



Minutes of Information Management Network Meeting

1st February 2023, 3PM MMT, online via Zoom

Agenda

1. Learning from Phone Surveys - *Presented by IFPRI and REACH*
2. Village Mapping Update - *Presented by MIMU*
3. Humanitarian Update - *Presented by UNOCHA*
4. Updates on cluster/sector/agency initiatives
5. AOB and other discussions

Attendance

Chair: Shon Campbell (MIMU)

Participants: FAO, UNFPA, IFPRI, REACH, MIMU, WWF, ICRC, UNHCR, UNOCHA (11 participants from 9 organisations)

1. Learning from Phone Surveys – *Presented by IFPRI and REACH*

The first part of the presentation considered the experience of the use of phone surveys in the Myanmar Agricultural Policy Support Activity, a project implemented by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and Michigan State University.

Phone surveys were started during the COVID-19 pandemic as a way to gather data and have continued in Myanmar due to the ongoing difficulty in gathering information directly. Phone surveys suffer from the same disadvantages as in-person surveys, but have advantages such as lower cost, shorter length, and easier access to remote areas.

The IFPRI team is currently following the value chain agents upstream, midstream, and downstream and interviewing them twice a year to assess problems in the agricultural season.

The Myanmar Household Welfare Survey (MHWS) was set up, interviewing 12,100 respondents from nearly all townships in Myanmar, with the aim of collecting data on a wide range of household and individual welfare indicators—including wealth, livelihoods, unemployment, food insecurity, diet quality, health shocks, and coping strategies. The survey is representative at the national, urban, and state regional level. Four rounds of the survey were conducted last year and three rounds are planned for this year.

Another survey that IFPRI was conducting is the Myanmar Agricultural Performance Survey (MAPS), following up with the farmers identified in the MHWS with a separate survey focusing on agriculture performance. The survey was conducted with around 4,000 farming households from a large number of townships, aiming to be representative at the national, urban, state, and regional level. Two rounds were conducted in 2022, with another two rounds planned for 2023.

Sampling is one of the challenges in phone surveys as not everyone has a phone, making it difficult for the survey to be fully representative. Attrition, or loss of respondents as survey rounds progress, is also a major issue which needs to be taken into account when interpreting the results of surveys which track changes for particular populations over time.

Areas of discussion included:

- Feeding back results – it has not been possible to share survey results directly with the survey respondents however the results are put in the public domain for anyone to consult. The reason for the survey is to inform actions that might be taken by stakeholders about problems in different parts of the country.
- The frequency of collecting data from agricultural equipment retailers. The surveys have been collecting this data twice a year, at the beginning of the monsoon and summer seasons.

- Preparation of the telephone list – the project works with companies with access to large databases of phone numbers, providing instructions on the quotas for rural and urban households, as well as education level.
- There is also a plan to look into gender differences in the responses to the survey questions. The sample size was split between men and women, with most of the questions focused on the situation of their households.

The second part of the presentation was from REACH, focusing on lessons learned from collecting data through phone surveys in the 2022 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA). The MSNA used a hybrid approach to data collection, with household surveys conducted face-to-face in some areas and remotely through non-probability quota sampling in others. 6,343 surveys were conducted across 329 townships from all states/regions and sub-regions of Myanmar, with roughly equal numbers of male and female respondents across three main population groups: other vulnerable people with humanitarian needs (OVPs), internally displaced people (IDPs), non-displaced stateless people (NDSPs).

The advantages of conducting remote data collection through phone surveys included access to large and hard-to-reach areas, cost-effectiveness, and being able to take advantage of the comprehensive phone panel of the remote data collection partner at a township level with equal proportions of male and female respondents for all population groups. However, the limitations included potential bias from the selection of households for remote data collection, underrepresentation of households without access to a mobile phone or electricity, and data collection through proxy may result in collecting from a single household respondent rather than the whole. Snowballing was also used for the IDP and NDSP population groups, which may have skewed the sample in certain areas. Random digit dialing of phone numbers was not used due to the size of the sample and potential challenges in achieving a gender balance. The individual level data collected through phone surveys was often collected from proxy respondents, leading to an underrepresentation of people with disabilities, particularly in the health data.

Areas of discussion

- There was no mechanism in place for feedback and the data was only shared with humanitarian organizations as per its main purpose. There may be both benefits and drawbacks in sharing results with respondents: On one hand, populations seeing their concerns reflected in the results may be more interested to continue to be involved, but it could also lead to bias in responses.
- Disability data was collected in the 2022 MSNA using the Washington group set of questions, but it was underrepresented and not shared due to concerns over its accuracy.
- The question of bias was raised in regards to collecting data both in-person and remotely. It was stated that there were no main differences between the two methods, although the prevalence of disability was three times higher in the in-person collected data compared to that collected remotely by phone.

The 2023 MSNA will include the same three population groups, i.e. the vulnerable crisis affected population group, the IDP population group, and the non-displaced stateless population group in Rakhine, but with the addition of the returnee population group.

2. Village Mapping Update – *Presented by MIMU*

Since MIMU was set up in 2007, one of its main tasks has been to collect base mapping information and resources to support humanitarian and development activities. This was needed due to the lack of available official data and also the lack of digital systems. The MIMU team began by requesting a list of village locations in order to prepare village maps however all that was available was a list of Myanmar language village names with the names of their village tract, township and state/region. There were no coordinates allowing villages to be digitally mapped, and no English-language transliterations of place names.

Hence MIMU began collecting the coordinates of villages, seeking to include all villages around the country on digital maps. The information is recorded in the MIMU Place Codes which include over 66,300 villages in Myanmar. So far, 78% of these villages have been mapped as a direct result of MIMU efforts with the help of various UN agencies and NGOs – Shan, Kachin and Kayin are the areas with the lowest level of village mapping. MIMU started a village mapping exercise in July 2022, seeking support from 21 agencies working in specific areas

with poor mapping of villages. Following training by MIMU, the participants were able to update information on almost 1900 villages across 39 townships. This includes corrected or verified locations of 1500 villages, updates of about 300 locations, and removal of a few villages that did not exist. The updated information from this exercise will be shared along with the official changes to villages from 2010 to January 2021. The MIMU Place Codes are a valuable resource for keeping track of village changes and locations, and MIMU continues to work on updating and verifying village information. Agencies that have field presence are welcomed to contribute to MIMU's village mapping exercise.

3. Humanitarian Update – *Presented by UNOCHA*

The latest round of HPC process has been ongoing for nearly six months and the team has produced the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) document.

The total number of people in need for the 2023 humanitarian program cycle is 17.6 million, with a target of 4.5 million people through the Humanitarian Response Plan with a total requirement is USD 764 million.

The MSNA (Multi-Sector Needs Assessment) findings, along with food security assessments and education assessments and other cluster specific assessments were used to identify people in need and calculate the figures. The four population groups considered in the HNO and HRP are IDPs, Returned IDPs, non-displaced stateless people and other crisis-affected people with humanitarian needs. The projection for IDP groups was conducted by UNHCR on behalf of ICCG.

The final HNO and HRP documents have been released and are available on the MIMU website and Relief Web. The team will start monitoring the plan on a quarterly basis.

During the Q&A session, a question was asked about the difference between people in need figures and target figures. It was noted that the people in need figures were calculated based on the global JIAF approach (Joint Intersectoral Analysis Framework - a new method for analyzing the multiple needs of populations in crisis), while the target population was based on the number of cluster specific calculations according to the global cluster guidelines.

4. Updates on cluster/sector/agency initiatives

FAO: FAO and WFP have finished data collection for the fifth round of their joint assessment for food security monitoring. The data is currently under review and the report is being prepared. The report for the fourth round can be viewed on the Data in Emergencies (DIEM) website. 5000 beneficiaries have received emergency assistance in Kayah, southern Shan and Karen state under the FAO emergency program, with 2500 distributions of agriculture inputs completed and the remaining 2500 distributions in Karen state being prepared. The FAO is also preparing for other interventions in Ayeyarwady, Rakhine, and other dry zones, but distributions have not started yet. Further updates will be reported bilaterally if necessary.

UNHCR: UNHCR is currently working on merging the camp list from the sub-national clusters for the CCCM cluster. Aiming to have camp lists and camp profiles available at the national level by the end of February.

IFPRI: IFPRI has finished the first round of the Myanmar household welfare survey and estimates on a number of indicators such as personal status and poverty are expected to be available by the end of the month. Implementation of the agricultural soil survey has also started this week and is expected to take about three weeks. Results from this survey are expected to be available in the beginning of March.

UNFPA: Updating the 2023 population projection data at township level for the purpose of preparing population datasets for humanitarian preparedness is ongoing, with the support of UNFPA headquarter, then it will be uploaded at Common operational data sets for population statistics (COD-PS) page of OCHA which will also be shared with on various platforms including MIMU. Additionally, UNFPA has also conducted other project / programme-based surveys, including a program-based survey on women and girls with disabilities.

MIMU: MIMU has been updating the MIMU Assessment Tracking, with close to 3000 assessments registered, including restricted reports not in the public domain. The MIMU website provides the metadata for assessments, including information on the data collection process, available languages, and contacts for follow-up where available. The MIMU 5W has seen an increase in local NGO participation in the latest rounds. The next MIMU 5W collection will be starting this month. The MIMU team is updating the approximate village tract boundaries and these changes will be reflected in the new Pcode updates. The MIMU Product Catalogue, which provides an overview of MIMU products, is being updated and will be released soon. MIMU is arranging a briefing on the information environment in Myanmar for newcomers- this will include an overview of different types of data and how they are collected, including village and admin boundaries' mapping and statistical baseline data, and/or lack thereof at some administrative levels.

5. AOB and other discussions

The next regular meeting will be held on April 5th, 2023. It was suggested that those who have not already attended a MIMU Orientation session might want to join them on the first Tuesday of the month at 09.00 in English language and 14.00 in Myanmar language. Customized orientations can be provided for those who cannot attend the scheduled ones.