



## Minutes of Information Management Network Meeting

5<sup>th</sup> April 2023, 3PM MMT, online via Zoom

### Agenda

1. Climate change and relevant data and information - *Myanmar Climate Change Alliance Programme (MCCA2), UN-Habitat*
2. Learning and examples on the importance of information linkages from more than a decade of Climate work - *Spectrum SDKN*
3. Humanitarian Update - *UNOCHA*
4. Updates on cluster/sector/agency initiatives
5. AOB and other discussions

### Attendance

Chair: Shon Campbell (MIMU)

Participants: UN-Habitat, WFP, WHO, IFPRI, MIMU, UNOCHA, Spectrum SDKN, UNFPA, FAO, WWF-Myanmar, UNHCR, AMDA Myanmar (17 participants from 12 organisations)

### 1. Climate change and relevant data and information – *Myanmar Climate Change Alliance Programme (MCCA2), UN-Habitat*

The presentation began with a mention of the recently concluded Myanmar Climate Action Week conducted from 20-26 March 2023. The global climate risk outlook was then discussed, highlighting the findings of the IPCC synthesis report from the sixth assessment released on 20<sup>th</sup> of March. The report emphasized the urgency of taking climate actions to catch up with the promises made in the Paris Agreement. It specifically called for limiting global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius by 2030, as the world is already 1.1 degrees warmer than pre-industrial levels. The need for bold decisions and investments by member states to reduce carbon emissions and increase adaptive action to address climate change risks was stressed.

Focusing on Myanmar, it was stated that the country is the second most impacted by climate extreme events over the past two decades, due in part to cyclone Nargis as well as more frequent and intense climate events since then, including widespread flooding in 2015. According to the 2020 ND-GAIN risk index, Myanmar is ranked as the 35<sup>th</sup> most vulnerable country to climate change globally due to its high vulnerability score. The low climate readiness ranking of Myanmar (164<sup>th</sup> globally) indicates that the country is more prone to climate risks.

Myanmar has faced a range of climate-related impacts in recent years, including landslides in upland areas, droughts, extreme heat events in the Dry Zone, and annual flooding in various states, resulting in both temporary and permanent migration. Urban heat has become a pressing issue, exacerbating heatwaves. Coastal areas face significant challenges due to rising sea levels, which threatens agricultural productivity, natural resources management and disrupts livelihoods. There is a link between climate change impacts and the loss of natural resources, such as the rapid deforestation of mangroves in the Delta areas – Myanmar has one of the highest deforestation rates globally, and has lost almost 60% of its mangroves in the last two to three decades.

Myanmar has received significantly less climate finance per capita compared to countries without political conflict. According to a study from the International Crisis Group, countries impacted by both conflict and climate change are more prone to risk, yet they receive a third of the financing for climate adaptation in countries without political conflict. In the last two decades, Myanmar received only USD 4.7 per capita climate finance, while countries without conflict received almost \$15 per capita climate finance.

Due to political instability, funding from major sources like the Global Climate Fund and the Green Climate Fund has been cut, as 75% of Myanmar's climate finance came in the form of debt through government counterparts.

Private sector investments have also been reduced due to the high-risk nature of investing in Myanmar. Limited options remain, with only a few multilateral or bilateral donors providing funding in the climate change sector.

The way forward may involve Myanmar adopting a nexus approach to mainstream climate change across multi-sector programming and putting emphasis on community-led adaptation. This approach was tested after cyclone Nargis, and it could be adapted to address climate change challenges in the current context.

Climate change challenges in Myanmar include shifting priorities due to changing ground conditions, increased humanitarian needs, absence of climate change mainstreaming across sectors and programs, lack of climate data at the sub-national level, limited engagement with civil society organizations, and inadequate support for local partners. More efforts are needed to increase awareness and knowledge at the grassroots level.

In 2019, Myanmar adopted a climate change policy, strategy, and master plan, and in 2021, it submitted its first Nationally Determined Contribution to the UNFCCC. However, without institutional support and international backing, it is unlikely that Myanmar will meet the targets defined within these plans.

The EU funded Myanmar Climate Change Alliance (MCCA) is a programme implemented by UN Habitat, with its second phase running until 2025. The first phase supported the development of climate change policy, strategy, and master plans (2018-2030). The current phase aims to scale up local adaptation and mitigation planning and strengthen climate dialogue in Myanmar.

The Myanmar Climate Action Network (M-CAN) is a non-state climate actors' network, voluntarily committed to addressing climate change issues in the country. M-CAN focuses on knowledge management, capacity building, collaboration, partnership, and advocacy for resource mobilization. As of now, 31 organizations have joined M-CAN.

Myanmar Climate Action Week 2023 was a full week of events, with 11 side events and two main events, involving over 50 speakers from more than 25 organizations. The event brought together various actors to discuss climate adaptation, inclusive resilience, the role of civil society organizations in climate action, multi-sector programming, and more. It also featured a Climate Fair and a Youth Forum to engage younger generations in taking a lead role in climate action.

Myanmar Climate Action Week 2023 provided an opportunity to reflect on the connections between climate change and human rights issues. Climate change impacts various human rights, such as the right to education, housing, livelihoods, and the future of generations to come. It is important to integrate climate change considerations into all programming and work collectively to address these challenges across agencies and programmes in Myanmar.

## 2. Learning and examples on the importance of information linkages from more than a decade of Climate work – *Spectrum SDKN*

Spectrum's various projects have included participatory monitoring and management, research on women in electrification, advocacy for renewable energy, promotion of transparency on natural resources, land registration mechanisms, and the creation of educational resources for teachers and children. A significant current program is the promotion of edible insects for food and feed in Myanmar, which originated from climate adaptation work in the Dry Zone 12 years ago.

Spectrum's climate work started in 2010 with the translation of the Tearfund CEDRA (Climate Change and Environmental Degradation Risk and Adaptation Assessment) manual. This manual was later updated and contextualized for use in Myanmar in 2012, resulting in a range of community tools for adaptation planning. Spectrum has also produced awareness-raising materials, such as a cartoon book called Questions from Mr. Curious, alongside work to better understand energy use patterns in Myanmar. Surprising findings included high solar usage in Shan State and the significant percentage of overall energy use for cooking in rural areas.

In discussing information linkages, there is a need to visualize and understand the most significant areas of energy use in order to focus efforts appropriately. Detailed disaggregation and mapping of energy use in various areas of Myanmar has helped to understand trends and to identify areas needing specific support, while also influencing larger organizations to adopt a more detailed approach in their projects. Gender focus also helped that. Spectrum's work in some rural areas had found the primary needs to be for lighting, communication, and extended working hours. It is also important to appropriately classify productive energy use so that the importance of lighting for education and caregiving is not overlooked.

Regarding gender and energy, it was mentioned that energy is often considered a male domain - even though women are perhaps the most important users, they are assumed to know little about energy or working with electricity. Thus, energy literacy is a key national gap area that flows into the climate aspects of energy.

In collaboration with WWF, a document called "Myanmar's Electricity Vision" was produced in 2015-2016 and has been updated in 2022 to include the improvements in technology options and costs, especially in solar and other sources of lighting. This publication includes a viable map for differing energy use scenarios up to 2050.

Another interesting piece of work was conducted with Achelous Energy, involving floating, inline riverine electricity generators as an alternative to building a dam (hydrokinetic energy production). Initially, Spectrum's involvement was to be for community engagement work, but it quickly became clear that there was a lack of information on water flow in the rivers and modeling the situation. Despite having over 40 river flow monitoring stations in Myanmar, obtaining and using river flow data proved to be difficult and expensive. Efforts were made to interface the data with climate models to develop generalized maps for the country on river flows. The potential of using this data for better flood prediction and understanding how communities can prepare, was emphasized as an unrealized opportunity. The importance of addressing these hazards was highlighted by an IMF country diagnostic discussing disaster impacts and their financial implications.

The World Bank's Asia Pacific Economic Update mentioned the triple dividend of investing in adaptation, namely avoided losses, induced economic benefits, and social and environmental benefits. Investment in countries with limited adaptation planning, particularly in lower-income countries like Myanmar, was argued to have a much higher financial return than in developed countries, because the value of avoided losses will be higher. The largest evaluated hydropower-induced resettlement project in the country, the Upper Paunglong project, was discussed as having severe negative social and economic impacts. The project involved the resettlement of over 2,500 households and left people worse off in 14 out of 18 categories assessed.

Also important is work on land use planning and boundary disputes, and particularly supporting community mapping to manage their local environment. Suspension of the EITI (Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative) system which was operating in Myanmar for many years has resulted in a loss of information on critical energy flows and forestry monitoring.

During the Q&A session, a question was raised about whether the list of topics in the last slide, such as climate change, energy, and others, could be rephrased as emergency risk, as these issues are also relevant in humanitarian intervention and conflict resolution. The response acknowledged that these topics could indeed be phrased that way, however energy does not have a seat at the table in humanitarian fora, making it difficult to get people to consider the humanitarian need and secure funding for such concerns. The classification of these types of issues as development issues rather than urgent life-saving humanitarian concerns has meant they are excluded from the humanitarian disciplines. This definition issue may take decades to change, as it presents a significant challenge in the humanitarian field.

Another question was posed about the changes in energy use in the last two years. Agencies have been able to conduct only limited studies on energy use changes, however it appears that people's energy usage has likely decreased significantly and become less efficient over this period. The gains made in energy efficiency over the past decade may have been lost, with the energy landscape likely to have regressed to resemble what it was like between 2005 and 2009.

Looking at trends in energy use for cooking, there was a significant increase in the number of people cooking with electricity between the 2014 census and the 2019 intercensal survey, as well as a smaller increase in LPG usage. A

project supplying LPG to IDP camps in Kachin had successfully demonstrated its potential as a cooking fuel across the country.

Another question concerned air pollution measurements in Yangon. There is a clear need for air quality monitoring and there were at least three monitoring stations set up around Yangon, but they have since been shut down. The importance of bringing air quality monitoring back was emphasized, and Spectrum has published materials on Myanmar air quality and ventilation quality. The burning of waste and leaves during this time of year particularly contributes to poor air quality.

### 3. Humanitarian Update – *UNOCHA*

**Inter-sector/Inter-cluster Information Management Priorities:** A Rapid Needs Assessment training was conducted in late March. The end-of-year report for the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) will be published soon and shared on the ReliefWeb and MIMU websites. The report reveals that 4.4 million people were reached out of the 6.2 million targeted in 2022. Efforts are being made to create a centralized data management system for HRP data collection. The implementation of this system may take approximately five to six months.

**Food Security Cluster Information:** Data collection for Q1 of this year is ongoing, with a deadline set for April 30th. Once the data is collected, it will be consolidated for analysis.

### 4. Updates on cluster/sector/agency initiatives

**UNFPA:** UNFPA recently conducted a study assessing partner capacities for disability inclusion, specifically focusing on their ability to provide accessible and quality services to persons with disabilities. The findings and recommendations from the study are considered valuable for promoting disability inclusion.

**FAO:** Fifth round of the FAO-WFP assessment has finished, and are currently working on finalizing the findings. The results will be presented at the upcoming food security cluster meeting.

**Food Security Cluster:** The Food Security Cluster is currently gathering data for the Q1 5W from partner organizations. These results will feed into quarterly HRP reports as well as the global food security cluster reports.

**WHO:** The information management data system at WHO is currently operating across various units such as HIV, hepatitis, malaria etc. with steps being taken to develop a more integrated system while collaboration with partners is ongoing. There is also an interest in environmental matters and the likely impacts on health, such as the risk of expansion of malaria-prone areas with rising temperatures, hence the interest in coordinating with the group on climate change, adaptation, and exploring renewable energy for hospitals.

**UN-Habitat:** UN-Habitat highlighted two upcoming initiatives: the Climate Gender Analysis, which aims to explore the linkages between climate and gender, and the Private Sector Engagement Strategy for climate change, planned for May. The Climate Gender Analysis will be a collaborative effort with other organizations, with the intent to utilize the findings across various programs in Myanmar. UN-Habitat expressed interest in connecting with partners who share similar goals and mentioned that more detailed discussions will take place during the Myanmar Climate Action Network (M-CAN) meetings. The contact information was offered for those who wish to get in touch for M-CAN.

**Clusters update from UNHCR:** The Multi-sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) indicators have now been completed and include a greater emphasis on CCCM indicators. A Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring Survey was conducted in coordination with the Global Shelter Cluster, and the results used along with partner feedback in a meeting to address identified gaps and develop a work plan which will be finalised in the coming days.

**AMDA Myanmar:** The Association of Medical Doctors of Asia is a Japanese NGO with three ongoing projects in the country, including a public health initiative in Magway and a maternal and child health improvement project in Shan State. Implementation of activities has become challenging due to the current security and other

administrative issues, however AMDA Myanmar is continuing to build on its long history in the country through its work.

**MIMU:** The latest round of the MIMU 5W (Who is doing What, Where, When, and for Whom), includes input from 230 organizations as of February 28<sup>th</sup>. It covers 22 sectors and 157 sub-sectors in humanitarian, development, and peace-related activities. The level of detail in the data extends to village and camp level. MIMU has shifted from static reports to new dashboard formats which enable users to search by area or activity type such as the MIMU 5W Overview Dashboard. The state region maps and Project focus maps will be released in the coming week, followed by overview reports. In terms of reporting organisations, there has been a growing number of local NGOs reporting and a resumption of reporting by international NGOs. Agency names are no longer shown in any public products, and the 5W data is not shared. However, agencies that have submitted 5W inputs can request the anonymized data.

Several MIMU trainings have been made available online in Myanmar language. MIMU's Power BI training in particular has been extremely popular and is being utilized well beyond the humanitarian-development community. MIMU is open to providing additional briefings in the Myanmar language or to partner organisations.

**Spectrum SDKN:** The insect protein for food and feed project by Spectrum is progressing well. This initiative offers climate, waste reduction, livelihood, and nutrition benefits and has seen growth on an international scale. A comprehensive manual on the subject, translated into the Myanmar language, has recently been released, aiming to boost the project's impact in the country.

## 5. AOB and other discussions

Many local agencies are facing immense difficulties due to the lack of project support. The majority of these projects are considered development projects rather than strictly humanitarian, resulting in cancellations or shutdowns. Issues such as gender considerations in energy situations within IDP camps are critical but often overlooked.

Despite their small scale, some pilot projects in IDP camp areas are considered significant for their potential to scale up. These projects might not be visible on the 5W reports, but they can be of great interest to other organizations for replication, learning, or collaboration. It would be helpful to include these projects in the 5W reports for increased visibility. This would require reviewing the MIMU 5W categories to integrate energy activities. It is recommended that specific suggestions for missing categories be provided so that they can be considered for integration in the next round of MIMU 5W.

The next regular meeting will be tentatively on June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023.