



# Minutes of Myanmar Language Information Management Network Meeting

## 25<sup>th</sup> September 2024, 2PM MMT, online via Zoom

*The meeting was conducted in Myanmar language and this is a translation of the original minutes.*

### Agenda

1. Presentation – Trends in Child Labour in Myanmar 2021-24 (ILO)
2. Adjustment of the meeting schedule to quarterly
3. Updates on Sector/Cluster/Agency Initiatives
4. AOB and other discussions

### Attendance

Chair: Ei Ei Thein (MIMU)

Participants: AHRN, BS, CBC, CPI, DRC, GH, HALO, ICRC, IFPRI, ILO, JOICFP, MC, MIMU, MSU, NAG, Nyein, SDF, SWISSAID, UNICEF, UNODC, UNRCO, WF, WVIM (31 participants from 23 organisations)

### 1. Trends in Child Labour in Myanmar 2021-24 (ILO)

Since 2021, Myanmar has faced deteriorating security, intensifying conflict, increased poverty, a sharp rise in displaced persons, economic contraction, and escalating job losses, exacerbating the prevalence of child labour.

To understand the situation, a situation assessment of child labour was commissioned in ethnic-controlled areas in Mon, Kayin, Shan, and Kayah states. In these regions, children are often forced to work in hazardous conditions due to factors such as lack of resources, conflict, poverty, and displacement. Language barriers and inadequate school supplies make enrolling in new states difficult for relocated children.

The study uses a qualitative methodology given the difficulties of conducting a quantitative survey under current circumstances. Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted in the first quarter of 2024. Due to the non-randomized selection and sample size, the findings are only statistically valid within the study locations. Despite these limitations, there is a high level of agreement between different participants and stakeholder groups, suggesting the findings accurately reflect child labour trends in the states studied.

It was found that children are entering the workforce at a younger age (around 8 years old), possibly even younger than prior to 2021. Child labour is involved in dangerous activities such as gambling, militias, and criminal enterprises. In terms of gender differences, boys are more likely to be recruited into armed conflict and scamming industries, while girls are more likely to be recruited for domestic work or forced into early marriages. Economic hardship has led to a significant decline in nutrition, with children consuming lower-quality food. Traumatic experiences such as violence, displacement, and the loss of homes have severely impacted the mental health of children. Drug use is also reportedly rising.

There has been a noticeable shift in attitudes towards child labour, as families seek to avoid military conscription. The enforcement of the People's Military Service Law of 2010 and conscription by ethnic armed groups have led families to view child labour as a means of protecting children from recruitment. Able-bodied adults fleeing conscription have left children to take up economic responsibilities.

Protecting children from child labour and other rights violations is becoming increasingly difficult for civil society organizations, hindering their protection efforts.

Recommendations include continued child labour monitoring and service referrals. It is important to adjust the strategies and operational procedures to introduce urgent measures to protect children, especially from dangerous forms of labour. Education support, including access to alternative and non-formal education and

vocational training, is needed. Safe migration must be ensured. Awareness-raising on child labour must continue. It is also necessary to safeguard the physical safety of children, families, community workers, and other professionals and volunteers supporting them.

## 2. Adjustment of the meeting schedule to quarterly

Since the founding of the IM Network Myanmar Language Chapter in May 2021, meetings were initially held monthly. In 2022, the frequency was adjusted to bimonthly. It was proposed to change the meeting schedule to quarterly starting in 2025. It was polled through Zoom's Poll System, and with a majority of 23 out of 24 participants in favor, it was decided to proceed with the quarterly schedule. The detailed schedule will be presented to the IM Network members in the upcoming November meeting.

## 3. Updates on Sector/Cluster/Agency Initiatives

**JOICFP:** Pending the registration process for the project.

**WVM:** Contributed inputs to MIMU HDP Nexus 5W. The budget year is concluding, and processes are underway to finalize the development project across 6 townships.

**CPI:** A training on RNA (Rapid Needs Analysis) was provided to implementing partners. An RNA will be conducted to support the flood emergency response. CPI also contributed 5W data.

**WASH Cluster:** The Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) process is underway for 2025. A draft of the People in Need analysis and Severity Scale data at the township level has been produced and submitted to OCHA. People targeting and funding calculations will follow.

**MIMU:** So far, 180 organizations have submitted 5W inputs. Pcodes checking and data cleaning are in progress. Due to the prevalence of restricted data, donors and partners needing access to 5W data will need to contact the contributing organizations directly and contact details will be shared pending permission from the original contributors. Dashboards will be released before the Thadingyut holidays, with maps to follow. For the flood emergency response, MIMU has produced several satellite analysis maps. Training sessions are paused for now due to the 5W exercise but will resume in November, starting with an IM workshop, followed by GIS training in December. IM Network members will be prioritized in the selection process.

## 4. AOB and other discussions

The next meeting will be tentatively on the last Wednesday of November 27<sup>th</sup>. Please contact [ei.ei.thein@undp.org](mailto:ei.ei.thein@undp.org) if you have anything to present or discuss.