

GICHD UPDATE – MASG MEETING – 19 OCTOBER 2021

GICHD DIFFICULT TERRAIN IN MINE ACTION STUDY

Difficult terrain constitutes a major constraint to land release and has been frequently raised by NMAAs and operators as a point of concern during workshops, conferences and reports. This issue has also been cited by many States parties as impeding their ability to meet their obligations under the APMBBC and the CCM, leading to increasing numbers of extension requests. For many countries and territories, principle factors that are cited when referring to difficult terrain-related blockages are the following: accessibility, security, remoteness, topographical difficulties, meteorological constraints, legislation and social or cultural factors.

Given the importance of this issue to the sector's ability to reach its targets, it is key to enhance our common understanding of how difficult terrain is impeding land release and what can be done to remove barriers to addressing these affected areas. The GICHD has therefore launched a research project to support NMAAs and other mine action stakeholders in understanding the various issues that are at play in defining difficult terrain and how these affected areas may be addressed more effectively and efficiently to return land to communities. Research objectives include (i) looking at the sector's definitions of difficult terrain, (ii) gaining a comprehensive understanding of the nature and extent of the associated challenges, (iii) understanding the impact of this contamination on local communities, (iv) analysing whether there are similarities in the approaches used by affected countries in dealing with difficult terrain, (v) identifying new or improved procedures, processes and tools to address this contamination, (vi) assessing the effect of planning, prioritisation, tasking and cost and (vii) estimating the impact of the difficult terrain issue on convention deadlines and completion initiatives. This study is set to be published in summer 2022.

EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE RISK EDUCATION

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) has gained significant traction over the past few years and is one of the primary means of preventing explosive ordnance accidents. The newly created section on risk education in the APMBBC Oslo Action Plan and more recently in the CCM Lausanne Action Plan clearly illustrate this positive development in the mine action sector. Over the past year, the GICHD has continued to provide global level EORE support within the framework of the EORE Advisory Group (both as its secretariat and as a core member) and also directly through regional and national initiatives. In this context, the Centre recently developed and launched two EORE sector-wide resources:

1. ['Introduction to EORE Essentials' e-learning module:](#)

This standalone [EORE e-learning module](#) was developed by the GICHD with the support of a group of EORE thematic experts from partner organisations and national mine action authorities. It is meant for anyone interested in learning about the basics of EORE and does not require any prior experience or knowledge of mine action. It is available in English on the GICHD [training platform](#). Since its launch in July 2021, 300+ people have successfully completed the course.

2. Working Paper on Measuring the Results of EORE:

In 2020-2021, the GICHD conducted a desk review to identify current and emerging good practices in measuring the effectiveness and impact of EORE. The [working paper on Measuring the Results of EORE](#) published in August 2021 seeks to make accessible the information gathered in relation to this question so far, whilst also outlining areas that need continued research.

NEW ONLINE COURSE ON INTERNATIONAL MINE ACTION STANDARDS (IMAS)

The IMAS serve to guide the development of National Mine Action Standards and Standing Operating Procedures that, in turn, ensure safe, effective and efficient mine action programmes and operations. Due to the importance of this framework to the mine action sector, there is a need to ensure a basic common understanding of what the IMAS are, why they are important, and how they are applied in mine action programmes and operations. Given the changing global context and the rapid evolution of online learning platforms, the GICHD is developing an online course that seeks to broaden the knowledge of IMAS within the mine action sector. This module will introduce the IMAS framework, its governance and scope, as well as its evolution and relevance to different groups of mine action users. It has been designed as an overall introduction and will not cover the content of individual IMAS chapters.

The course will provide a cost-effective platform for the IMAS to be accessible to all levels of mine action personnel. Being at an introductory level, the course will not remove the requirement for further training, but will provide a starting point for participants to continue their path to learning. It will be used as a complement to or in conjunction with in-person workshops, online training and independent learning to maximise the uptake of IMAS guidance in the sector. The GICHD expects this course to be available early 2022.

GICHD FRANCOPHONE REGIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME – ONLINE WORKSHOP ON THE ISSUES OF IEDs AND EORE

On 26-29 October 2021, the GICHD will organize an online workshop on the issues of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and Explosive Ordnance Risk Reduction (EORE) for the members of its Francophone Regional Cooperation Programme (FRCP).

This online workshop is another example of GICHD's commitment to revitalize and strengthen its FRCP. The Sahel and West African regions are particularly affected by the threat posed by IEDs. It was therefore felt as advantageous that the GICHD, within the framework of the FRCP, introduces to the countries and programmes of these regions the tools available to deal with this threat. This online workshop will be organized around three parts:

1. The first part will focus on the issue of IEDs. It will present the different tools available to deal with this threat and explain how they can support the national authorities' handling of IED contamination.
2. The second part will focus on the issue of EORE, particularly as it relates to IEDs. This part will inform participants about the latest developments in EORE and present the latest tools and resources available to mine action programs to promote EORE.
3. Finally, the third part of this workshop will be dedicated to the issue of safe and secure ammunition management with an introduction to the work of the Ammunition Management Advisory Team – AMAT.