# South East Data Network

# TERMS OF REFERENCE

# January 29, 2015

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# Background

The South East of Myanmar remains one of the most complex regions of the country. Bordering Thailand, Laos and China, it includes a wide diversity of terrain and ethnic composition as well as valuable natural and economic resources. The legacy of long-standing conflicts – widespread displacement, mine contamination, land issues and chronic under-development – contrast the growing interests in the region’s environmental and industrial resources.

Numerous initiatives have highlighted the gaps in data and information needed for programming in the South East (SE), including the SE Stock-take (May 2013) - a desk review bringing together available information as an initial step toward the planned Joint Peace Needs Assessment / JPNA .

At the initiative of the inter-agency Information Management Network, a Thematic meeting focused on Data and the South East was held in November, 2014. Recommendations from this meeting included the creation of a specific group/network to focus on identifying available and required information for planning and programming in the SE.

# Objectives

The SE Data Network has been established under the inter-agency Information Management Network in January 2015, seeking to bring together stakeholders active in the SE to promote the responsible, productive and coordinated use of information management in line with best practices.

The SE Data Network aims to:

1. Bring together agencies/actors with knowledge of the SE on a regular basis to update information relevant to humanitarian and development planning and programming.
2. Maintain a multi-sector overview of data holders and available data (who has what, its target and use), and identify key data gaps and priorities.
3. Develop and share best practices, standards and approaches for data sharing and information management in the SE context, including practical tools to strengthen IM in SE-based projects.
4. Advocate for policies and standards that enable data from different sources to be interoperable of data to support more efficient information management and avoid assessment fatigue (i.e. using Pcodes, documenting how data was collected and issues in its reliability),
5. Share information on planned data collection initiatives,
6. Collaborate on common platforms or projects which advance the understanding and use of information management in strengthening humanitarian response and development activities.

# Limitations

The SE Data Network provides a neutral and non-partisan space to focus on technical issues and the collation of available information from different sources on the situation across the SE as a resource for humanitarian and development planning and programming. Attention will be paid to the sensitivities around specific issues and datasets with careful consideration of the limitations which may be needed in gathering, sharing and visualizing data.

# Structure and Membership

The South East Network is a standing working group under the inter-agency IM Network and will report back to the IM Network on its activities and progress.

It will be open to representatives from all actors involved in humanitarian and development activities in the South East regardless of where they are based. The SE Data Network will actively work to engage stakeholders across all relevant sectors to ensure a broad base for coordination on data issues and data sharing.

The SE Data Network may establish time-bound task groups as required to work on specific tasks and report back regularly to the SE Data Network on their activities and achievements.

The SE Data Network working group will meet every two months with meetings arranged and chaired by MIMU with support from member agencies. Minutes and other documentation relevant to the SE Data Network will be disseminated directly to SE Data Network via a dedicated mailing group and shared through a dedicated page on the MIMU website.

# Expected Outputs

The SE Data Network will take on projects in line with the stated objectives above. Initial priorities/outputs will be as follows:

* Regular meetings of the membership and dissemination of meeting minutes,
* Steps to engage field-based IM practitioners of agencies active in the SE,
* An overview of what information is available and a tool to capture this information,
* Identify the main challenges to progressing information management in the South East of Myanmar,
* A workplan identifying 2-3 priorities for the coming year, and an action plan for doing so,