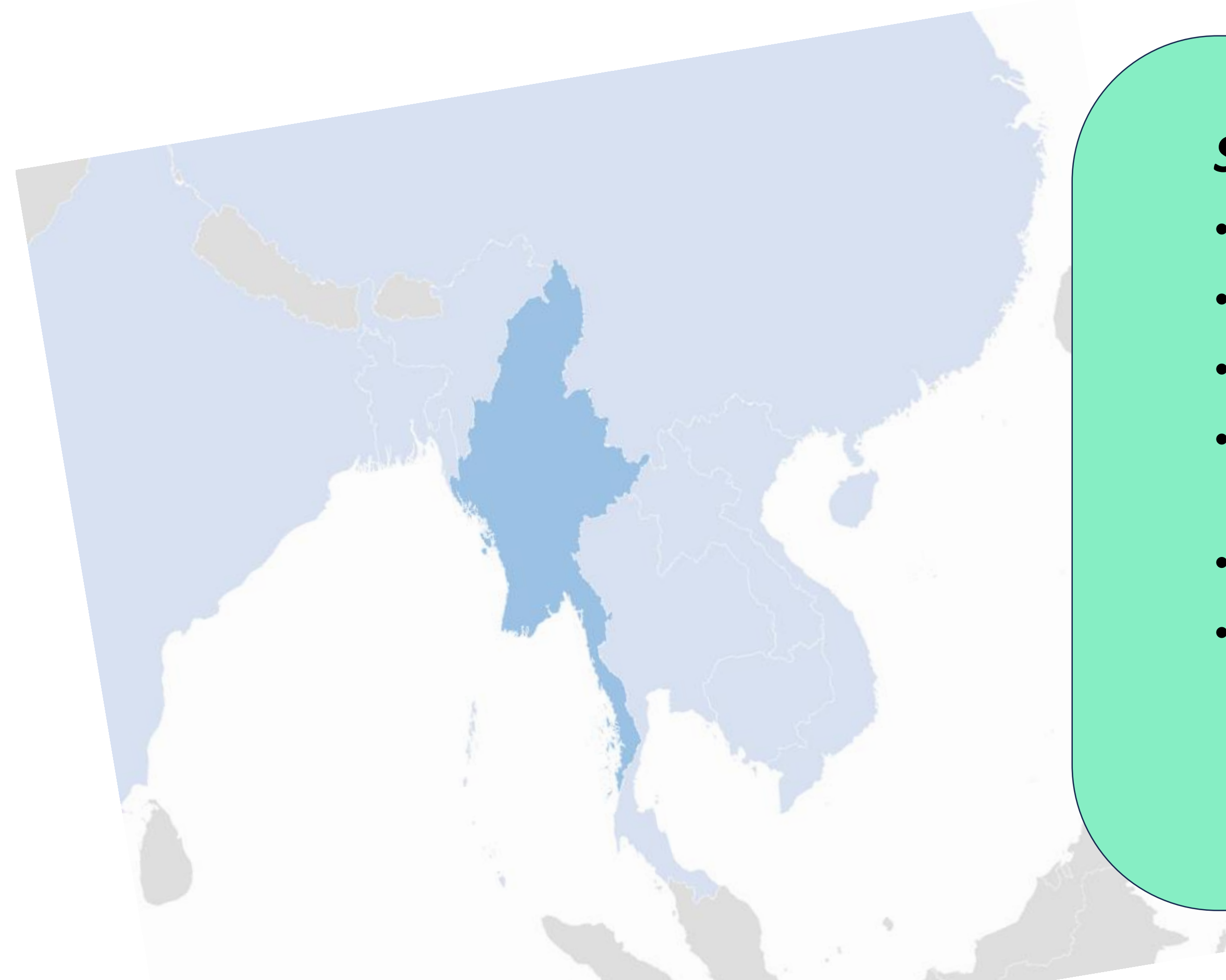


Standard Operating Procedures on Health Care in Prisons - UNODC's effort on improving the health of most forgotten citizens in Myanmar

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Situation and Context

- There are 45 prisons and 48 work camps for prisoners in Myanmar.
- 60,000 to 85,000 prisoners including 10-12% women are serving prison sentence in 2023
- 48% of inmates are detained for drug-related offenses
- Enforcement heavy approach in drug control causes overcrowding in prisons and the occupancy level was 111.5% in 2020.
- Health services are limited for prisoners, with no written policies or procedures in place.
- This results in inconsistent quality and timeliness of healthcare in Myanmar's prisons, further worsening the vulnerabilities and marginalization resulting in poorer health outcomes of people in prisons.

A Rapid Need Assessment

- A rapid need assessment was conducted in 2016 with the support of UNODC, UNAIDS and WHO in Myanmar, to get a comprehensive understanding of the key issues facing the health care in prisons of Myanmar.
- Six key issues were identified as major challenges for improving health care in prisons.
 - Overcrowding
 - Limitations in health human resource
 - Limited health infrastructure
 - Lack of standard operating procedures leading to discrepancies across prisons
 - Lack of standardized procedures for supply of medications and equipment
 - Unavailability of drug dependence treatment and care for people with drug use disorders

Availability of SOPs

- Regarded by stakeholders as priority to improve health in prisons.
- To provide a consistent standard of care for prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases.
- To ensure the access to health by everyone and ethical health care.

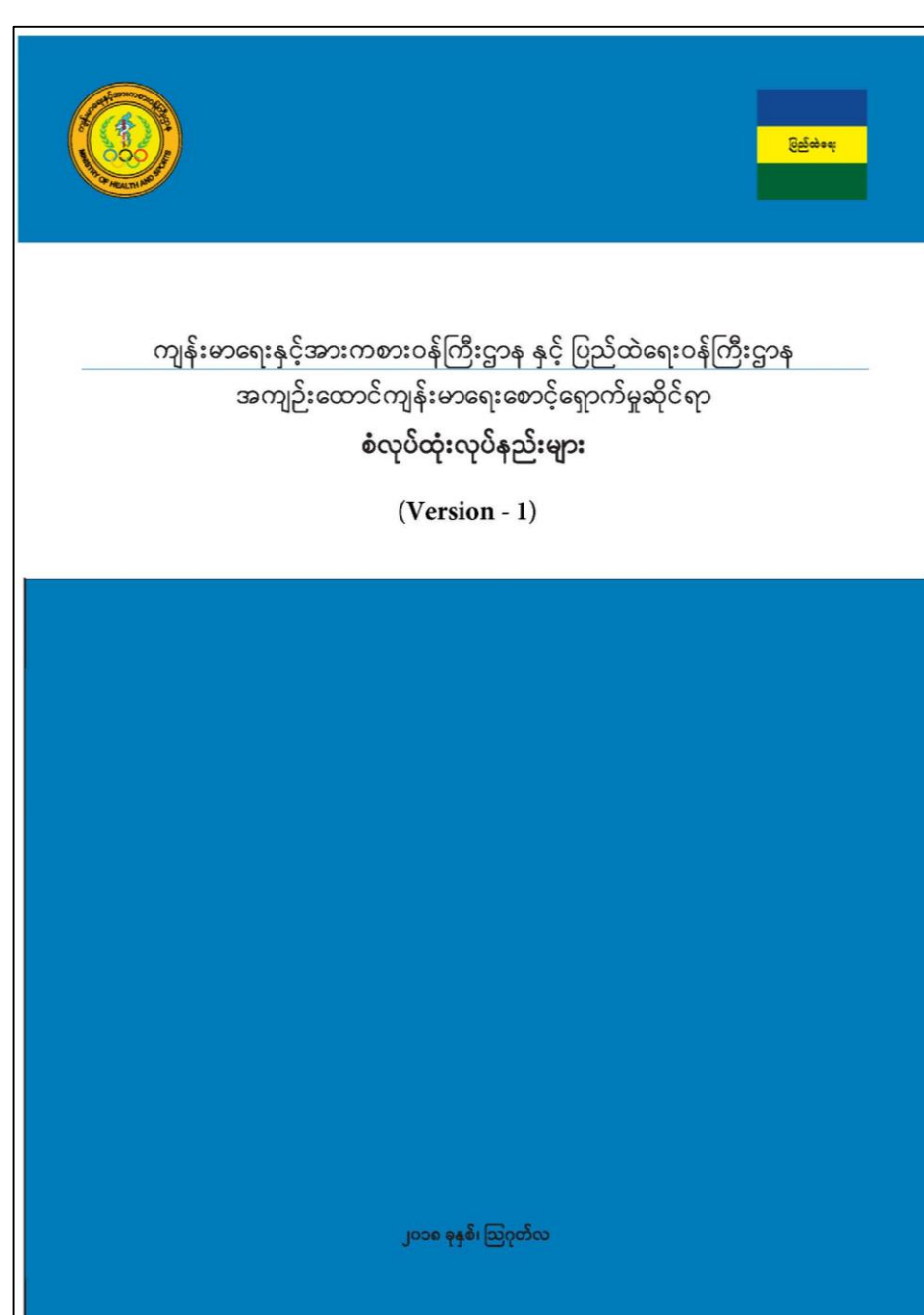


Development of the Standard Operating Procedures for Health Care in Prisons

- Ministry of Health and Sport and Ministry of Home Affairs (particularly the Prisons Department) worked together for the development of the SOPs from 2017 to 2018.
- UNODC, UNAIDS and WHO, in partnership with relevant stakeholders, provided technical support for the process of the development of the SOPs.
- The process involved several coordination meetings and consultation meetings.
- Technical support ensured the SOPs to align with both international standards for prison health care and Myanmar's national guidelines for health care for the general population.
- Study visits were organized for Myanmar Prisons Department officials and Health Department officials to neighboring countries to learn best practices and challenges. This helped constructive discussions among concerned authorities for evidence-based practices.

What is the SOPs all about?

- The SOPs was launched jointly by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Health and Sports in August 2018.
- The SOPs has served as basic framework for the delivery of health care to prisoners in the Myanmar prison system.
- It also promotes ensuring the adequate level of health care standard equivalent to what is available in the community.



Follow up and next steps.

- The consistent application of the SOPs in all prisons throughout the country is essential.
- UNODC has provided SOPs training to the prison health staff and prison security and admin staff.
- Development of the strategic plan for improvement of prison health according to standards defined by the SOPs.
- Peer education programme for voluntary participation of inmates in improving health literacy.
- Review and revision of the SOPs.

