

GICHD UPDATE – MASG MEETING – 15 OCTOBER 2020

Online tools and trainings

The current COVID-19 pandemic represents an unprecedented global health crisis that poses considerable challenges for the mine action sector. The needs for mine action remains however undiminished. In order to maintain business continuity as much as possible, the mine action sector should notably improve its ability to extend support remotely, which will be beneficial long after the pandemic has ceased. In this context, the GICHD has further developed its ability to provide on-line tools and trainings in a systematised and uniform manner as illustrated by two examples below.

Training on quality management for ASEAN countries

In a survey conducted in early 2020, quality management (QM) was identified as the greatest training need. This course for the ASEAN region, organised in September, was the second training on QM that the GICHD conducted so far this year and aimed at addressing good practices to increase efficiency, effectiveness, results and achievement of strategic goals through improved and enhanced quality management processes. The regional aspect of the course encouraged experience sharing from countries working in the same region and sometimes facing similar challenges. The online course was organised in cooperation with ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC). A total of 20 participants joined the training from six countries: Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam. All participants successfully passed the final test, demonstrating an average 26% increase of knowledge in QM in comparison with the pre-course baseline assessment.

Workshop on Risk Management, Residual Contamination and Liability for Afghanistan

A workshop on Risk Management, Residual Contamination and Liability was held in October 2020 and aimed at fostering discussions and identify key steps in developing a liability policy for the Mine Action Programme in Afghanistan (MAPA). The workshop featured several guest speakers who presented country case studies (Germany, France, Cambodia and Vietnam) of how liability is managed in the context of the removal and destruction of explosive ordnance. The workshop was organised in an hybrid format whereby in person participation took place in Kabul at a conference venue, and online facilitation and presentations were managed by the GICHD. A total of 37 Senior Management staff from the national programme and many implementing partners participated in person. An additional 24 Middle Management staff joined the workshop online in Afghanistan. As a result of the workshop, a plan will be consolidated to develop a policy on liability for mine action in Afghanistan and to ensure that key related documents such as National Mine Action Standards and quality management systems can be reviewed as appropriate.

Mine action law in Ukraine

Since the passing of the Mine Action Law in December 2018, the GICHD has been working closely with the OSCE PCU through its "Building Ukrainian Humanitarian Mine Action" project to advise on the development of mine action institutional arrangements, standards, quality management practices and training facilities.

In September 2020, an amended version of the mine action law was adopted by the Ukrainian parliament. This steps marks the starting of new positive developments for mine action in Ukraine, in particular the development of a National Mine Action Authority and Mine Action Centre. The GICHD will be strongly involved in supporting Ukraine in the development of such entities. This support will cover many aspects of mine action such as strategic planning, operational efficiency, standards and information management.

Strengthening the Francophone programme

The FRCP was established in 2006 when a group of French-speaking countries in Africa made a request for the establishment of a platform to exchange on various experiences in mine action and for support with the translation in French of mine action documents and standards. The aim of this initiative was to foster regional cooperation among French-speaking national mine action authorities. During the National Directors and UN Adviser meeting earlier this year, the GICHD organised a francophone regional breakout group for Francophone African countries. The discussions focused on the challenges in the region, the identification of solutions to these challenges and on how regional cooperation could be of added value to the affected countries. The participants recognised that the promotion of regional cooperation for French-speaking African countries could have a great added value in their mine action efforts, in particular with regard to key challenges such as the survey and clearance of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), the management of residual contamination and the promotion of risk education. In view of the above, the GICHD has decided to strengthen its FRCP, and, in this context, will continue its efforts to translate the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) as well as a publication on the issue of IEDs into French, and plans to organize, in 2021, a workshop on the issue of IEDs with a focus on the Sahel region.

Mine action and SDG

UNDP and GICHD are jointly implementing initiatives aiming at promoting the connection between mine action and the SDGs. These initiatives comprise the following categories: (i) providing support to strengthen the linkages between mine action and the SDGs at the national level, (ii) increasing evidence about mine action outcomes in the field of sustainable development, and (iii) promoting dialogue and coordination across humanitarian, development and peace sectors. The Centre is developing a new training package to enhance the practical understanding of the SDGs and their implications for the sector. In addition, the GICHD is conducting policy research to analyse the state of play and provide practical insights to guide the ongoing mainstreaming efforts within the sector. In close collaboration with BHMAC, NRA and UNDP, the Centre is finalizing a policy paper that examines how NMAA have integrated and operationalised the 2030 Agenda in these two countries. This new publication will be released in November 2020. Lastly, GICHD is currently finalizing a first-of-its-kind socio-economic impact assessment of mine action in Jordan. Based on the findings from previous studies, this report is based on the comprehensive mapping of the sustainable development outcomes of mine action activities, using the SDGs as analytical framework. This study analyzes the contributions of land release, victim assistance, explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), gender mainstreaming, along with partnerships and cooperation, towards the overarching principle to "leave no one behind."

The Arms and Ammunition Management Validation System (AAMVS)

The loss of SALW and ammunition from state stockpiles represents a significant source of diversion internationally. There is currently no internationally recognized system to validate if a state has implemented sufficiently robust measures to effectively reduce this risk, in adherence to best practices found in the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) and Modular Small Arms Control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC). Based on a EU Council Decision (2020/979), AMAT is initiating a project to determine the feasibility (Phase 1) and then to develop the plan (Phase 2) to build an Arms and Ammunition Management Validation System (AAMVS) to serve as tool enabling an impartial assessment of states' efforts to implement systemic safe and secure management practices.

The project began on 1 October 2020. The first month is dedicated to establishing the core elements of the AAMVS feasibility study. The first steps are establishing the Expert Working Group (EWG) and developing the feasibility study methodology. The EWG will consist of 10-16 experts in the fields of export controls, arms and ammunition management best practices, munitions manufacturing, weapons trade policy and conformity assessments. An inception workshop will be held in late November to formally launch the project. This will be an opportunity to describe the project in full detail to core partners and the EWG. The feasibility research is due by March 2021.