



Terms of Reference

July 2021

1. Background

The Myanmar Information Management Unit / MIMU is a service of the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator to support the information management needs of humanitarian, development, and peace-focused actors across Myanmar for analysis and decision-making.

MIMU was established in late 2007 in response to a survey of the needs of key humanitarian and development actors in the Myanmar context. Its activities have been supported by various donors, notably the European Commission Humanitarian Funding, the Government of Canada, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and UK Aid. Administrative oversight is provided by the United Nations Development Programme / UNDP.

This document updates and replaces the previous Terms of Reference for MIMU (November 2019).

2. Role of the MIMU

Information management (IM) seeks to ensure the availability of relevant and appropriate information in a timely manner to support decision-making.

To this end, MIMU safeguards the common data and information repository for development, humanitarian, and peace actors in Myanmar through gathering and compiling data from various sources on relevant sectors, countrywide, and making this information accessible to the wider group of stakeholders. MIMU works closely with the various entities and agencies active in IM across different sectors/geographic areas.

MIMU also plays a key role in the use of geospatial data standards among United Nations, non-governmental agencies, and other actors by promoting open availability and interoperability of data through the practical application of information standards, providing dedicated support in emergency preparedness and response, and supporting analysis and wider development monitoring processes.

3. Purpose and Principles

MIMU's purpose

MIMU seeks to improve the capacity for analysis and decision making among actors engaged in development, humanitarian, and peace-related activities in Myanmar through strengthening coordination and capacity for the collection, processing, analysis, and dissemination of information.

As such MIMU provides support to the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, the United Nations and Humanitarian Country Teams, Peace Support Group, Cooperation Partners' Group, civil society and non-governmental organizations and other entities/agencies engaged in strengthening emergency preparedness and response.

MIMU Underlying principles

- a. MIMU seeks to ensure a robust, **impartial, and independent** mechanism for creative and innovative approaches to information management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable information management capacity among Myanmar-focused humanitarian, development and peace actors.

- b. MIMU is a resource for the entire **humanitarian and development** community in Myanmar, **countrywide**, and therefore will not primarily serve the needs of any single individual or agency.
- c. MIMU activities are **evidence-based** and span **all humanitarian/development/peace-focused sectors**, providing data on the whole of the country alongside a focus on UNCT/HCT priority areas.
- d. MIMU services and initiatives seek to **promote good practice** at local, regional, and national levels while maintaining a **people-centred** and **conflict-sensitive** approach.
- e. All data and information products provided to and created by MIMU are the collective property of the UNCT/HCT/PSG-led humanitarian, development, and peace-focused communities. MIMU strives to ensure data and information products are **openly accessible** while limiting access and/or dissemination of sensitive information and products.

4. MIMU Strategies and Deliverables

4.1 Data repository and Information products

MIMU seeks to ensure a comprehensive, reliable, and accessible body of knowledge to support situational analysis, operational planning, and inter-agency coordination among humanitarian, development, and peace actors active in Myanmar.

Key deliverables:

- **A country-wide repository of relevant data and documents** to support humanitarian, development, and peace-related activities. This includes the compilation of base datasets, supporting the interoperability/sharing of data (Place codes or national equivalent), maintaining a central bank of data, information resources, and documents on development, humanitarian, and peace-focused programming and the operating environment.
- **Maintaining an overview and inventory of existing relevant datasets** as a resource for agencies, donors, and researchers to strengthen analysis, targeting, and programming.
- **Quality, standardized information products and services** to support decision-making around planning and the allocation of funding and resources. This includes base maps, the Who/What/Where database, contact lists, meeting schedules, infographics, and other products to support programming, disaster preparedness and response.
- **A dissemination platform** to facilitate wide and timely dissemination of information products, resources, and services to ensure their availability for analysis and decision-making.
- **Specific information products responding to inter-agency coordination needs**, including context-specific data for use by decision-makers; information products to support scenario development, contingency planning, emergency response (particularly the processing of remote sensing information), and the identification of trends and humanitarian risks; tailored products in response to ad-hoc requests by inter-agency coordination bodies and entities
- **Support the verification, digitization and completion of core datasets**, including village mapping and other geospatial datasets.

4.2 Technical assistance and coordination

MIMU will expand IM capacity among humanitarian, development, and peace-focused actors through demonstrating robust IM approaches, promoting the creation and use of common data standards based on international best practice, and building capacity through technical support and training.

Key deliverables:

- **Timely and relevant products** to support humanitarian, development, and peace-focused inter-agency coordination.
- **Lead/support information management technical working groups and initiatives** at national and state/regional level to strengthen information quality, information sharing, and coordinated approaches to improving IM capacity.
- **Joint activities with sector/thematic working groups and others** to support thematic analysis and monitoring, to strengthen the use of common data standards for improved data quality and interoperability enabling better targeting of support to vulnerable populations.
- **Support the development of national standards, policies, and procedures** relevant to robust IM, and build capacity at all levels in their use.
- **Strengthen the information management capacity of humanitarian, development, and peace actors** working in the Myanmar context and improve the country-wide information base for use by a broader set of stakeholders. Key targets for capacity building will include UN, civil society, and research entities active in relevant sectors in Myanmar.
- **Support to the design of assessments, surveys, and databases** and their integration of common data standards and indicators promoting interoperability (geospatial standards, appropriate data disaggregation).

4.3 Monitoring and analysis

MIMU will provide a wide range of tools to support common situational monitoring and analysis, reflecting the country-wide situation as well as the diversity and differences across administrative areas and different populations.

Key deliverables:

- **Definition of data and information elements** required for information products and services to support monitoring and analysis, and systems in place to promote the availability of this data/information to different stakeholder groups.
- **Improved data and information sharing** including the adoption of global, country, and sector-specific common data standards.
- Products to support **common situational analysis and monitoring** at thematic and national levels developed drawing on data from different sources.
- **Ad-hoc and regular analysis of available data and information** to support the UN Country Team, Humanitarian Country Team, Peace Support Group, Coordination Partners' Group, and other inter-agency coordination bodies in analysis, planning, and monitoring, and promote increased awareness of the vulnerability of specific groups/areas of the country.

4.4 Networking and liaison

MIMU will establish and maintain relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders (including UNCT, HCT, PSG, and CPG members, inter-agency working groups, civil society agencies etc) to promote strengthened information

exchange, use of appropriate IM tools and improved IM support to humanitarian, development, and peace-related activities in Myanmar.

Key deliverables:

- **Partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders** to promote better IM-related practices, standards, and coordination, and gather information on survey, assessment, and information gathering efforts.
- **Technical partnerships with key groups/agencies** to strengthen data quality, availability, and use at national and regional levels.
- **Advocacy toward strengthening information management in national systems** focused on ensuring data standards, data quality, and open accessibility.

5. MIMU Composition

The Unit staffing is determined by MIMU Manager under the management of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and outlined in the MIMU organogram. MIMU seeks to build and retain a highly skilled and capable team of mainly national staff able to ensure quality information management products and services. Key activities and responsibilities within the Unit are as follows:

- **MIMU manager:** Overall oversight and management of MIMU's staff, activities, and resources in line with the strategic vision. This includes leading on strategy, planning, monitoring, and evaluation; fundraising and financial oversight; staff capacity building; introduction of appropriate and strategic innovation; identifying new opportunities and partnerships; liaison with external partners relevant to MIMU activities; provision of advisory support concerning information management to stakeholders (including the UNRCHC, the UN and Humanitarian Country Teams, Cooperation Partner's Group); active engagement in and support to relevant coordination networks; liaison with MIMU Project Board and MIMU Advisory Board;
- **Geographic Information Systems team:** Gathering, maintaining and updating geospatial databases relevant to emergency preparedness, humanitarian and development activities; strengthening national datasets and systems, capacity building; supporting the introduction and embedding of international standards of geo-referencing and geo-spatial data management;
- **Data team:** Gathering, maintaining and updating statistical databases relevant to emergency preparedness, humanitarian, development, and peace-related activities; maintaining information on who is doing what, where, countrywide with regular inputs from a large number of agencies; building capacity to support the introduction and embedding of international data management standards; data analysis and infographics development;
- **Web/Information and Communications Technologies:** Maintaining web-based dissemination mechanisms of MIMU's products to allow wide access; developing innovative tools and systems to support data collection and management; maintenance of MIMU technical equipment and resources;
- **Communications and Resource Centre team:** External liaison and outreach; dissemination of resources; gathering and maintaining information for user-related databases (contact lists, coordination meetings); development of infographics and other client-focused materials;
- **Finance and Administration team:** Undertakes finance, human resources, administration, procurement, logistics, and other support tasks;
- **Technical support** may also be sought through consultancies for specific activities.

6. Governance and Reporting

6.1 Direct management and operational support

MIMU and the MIMU Manager come under the direct supervision of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. Administrative and operational oversight is provided by the UNDP through MIMU's use of UNDP's administrative, financial, human resources, procurement and other operational processes. MIMU compliance with UNDP procedures is overseen by the MIMU Project Board.

6.2 MIMU Advisory Board

The MIMU Advisory Board offers an integral link to the main users of MIMU services and provides strategic guidance to MIMU as per the MIMU Advisory Board Terms of Reference (December 2018). The MIMU Advisory Board holds no legal responsibility or authority for MIMU or its activities.

The MIMU Advisory Board is chaired by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and comprises representatives of the stakeholder groups which are the main users of MIMU's services, namely UN agencies, INGOs, and Myanmar NGOs - each providing three representatives, as well as one donor representative. An ex-officio observer from UNDP represents the MIMU Project Board.

Specific responsibilities of the MIMU Advisory Board:

- Provide guidance on MIMU's strategic direction and priorities,
- Proactively engage with stakeholders to promote and resource MIMU,
- Ensure data integrity,
- Keep members' wider constituencies informed of MIMU initiatives and developments,
- Assist MIMU to closely engage with relevant activities of the stakeholder group,
- Build and maintain a competent Board which can continue to support MIMU.

The MIMU Advisory Board meets twice a year with the possibility of additional ad-hoc meetings as required.

6.3 Monitoring and Accountability

MIMU remains **accountable to its stakeholders** through the MIMU Advisory Board, and accountable to its donors through **compliance with UNDP procedures** in finance, administration, human resources, and procurement as overseen by the MIMU Project Board.

Regular monitoring will be undertaken by the MIMU Manager for reports on progress and developments to the MIMU Advisory Board, and on procedural compliance, risk, and use of funds to the MIMU Project Board.

Periodic peer reviews and **external evaluations** will be arranged by the MIMU Manager in collaboration with the MIMU Advisory Board to assist in confirming and refining MIMU's direction and efficiency in the changing context.

7. Collaboration with Key Stakeholders

7.1 Collaboration with inter-agency coordination bodies and the donor community

MIMU will seek to build and maintain relationships with key stakeholders in inter-agency coordination - UN agencies, NGOs, and the donor community – for a constructive, collaborative environment to promote the overall effectiveness of MIMU. Specifically, MIMU will seek the following support

- a. **Commitment to sharing relevant, accurate and timely information** relevant to MIMU's specific role and activities supporting development, humanitarian, and peace-related activities;

- b. **Assigning an IM Focal Point** within their respective agency to facilitate information exchange and coordination with MIMU and other stakeholders.
- c. **Sharing of information on planned activities** in which MIMU can usefully contribute in a timely manner.
- d. **Promoting complementarity and synergies with MIMU activities** and avoiding duplication or competing initiatives.

7.2 Support to wider coordination of Information Management approaches and activities

MIMU will maintain close collaboration and coordination on IM-related issues across Myanmar with agencies and entities engaged in emergency preparedness and response, development, humanitarian and peace activities. MIMU will reach out to provide synergies, support the development of harmonized systems grounded in good practice, and strengthen IM capacity.

MIMU will continue to play a key role in IM support in crisis situations, working closely with UNOCHA Myanmar and other partners to strengthen preparedness and response. MIMU provides country-wide base datasets and products supporting data preparedness, whereas OCHA maintains and elaborates specific IM products on humanitarian issues related to conflict, emergencies, and displacement (access, monitoring of affected populations, rapid assessments among others). MIMU also provides capacity building to agencies and entities engaged in humanitarian response and responds to requests for technical assistance in emergencies.

7.3 Collaboration with other agencies and entities

MIMU has developed relations and initiatives with a large number of agencies and entities in Myanmar. Key areas of collaboration have included:

- a. **Collection of relevant data and information** for MIMU's regular product base and data preparedness related to humanitarian, development, and peace-focused activities;
- b. **Coordination around specific information issues and needs** (support to emergency IM, updating key datasets on village/infrastructure location, administrative boundaries, etc.);
- c. **Building the technical capacity of** relevant personnel in the use of geospatial, data, and IM techniques to strengthen the accuracy of available datasets and ensure a robust information base to support humanitarian and development programming across Myanmar;
- d. **Provision of technical support and advice** relevant to MIMU's areas of expertise.
- e. **Input to technical initiatives to strengthen information management standards, policies and practice.** This includes support to developing and implementing a national coding system, establishing accurate countrywide village and service mapping, support to information management in emergencies.

8. Sustainability

In the absence of any central, widely accessible IM function ensuring transparency and availability of datasets and IM resources, MIMU fills a critical gap by providing comprehensive and innovative services and products which are not available to development, humanitarian and peace actors through other providers. MIMU also plays a critical role in the provision of technical and capacity-building support in the development of standards and robust IM systems.

Alongside these ongoing activities, MIMU has been laying the ground for a future exit strategy in which core capacities would be made available through longer-term structures. Specific activities have included:

- Creating a foundation for good information practices through supporting the development and implementation of data standards which are in use by a large and growing number of agencies and entities working in and for Myanmar;

- Building IM capacity among staff working in humanitarian, development, and peace-focused sectors ;
- Internal review and reorientation (2015 Sustainability Study, clarification of MIMU Principles as a lens through which to review proposed longer-term options);
- Expansion of technical assistance activities and partnerships;
- Periodic review of the changing context and options by the MIMU Advisory Board.

MIMU will continue to review options to ensure the longer-term sustainability and quality of MIMU's data and IM resources under the guidance of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and the MIMU Advisory Board.

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