the right to health.
2. To understand and explore the value and impact of linking health and human rights.
3. To be able to analyze the health impacts resulting from violations of human rights.
4. To have knowledge of how health workers and their professional organizations like "BMA" can protect and respect human rights.
5. To develop the capability to work efficiently and effectively in groups and be able to communicate through presentations and discussions (as trainers).
6. To form basic unit of Health as Human Rights Education advocacy network along the border areas of Burma.

### **Organizing Teaching Arrangements**

It is an intensive course for 5 days from 9 am to 4 pm. Assessment is carried out on the basis of class presentations and contributions to discussions. Content and style of group work will also be assessed. There will be a short questions written test at the end of the course.

Reference Material are provided.

### **Detailed program**

#### **Day 1**

Introduction

Principles of human rights, features, origins, classification of rights, how they are implemented and how they can be enforced.

Phrasing of rights - for example, freedom of movement, freedom of opinion, right to life, non discrimination

Connection between Health and Human Rights

Consider the following questions

Q: What is your understanding of the term human rights?

Q: What do you consider to be the important features of human rights?

Q&A

References

- Human rights articles booklet - translated by Aung Myo Min
- Human rights are not alien to Burma, by Aung San Suu Kyi - Time Magazine, 28 Oct 1999.
- Health and Human Rights in contemporary humanitarian crises - British Medical Journal 1999.
- Militarism and world health - Social and Science Medicine, 1992

## **Day 2**

Health consequences of human rights violations

sources: Alma Ata Declaration, Tokyo declaration, the WHO corporate strategy 2000

What is right to health? - The cartoon booklet

- \*health care and the underlying determinants of health
- \*freedoms and entitlements
- \*more specific entitlements
  - torture
  - maternal, child and reproductive health
  - HIV/AIDS
  - access to safe and potable water

Test questionnaires on the topics of day 1 and 2

## **Day 3**

Role play and case study on torture

- \*Burma's prison system
- \*Forced labor
- \* the role of health professionals in relation to torture in

General

There will be a debate on some Burmese health professionals who participated in human rights abuses including torture and the preparation of false medical documentation to cover up human rights abuses. However,

those health professionals have been victims of discrimination, and have had their freedoms of opinion, speech and movement been curtailed.

What is the impact of that on health situation and the right to health?

There will be a video show "doctors and torture"

#### **Day 4**

Maternal, child and reproductive health  
HIV/AIDS

- \*right to information
- \*issues of HIV testing, VCT
- \*women's rights and gang rapes - to study on the cases of "the situation in the former Yugoslavia" and "License to rape"

Role play

Q&A

Final exam - 1 hour written test

#### **Day 5**

How public health policies and practices can burden human rights and how optimal balance can be negotiated between public health goals and human rights norms.

Globalization and health  
Health equality and equity  
Non discrimination

Draft declaration of health and human rights

Teaching Methods

**Wrap up.**