Myanmar Geographic Information System Working Group / GIS-WG
TERMS OF REFERENCE
June 2022

1. Background

The GIS Working Group (GIS WG) was formed in 2009 to address common geospatial issues – maps, boundaries, data exchange, standards – that affect the work of agencies working in humanitarian, development and peace-related sectors in Myanmar. It was established at the initiative of the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) - a service of the United Nations under the UN Development Programme and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.

2. Objectives

The GIS WG is a technical platform for the coordination of GIS initiatives related to humanitarian, development and peace-related activities in Myanmar. It does not seek to centralize data but rather to provide a source of 'information on information', helping to direct interested parties to relevant agencies where specific data are held. Its objectives are as follows:

1) *Develop and share best practices* as well as new developments in cartography, GIS and Remote Sensing,
2) *Exchange information and experiences* on how spatial data has been collected, processed, and analysed, as well as exchange of relevant data, final products, policies and procedures;
3) *Establish, adapt and promote standards and international norms* to the Myanmar context for maps and other geospatial information which enable information sharing and exchange to enable better use of resources;
4) *Promote transparent information sharing* to promote better use of available information and avoid duplication;
5) *Promote capacity building* to improve spatial data management supporting humanitarian and development programming;
6) *Collaborate in agreeing, developing and disseminating common tools and approaches* to gathering and using geospatial information standards and practices in humanitarian response, peace and development activities, including common mapping platforms, common operational datasets (CODs), templates, etc;
7) *Advocate for improved policies* in the use of international standards, norms and best practice that promote the efficient and effective use of GIS to support activities in humanitarian, and development sectors.

3. Structure and Membership

The GIS Working Group is a standing working group under the inter-agency Information Management Network and will report back to the IM Network on its activities and progress.

Members of the GIS Working Group will be **open to representatives from all civil society actors involved in GIS related activities** supporting humanitarian and development work in Myanmar, including NGOs, UN agencies, donors, and other entities as required. The GIS Working Group will actively work to engage stakeholders across all relevant sectors to ensure a broad base for coordination.

The GIS Working Group may establish time-bound task groups as required to work on specific activities and report back regularly on their achievements or needs.

Frequency of the meeting: The GIS working group will meet on a quarterly basis, with further ad-hoc meetings organized according to the needs or situation.

Minutes and other resources: MIMU will chair the working group and provide secretariat support. Minutes and documentation relevant to the working group meetings will be disseminated directly to the group members and shared through a dedicated page on the MIMU website.

GIS Working Group members will exchange information and resources through the GIS WG mail group.

4. Expected Outputs

1) Regular meetings and shared communications which provide a forum for the exchange of data and information on upcoming studies, database tools, remote sensing analysis and other relevant activities, initiatives and emerging priorities;

2) Maintain a list of key data producers and sources, which data is produced and the status of its availability (Data cataloguing);

3) Identification of the main challenges and emerging issues to progressing on the improvement of spatial data management in Myanmar, which of those challenges the GIS WG can collaborate to overcome, and an action plan for doing so;

4) Develop a common understanding of the minimum set of key geospatial parameters to facilitate data exchange among agencies working in humanitarian and development-related sectors (including data collection tools, Place Codes, projections, and common operational datasets/ CODs etc);

5) Definition of the roles and responsibilities in the event of a major disaster, including data collection, data sharing and exchange, data processing and dissemination;

6) Collaboration in data/information gathering;

7) Information sharing on capacity needs, resources and collaboration in capacity building initiatives;

8) Sharing new technologies, seminars, events and activities related to cartography, GIS and Remote Sensing;

9) Other priorities as defined by the GIS Working Group.