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## Mine/ERW Risk Education

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## Foreword

International standards for humanitarian demining programmes were first proposed by working groups at an international technical conference in Denmark, in July 1996. Criteria were prescribed for all aspects of demining, standards were recommended and a new universal definition of 'clearance' was agreed. In late 1996, the principles proposed in Denmark were developed by a UN-led working group and the International Standards for Humanitarian Mine Clearance Operations were developed. A first edition was issued by the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in March 1997.

The scope of these original standards has since been expanded to include the other components of mine action and to reflect changes to operational procedures, practices and norms. The standards were re-developed and renamed as International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) with the first edition produced in October 2001.

The United Nations has a general responsibility for enabling and encouraging the effective management of mine action programmes, including the development and maintenance of standards. UNMAS, therefore, is the office within the United Nations responsible for the development and maintenance of IMAS. IMAS are produced with the assistance of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

The work of preparing, reviewing and revising IMAS is conducted by technical committees, with the support of international, governmental and non-governmental organisations. The latest version of each standard, together with information on the work of the technical committees, can be found at <http://www.mineactionstandards.org/>. Individual IMAS are reviewed at least every three years to reflect developing mine action norms and practices and to incorporate changes to international regulations and requirements.

## Introduction

Over the last few years the mine action community has taken major steps towards professionalizing mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) risk education (MRE). A central element in that process has been the development of international standards for MRE by UNICEF, within the framework of the IMAS, which are maintained by UNMAS. In October 2003, UNICEF completed seven MRE standards, which were formally adopted as IMAS in June 2004:

- a) IMAS 07.11: Guide for the management of mine risk education;
- b) IMAS 07.31: Accreditation of mine risk education organisations and operations;
- c) IMAS 07.41: Monitoring of mine risk education programmes and projects;
- d) IMAS 08.50: Data collection and needs assessment for mine risk education;
- e) IMAS 12.10: Planning for mine risk education programmes and projects;
- f) IMAS 12.20: Implementation of mine risk education programmes and projects; and
- g) IMAS 14.20: Evaluation of mine risk education programmes and projects.

Since their adoption in 2004 the MRE IMAS, like the rest of IMAS, have set a global framework based on which national standards and other technical notes have been developed by countries and programmes. In March 2008, the IMAS Review Board endorsed a recommendation by UNICEF that the IMAS on MRE should be reviewed by the International MRE Advisory Group-which was in the process of being formed-before submission to the board for final approval. In May 2009, at the first meeting of International MRE Advisory Group, co-convened by UNICEF and the GICHD, members of the group agreed that the seven existing standards should be replaced with a new, single standard on MRE (the document presented herein).

## Mine and ERW Risk Education

### 1. Scope

This IMAS establishes principles and provides guidance for the effective assessment, planning, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of MRE. This IMAS updates and replaces all previous IMAS on MRE, specifically 07.11, 07.31, 07.41, 08.50, 12.10, 12.20, and 14.20. This document is intended to serve as a basic framework for MRE globally. Further detail on implementing the IMAS may be found in the guidebooks and modules referred to in the section below on resources (Annex A). This IMAS should be read in conjunction with other IMAS and guides. In particular, attention is drawn to IMAS 01.10, which defines the role of the IMAS, and establishes the guiding principles for their proper use.

### 2. References

A list of normative references is given in Annex A. Normative references are important documents to which reference is made in this standard and which form part of the provisions of this standard.

### 3. Terms, definitions and abbreviations

A complete glossary of all the terms, definitions and abbreviations used in the IMAS series of standards is given in IMAS 04.10.

In the IMAS series of standards, the words 'shall', 'should' and 'may' are used to indicate the intended degree of compliance. This use is consistent with the language used in ISO standards and guidelines:

- a) 'shall' is used to indicate requirements, methods or specifications that are to be applied in order to conform to the standard;
- b) 'should' is used to indicate the preferred requirements, methods or specifications; and
- c) 'may' is used to indicate a possible method or course of action.

The term 'National Mine Action Authority' (NMAA) refers to the government entity, often an inter-ministerial committee, in a mine-affected country charged with the responsibility for the regulation, management and coordination of mine action.

Note: In the absence of a NMAA, it may be necessary and appropriate for the UN, or some other recognised international body, to assume some or all of the responsibilities, and fulfil some or all the functions, of a MAC or, less frequently, an NMAA.

The term 'Mine Action Centre' (MAC) or 'Mine Action Coordination Centre' (MACC) refers to an organisation that, on behalf of the NMAA where it exists, typically is responsible for planning, coordination, overseeing and in some cases implementation of mine action projects. For national mine action programmes, the MAC/MACC usually acts as the operational office of the NMAA.

## **4. MRE general**

### **4.1. What is Mine/ERW Risk Education**

The term mine/ERW risk education (MRE) refers to activities that seek to reduce the risk of death and injury from mines and ERW, (including unexploded sub-munitions), by raising awareness and promoting safe behaviour. These activities include information exchange with at-risk communities, communication of safety messages to target groups, and support for community risk management and participation in mine action.

MRE should ensure that men, women and children in the affected communities are aware of the risks from mines and ERW and are encouraged to behave in a way that reduces the risk to people, property, and the environment. The objective is to reduce the risk to a level where people can live safely, and to recreate an environment where economic and social development can occur free from the constraints imposed by contamination.

MRE is an integral part of mine action planning and implementation. It should not normally be a stand-alone activity,<sup>1</sup> but wherever possible, should be implemented in support of and in conjunction with other mine action activities. Programmes and projects may be implemented in situations of emergency, transition, or development.<sup>2</sup> There are, however, examples where 'stand-alone' MRE is both feasible and appropriate. In certain emergencies when demining is not possible or has not begun or in countries with residual contamination (which is becoming increasingly common) MRE may form part of a school curriculum, and not be linked to other aspects of mine action. It may be managed and monitored by educational authorities, independently of a mine action centre.

### **4.2. International legal obligations to provide MRE**

Certain international treaties impose legal obligations on States Parties to provide MRE. The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention obliges States Parties 'in a position to do so ... to provide assistance for mine awareness programs.'<sup>3</sup> The Convention on Cluster Munitions requires that States Parties conduct 'risk reduction education' to ensure awareness among civilians living in or around cluster munitions contaminated areas of the risks posed by such remnants.<sup>4</sup> Protocol V to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons requires that States Parties and parties to an armed conflict take all feasible precautions in the territory under their control affected by explosive remnants of war<sup>5</sup> to protect the civilian population, individual civilians and civilian objects from the risks and effects of explosive remnants of war.... These precautions may include warnings [and] risk education to the civilian population...'.<sup>6</sup>

### **4.3. The role of MRE in mine action**

#### **4.3.1 General**

MRE can play a significant role in mine action, by virtue of the information it exchanges with community members and the relationship it can build with affected communities. Some of the practical contributions that MRE may make within a mine action programme to protect affected populations are identified below.

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<sup>1</sup> Stand-alone MRE is risk education that is not linked to any other mine action activity.

<sup>2</sup> The term 'project' refers to an activity, or series of connected activities, with an agreed objective. A project will normally have a finite duration and a plan of work. The resources needed to successfully accomplish the objective will normally be defined and agreed before the start of the project. The term 'programme' implies the medium- to long-term activities of an organisation in the fulfilment of its vision and strategic objective. A mine action programme consists of a series of related mine action projects. Similarly, an MRE programme consists of a series of related MRE projects.

<sup>3</sup> Article 6, paragraph 3, APMBC.

<sup>4</sup> Article 4, paragraph 2(e), CCM.

<sup>5</sup> Defined as AXO and UXO linked to an armed conflict.

<sup>6</sup> Article 5, Protocol V on ERW, CCW.



#### **4.3.2 Communication of safety messages**

Communication of MRE safety messages refers to information and education activities that seek to minimise deaths and injuries from mines and ERW by raising awareness of the risk among individuals and communities and by promoting safe behaviour. Messages may be transmitted through a mix of interpersonal communication, mass media (e.g. TV and Radio), traditional media, or 'small media' (e.g. posters and leaflets). Activities may be conducted in formal and non-formal environments.

In an emergency post-conflict situation, due to time constraints and lack of accurate data, communication through public information channels may be the most practical means of communicating safety information to reduce risk. In more stable contexts, communication of safety messages may be carried out as part of a more comprehensive risk-reduction strategy within a mine action programme. These may include community-based activities, integration into schools and other social and economic activities for better impact.

#### **4.3.3 Data gathering in at-risk communities**

Data should be gathered from at-risk communities and other sources on the mine and ERW hazard, dangerous areas, the impact of mines/ERW on the civilian population, including victim and incident data, knowledge of the hazard and safe behaviour, and victim assistance. Data should be used in order to understand better the extent of the hazard and its impact; to identify target groups; to support other mine action, in particular non-technical survey, technical survey, clearance and BAC, and victim assistance. Data should also be used for monitoring and evaluating the impact of mine action activities.

#### **4.3.4 Community liaison**

Community liaison in mine action refers to the processes, techniques and information exchange that encourage mine action actors to develop a better understanding of affected communities and their existing assets, needs, and priorities. The process also allows affected communities, local authorities and development organisations to gain a better understanding of mine action services and to participate in defining their requirements for MRE, survey, marking, clearance and victim assistance. Community liaison facilitates information exchange between national authorities, mine action agencies, relief and development organisations and bodies, and affected communities.

Community liaison should ensure that community members are involved in determining their own risks and their priorities for mine action assistance. It may also support communities to develop locally appropriate solutions to reduce the risk in their communities. Community liaison should also ensure that mine action programmes address community needs and priorities and involve community members in the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of mine action operations.

Community liaison is particularly relevant to MRE, but it is important to all pillars of mine action. Those engaged in MRE may undertake community liaison, but they may also be organised in distinct teams or staff. Community liaison work should be carried out by trained officers only, to ensure that a single, coherent approach is applied when interacting with communities, and educating them on mine/ERW risks.

#### **4.3.5 MRE support for demining and explosive ordnance disposal**

Demining includes survey, marking, and clearance of mines and ERW. MRE may contribute to each of these three activities, as well as to promote community support for the demining process. In terms of non-technical and technical surveys, MRE teams may, based on data/information supplied by the community or other key informants:

- a) locate hazardous areas;
- b) identify types of hazards present;

- c) understand how mines/ERW are affecting the lives and well-being of the community; and
- d) help to generate community lists of priorities for clearance or marking.

In terms of marking, MRE teams may:

- e) gather and disseminate information about local warning signs;
- f) ensure community understanding and respect for minefield marking and fencing; and
- g) help to generate community lists of priorities for marking (including suitable materials that will reduce the risk of removal, theft, or destruction).

In terms of mine/ERW, (including unexploded sub-munitions clearance), MRE teams may:

- h) advise the community of the arrival of demining teams;
- i) inform the community about safety procedures to be used during clearance operations;
- j) inform men, women and children about areas that have been cleared and those that remain hazardous, including markings of cleared and uncleared areas;
- k) facilitate handover of released land, including confidence-building measures to show the community that land is actually clear; and
- l) follow-up, by returning to communities weeks or months after clearance to ensure that land is being used, and used appropriately, by the intended beneficiaries.

In terms of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), MRE teams may:

- m) gather and report information on ERW spot tasks;
- n) support the development of reporting systems for spot tasks;
- o) facilitate the work of the EOD teams within communities to remove and destroy ordnance; and
- p) ensure that EOD teams respond in a timely manner to community reports.

#### **4.3.6 MRE support for victim assistance**

Victim assistance includes minefield rescue, emergency and continuous medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychosocial support, and socioeconomic reintegration of survivors of mine/ERW explosions and persons with disabilities. Information management and data collection, and support to laws and policies that promote the human rights of persons with disabilities are also part of victim assistance activities. MRE may facilitate the provision of assistance to mine/ERW, including unexploded sub-munitions, victims and survivors as well as, wherever possible, other persons with disabilities. In particular, MRE teams may:

- a) contribute to mine/ERW victim data collection or surveillance systems;
- b) identify national and local capacities for victim assistance, and under what conditions assistance is available;
- c) identify survivors in need of assistance during their work in communities;
- d) provide to survivors detailed information about the availability of assistance and how this assistance can be obtained;

- e) liaise with physical rehabilitation centres to ensure assistance is provided;
- f) if necessary, facilitate transport of the survivor and family member to and from the centre for treatment; and
- g) consider employing survivors in their work, if possible and where appropriate, as MRE facilitators.

#### **4.3.7 MRE support for advocacy**

MRE may play a role in building political will within concerned countries in favour of mine action. In addition, MRE may consider including a national or regional advocacy element. This may be advocacy in favour of the *Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention*, the *Convention on Cluster Munitions*, and the *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons*, especially its Protocol V, as well as other relevant treaties of international law. It may also cover advocacy in favour of victim assistance, including support for the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## **5. Needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities assessment and information management**

### **5.1. General**

MRE should be based on a careful assessment of needs and capacities (an 'MRE needs assessment'). The purpose of an MRE needs assessment is to identify, analyse and prioritise the local mine and ERW risks, to assess the capacities and vulnerabilities of the men, women, boys and girls in the affected communities and other stakeholders, and to determine the options for conducting MRE.

The purpose of gathering data and assessing needs should be established in agreement with all relevant stakeholders. The results should be shared with them, for example, through briefings to community leaders, community-based organisations, and community members. This is particularly applicable for data collected from the affected communities themselves. All data gathered should be stored, analysed, and used to improve MRE.

### **5.2. The conduct of the needs assessment**

All needs assessments should contribute to national mine action assessments, in order to better plan programme activities. Any needs assessment should be reported to the relevant mine action centre, which should then share it with other relevant organisations and bodies.

Although a needs assessment should precede the planning and implementation of MRE, it is not a one-off activity but should occur on a regular basis. It should review the different needs, vulnerabilities, and expectations of the affected communities in each mine/ERW affected region (province or district). This is part of the monitoring responsibilities of MRE operators.

The process of data gathering and analysis should be transparent. Wherever possible, the process of needs assessment should ensure the participation of the at-risk community. National and local authorities and other MRE organizations should also be informed and included in the process, where relevant. Participatory approaches should be employed wherever possible and appropriate, and should be planned from the start.

Those conducting a needs assessment should be appropriately qualified or trained and gender balanced to do so. The training on needs assessments should ensure that men and women staff:

- a) understand the reason for gathering the data and how it will be analysed and used;
- b) know the Safety and Occupational Health IMAS in series 10 that shall be applied when conducting assessments and are not put at unnecessary risk; and

- c) obtain comprehensive and on-going training, particularly in relation to norms and ethical standards for gathering data and conducting a needs assessment.

### **5.3. Data to be collected as part of an MRE needs assessment**

The data gathered during an MRE needs assessment provides the foundations upon which the plan can be developed. The data collected should allow the following to be determined:

- a) target groups – both social and geographical (by gathering mine and ERW victim data on who is taking risks and why, and who is affected by mines and ERW? Regarding the latter, attention should be paid, in particular, on population movements into or through areas of risk);
- b) information on the mine and ERW hazards and affected areas (e.g. type of devices used, nature of suspected areas where such devices can be found, any markings, signs used, etc.);
- c) areas of work (by gathering data on where people are injured, where the risk is greatest, where risk-taking behaviour is occurring, etc.);
- d) messages, and subsequently the activities, according to target groups (by assessing how people are injured and how and why they take risks);
- e) MRE approaches and methodologies likely to induce behavioural change. Community input should be sought in assessing any existing local safety strategies;
- f) channels of communication and the way target groups communicate and learn;
- g) institutional arrangements and partnerships for providing MRE messages and emergency responses;
- h) resources available and their allocation; and
- i) timeframe to achieve the project or programme objective (by gathering data on the nature and size of the mine/ERW hazards).

### **5.4. Principles applicable to the conduct of needs assessments**

Those conducting MRE needs assessments should draw on existing information wherever possible.

Data should be gathered on the nationally standardised forms, where they exist, for entry into the national mine action information system. In addition, organisations may also gather other data for internal purposes using their own forms. Men and women and other programme implementers who are gathering data shall be specially trained for that purpose, including on the ethics of data gathering. Care should be taken that this process does not become a mechanical experience, but that it develops as an open conversation allowing interviewees to speak naturally.

MRE organization shall not raise expectations that cannot be fulfilled. They shall be careful not to raise false hopes about early clearance, and stress that the data is being collected for the purpose of helping to determine communities' need for MRE.

Men, women and children's needs should be considered. Community members' perceptions and requirements vary according to age, gender, social, tribal/ethnic and educational background, etc.

Mine and ERW (including unexploded sub-munitions) survivors have the right to privacy and to be included in decisions and programmes affecting them. These should be respected at all times.

Organisations conducting MRE needs assessments should provide to the NMAA all the data collected, subject to requirements for confidentiality. The information shall be entered into the national mine action information system to support other mine action and broader development. The national authority shall in turn share all necessary information, subject to requirements for confidentiality, with mine action organisations and other relevant bodies. This should include an analysis of the results of any needs assessment, wherever possible.

## **6. Planning**

There are different forms of MRE plan and the duration of plans varies. Typically, a strategic MRE plan will be a multi-year plan, while an action plan or work plan will be for one year or less.

A community mine action plan may also be developed, based on the expressed needs of the affected community. These needs should be incorporated into the higher level of mine action planning.

Planning is essential to effective implementation and should be based upon careful and ongoing assessment of the needs of affected communities. The assessment is conducted with the active involvement of men and women in the affected community. Planning should also determine how the monitoring and evaluation of the programme will be conducted.

Planning should seek to formulate clearly defined objectives for MRE interventions.

## **7. MRE messages and message delivery**

### **7.1. General**

Safety messages are at the heart of any MRE initiative. Developing and disseminating these messages and assessing their impact should be the result of a carefully planned strategy and process. A nationwide approach to addressing risk-taking behaviour, target groups, messages, etc. may not always be the best way to deliver MRE. Some countries have significant cultural and religious differences that determine the nature of behaviour.

All communication in MRE should be based on a carefully planned strategy that is targeted to specific at-risk groups and which is socially and culturally appropriate. An MRE project or programme should not assume that children and women are always the most at risk. In many situations, men are the majority of mine and ERW victims. The following elements should be included in an MRE communication strategy:

- a) risk-taking behaviours to be addressed,
- b) target groups,
- c) safety messages,
- d) communication channels, and
- e) means of dissemination.

## **7.2. Message development**

Messages to be communicated depend on target audiences, the behaviour to be promoted and the factors likely to influence target audiences to adopt the desired behaviour. Messages or symbols should be culturally, linguistically, and socially appropriate. There should be positive messages, as people need to feel that they can take action and that by taking action they can improve their own and their families' lives. A message does not need to be short, but it should be clear.

## **7.3. Message testing**

All messages and suggested means of delivery to be used should be tested before they are finalised.

Testing should ideally be done among the target audience. If the target audience consists of young male farmers of a specific ethnic group, pre-testing should be undertaken among these people. Testing may be done at various levels of sophistication with different costs. It does not have to take long. Testing aims to ensure that messages or materials are:

- a) understandable,
- b) socially acceptable,
- c) relevant,
- d) realistic, and
- e) persuasive.

## **7.4. Monitoring, reviewing and revising MRE messages**

Messages and message delivery should be monitored by every MRE project or programme to ensure their effectiveness. A monitoring system should have been established at the planning stage. This means assessing whether messages are:

- a) reaching their target audiences;
- b) being understood and accepted; and
- c) being acted upon.

## **8. Using media and materials**

### **8.1. Designing MRE media and materials**

In determining whether there is a need for media and materials to support MRE, the difficulties of getting the right message to the right person in the right language or symbol using printed materials should be a major consideration. There may, though, be occasions when a project or programme deems it appropriate to develop printed materials (e.g. posters, leaflets, or billboards). Printed materials may, for example, be useful reminders when combined with other communication approaches.

The same or different messages and images may be used for each MRE product. Adapting materials from other contexts may be inappropriate or misleading in certain circumstances and shall therefore, be carefully tested before dissemination.

### **8.2. Testing MRE media and materials**

As with messages, MRE media and materials should be tested before they are finalised. A focus group discussion or group or individual interviews may be conducted to discuss the

proposed approach with selected members of the target audience. Materials should not be finalised and printed without field-testing them first because changes may need to be made. Similar to the points mentioned above about messages, testing of MRE materials should check whether the designs are understandable, socially acceptable, relevant, attractive, and persuasive.

### **8.3. Monitoring and revising MRE media and materials**

As part of a project or programme-wide monitoring system, the reaction to and trust in the means of delivery, including any printed materials, should be regularly checked. Where media and materials are resulting in the wrong message being delivered they should no longer be used until they have been effectively revised.

## **9. Implementing MRE**

### **9.1. General**

This section identifies particular issues in the implementation of MRE projects and programmes, in particular MRE in an emergency and how to promote sustainable MRE.

### **9.2. MRE in an emergency situation**

An emergency may result from an armed conflict or a natural disaster.<sup>7</sup> MRE in an emergency refers to efforts to raise awareness of a significant new risk from mines and/or ERW. The aim is to promote safe behaviour among the largest number of civilians potentially at risk, particularly children, in the shortest possible time. It may be nationwide or extremely localised, and the emergency situation may last for days, weeks, or months.

### **9.3. Key challenges for MRE in an emergency situation**

Ideally, MRE should be an exchange of information with specific groups within at-risk communities to support sustained behavioural change. In an emergency, for reasons of time, most of the communication will normally be one-way. The aim is to reach the greatest number of at-risk people in a few days or weeks with information about the explosive Hazards and basic safety messages to encourage safe behaviour.<sup>8</sup> Population displacement or even movement are particular risk factors, especially in an emergency. At the end of an emergency phase, evaluation or re-assessment may be required to establish a new/different post-emergency MRE approach.

### **9.4. MRE messages in an emergency situation**

In an emergency, messages should tend to be general in nature. Determining the key messages in such cases depends on a variety of factors, such as the target audience and the types of risk-taking behaviour. It is still necessary to know which types of explosive hazard people are at risk from. If mines are the greatest risk, it may be that people are injured through stepping on them or triggering unseen tripwires rather than touching mines. Therefore, efforts should focus on raising awareness of the danger and stressing safe behaviour, such as recognition of potentially dangerous areas, which may include the following set of connected messages:

- a) stay on a well-used path.
- b) ask local people where it is safe and where it is dangerous.

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<sup>7</sup> UNICEF defines an emergency as 'a situation that threatens the lives and wellbeing of large numbers of population and in which extraordinary action is required to ensure their survival, care and protection.'

<sup>8</sup> UNICEF has developed an Emergency MRE Toolkit for use in planning a risk education campaign in an emergency situation. The Toolkit is designed to take an MRE project manager or project team step-by-step through the first six weeks of an emergency MRE campaign.

- c) avoid overgrown areas, military bases and equipment.
- d) report explosive ordnance to a responsible person or authority.

If unexploded submunitions (or other forms of UXO) pose the greatest risk, 'don't touch' messages are far more appropriate. Such messages may include:

- e) unexploded bombs are lying in the fields around your homes.
- f) unexploded bombs are small but extremely powerful and can kill many people.
- g) unexploded bombs are highly unstable – you never know when they're going to explode.
- h) never touch unexploded bombs, pick them up, or kick them.

### **9.5. MRE in schools**

Integrating MRE into the school system and curriculum is a strategy primarily developed in countries facing a widespread and protracted mine or ERW problem, which is likely to be faced by successive generations of people. It is a method to target a very large number of children, and is appropriate in countries where the national government has accepted that mines or ERW are a long-term or residual problem, requiring multiple and sustainable solutions. The information and its means of provision should be appropriate to different age groups. MRE does not have to be a specific subject, but may be incorporated as an extra-curricular activity or into a curriculum on life skills or social environment curriculum.

### **9.6. Integrating MRE into the curriculum**

Integrating MRE into the school curriculum or as an extra curricula activity is distinct from projects where MRE teams visit schools and make presentations. In setting up a programme to integrate MRE into schools system it is necessary to determine if it will involve all schools in the country or only particular schools in heavily affected areas.

It should also be determined whether the national or local authorities and school systems have the capacity and willingness to undertake such a programme. Many regional and rural schools may be under-equipped and teaching staff may be poorly trained and under-paid. Acceptance by the ministry or department of education and the heads of the targeted schools is essential from the beginning of the programme. These institutions will be involved in developing the programme and will be ultimately responsible for implementing and monitoring it.

It may be that MRE is more appropriate to include as a supplementary activity in schools, rather than to integrate it in curricula, which may take several years to achieve. In addition, depending on the level of school enrolment in a country or area the development of special projects and methods to reach out-of-school children and/or those who attend informal or religious schools, may be required. The need to reach these children is a serious challenge as they are often more at risk from mine/ERW accidents than those who attend school. Such children may be reached through the development of community liaison and broader MRE projects and programmes.

A child-to-child approach may be useful to reach younger or female siblings who may not have the opportunity to attend school.

### **9.7. Strengthening community capacities for MRE**

Efforts to strengthen community capacities for MRE should be an integral part of any MRE programme. This may include the establishment of volunteer networks and strengthening of community risk management efforts. MRE may be integrated with development, clearance/survey, disability assistance, and other methods of community-based risk reduction.



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## **10. Coordination of MRE and information management**

### **10.1. General**

Coordination shall ensure that MRE organizations and other mine action organisations complement and support each other's work. Responsibilities for coordination are set out in Clause 10.2.

MRE coordination should ensure the coherent and effective involvement of all relevant actors in every component of the MRE programme cycle: assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of strategies and activities. MRE should also be coordinated with other mine action activities, and other relief and development efforts. In this way, MRE can better achieve its goals of minimising the number of victims, reducing the socio-economic impact of mines and ERW, and promoting development.

### **10.2. Coordination mechanisms and tools**

For maximum effectiveness, MRE should be coordinated within the structure of a mine action programme. This ensures that MRE is integrated with other aspects of mine action. In countries where no effective mine action coordination mechanism exists, MRE organisations should develop their own coordination group.

Overall responsibility for the national management of mine action, including MRE, normally rests with NMAA. The NMAA, typically, sets overall mine action policy and strategy for the country. It may also coordinate operational mine action activities, although this role is usually devolved to a mine action centre (MAC), which reports to the NMAA. The national MAC may, in turn, fulfil its tasks through several regional MACs. In addition to coordinating MRE through an NMAA/MAC, MRE organisations should participate in other relevant coordination mechanisms that may exist or be set up by government, the UN or non-governmental organisations (NGOs) at regional and national levels.

## **11. Monitoring and evaluation**

### **11.1. General**

Monitoring should quality-assure MRE and the outputs of the project or programme in accordance with the plan. Evaluations should focus on the achievement of objectives, the impact of MRE, accountability, and lessons learned.

### **11.2. Key issues to monitor**

At a minimum, monitoring should look at how well MRE is being implemented and whether the plan on which implementation is based is relevant to the needs of the affected communities. The following issues should, therefore, be monitored:

- a) effectiveness and efficiency of MRE delivery;
- b) perception of MRE projects and programmes by at-risk communities;
- c) resultant behavioural change;
- d) geographical coverage;
- e) reasons for risk-taking, new behaviours, adaptation to the hazard;
- f) casualties; and
- g) changes in the make-up of the target risk group.

In addition to assessing the effectiveness of MRE and progress in implementing plans, monitoring should track change in the mine/ERW hazard and environment. This involves monitoring changes to:

- h) initial assumptions regarding target groups;
- i) demographic and cultural changes affecting those most at risk;
- j) the mine/ERW hazard; and
- k) the broader political and socio-economic context that might influence people's ability to respond to MRE in an appropriate manner.

### **11.3. Developing a monitoring system**

Monitoring should be carried out at project and programme level and both internally (i.e. by the implementing organisation itself) and externally (by a national or UN MACC or on their behalf). It should aim to ensure that all MRE meets applicable national and international standards, including the requirements of any accreditation granted to MRE operators.

Whatever system is created, it should be able to:

- a) identify measurement indicators that focus on relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability;
- b) establish systems to collect information concerning these indicators;
- c) have a process that systematically collects and records the information;
- d) ensure that the data collected is analysed and interpreted;
- e) ensure that the information is used to inform day-to-day project/programme management; and
- f) ensure that MRE is adapted based on the information gathered by monitoring to ensure that the activities support the achievement of objectives.

### **11.4. Key issues to evaluate**

Evaluation of MRE should assess the impact of the project or programme, in particular in reducing the human, social or economic impact of mines and ERW. An evaluation may not necessarily be of a single project; it can also consider the organisational approach/policy/strategy on MRE.

### **11.5. When to evaluate**

An evaluation may take place at various stages of the programme or project cycle—not only at the end. Formative evaluations (also sometimes known as mid-term reviews) aim to assist the development of a project or programme during its implementation by highlighting achievements, identifying problems, and suggesting solutions. Summative (or ex-post evaluations) take place after the project or programme has ended (sometimes a number of years afterwards) and aim to derive lessons and to feed into long-term policy.

The decision when to evaluate will depend on each individual project or programme, and the different factors that affect it. Factors that should be considered are:

- a) whether the project or programme has short- or long-term objectives;
- b) what kind of monitoring methods are already being used (i.e. what data are available);

- c) whether external evaluators are required;
- d) the availability of resources for the evaluation; and
- e) the impact the evaluation will have on people's time (both project/programme staff and target beneficiaries).

### **11.6. Using an evaluation**

There are four good reasons for undertaking an evaluation of an MRE project or programme:

- a) to improve performance;
- b) to enhance accountability;
- c) to improve communication among stakeholders; and
- d) to improve learning and empowerment.

Ultimately, the value of evaluation, as with monitoring, is realised only through the use of the results. So, the results of an evaluation should feed directly into future project and programme planning, organisational strategy and, to the extent possible, should be disseminated widely to all programme stakeholders.

## **12. Capacity development**

### **12.1. General**

The need to develop national capacity has been seen as a critical area for international assistance since the early days of mine action. However, unlike the rapid advances achieved in the areas of technology and operations, improvements in national capacity-development have been sporadic and inconsistent.

### **12.2. Developing a capacity development plan**

Based on the information and insights generated by the needs and capacities assessment, a capacity development plan should be elaborated to improve MRE management and operations.

A capacity development plan should include the following elements:

- a) a shared stakeholder vision and understanding of the current gaps in management capacity;
- b) activities for dealing with each problem, keeping in mind the overall vision;
- c) specific benchmarks and outputs to be reached in meeting each stated objective;
- d) the process of how each objective will be reached; and
- e) clear division of who will be responsible for supporting, implementing, and/or executing the plan.

Capacity building may be carried out directly on the ground, or through the provision of technical support from a distance.

Based on the strategic plan and its vision, mission, and goals, the next phase in the process is the formulation of a work plan. A work plan flows logically from the strategic plan and supports its implementation, typically on an annual basis. This operationally focused document should normally include detailed activities, and necessary resources, as well as programme results,

indicators and targets. It should also include a concise performance measurement framework, summarising key components of the plan in an easy-to-track format.

### **12.3. At-risk communities**

At-risk communities, i.e. those living with the mine/ERW hazards, including mine/ERW survivors - are constrained to live with the daily risk of mines or ERW. Many develop local coping mechanisms, which may be more or less effective. MRE operators should seek first to understand and support at-risk communities in their efforts to minimise risk, and not to assume ignorance or lack of capacity. Subsequent capacity development may cover areas such as information management, risk management and MRE delivery. Risk management involves marking or fencing or seeking alternatives to risk-taking and using alternative approaches to access livelihoods and resources without clearance or entering SHAs.

### **12.4. National Mine Action Authority**

Building the capacity of the NMAA is critical to the performance of a mine action programme. In the case of MRE, the NMAA should be aware of the importance and role of MRE and be capable of making informed, strategic decisions about MRE direction and contribution to casualty reduction and effective mine action.

### **12.5. Mine Action Centre**

The capacity of the MAC, where it exists, to coordinate MRE effectively is essential for any successful MRE programme. Capacity development efforts need to include the abilities to assess, plan, task, monitor, and ensure the quality of MRE projects as well as the MRE programme as a whole. Both the UN and NGOs have contributed to effective capacity development of MRE expertise within MACs.

### **12.6. MRE operators**

MRE operators and their staff, especially within local NGOs, require capacity development to assess, plan, train, deliver, and monitor MRE. This is especially challenging if participatory development approaches are to be effectively institutionalised. The facilitation of participatory rural appraisal methods and techniques, for example, is a complex management task. It requires skills and expertise to accomplish it well. The same applies to the need to use data meaningfully to facilitate change and incorporate it into mine action and development planning. The emphasis on assisting individuals or communities to think through their issues and to find meaningful solutions rather than being told what the problem is by an outsider is central. This requires solid facilitation skills, including an ability to listen.

## **13. Role and responsibilities**

### **13.1. At-risk communities**

At-risk communities, i.e. those living with the mine/ERW hazards, bear a primary responsibility for ensuring their own protection. Many develop local coping mechanisms, which may be more or less effective. MRE operators should seek to understand and support at-risk communities in their efforts to minimise risk, and not to assume ignorance or lack of capacity.

### **13.2. Governments of affected countries**

The authorities, both the national government and at local level, have the primary responsibility for ensuring the safety of their constituents. This obligation is recognised in the IMAS, which affirm that: 'the primary responsibility for mine action lies with the Government of the mine-affected state.' See IMAS 01.10 for detail.

Typically, armed conflict, especially when it is prolonged, reduces the capacity of the authorities to afford the necessary protection, including through MRE. This explains why it typically falls to

NGOs to implement MRE projects. However, even when the decision is taken to work through NGOs, this approach should be supported by the government and thought should be given to how the authorities can eventually take full responsibility for MRE.

### **13.3. National Mine Action Authority**

If one does not already exist, the government of an affected country should seek to establish a national mine action authority (NMAA) as soon as possible. The NMAA, or the organisation acting on its behalf, is responsible for ensuring the conditions which enable the effective management of national mine action. The NMAA is ultimately responsible for developing and managing the mine action programme, including MRE projects, within its national boundaries and ensuring that it responds to the needs and priorities of the affected communities.

The NMAA is responsible for establishing and maintaining national standards, regulations, and procedures for the management of MRE. These national standards, regulations, and procedures should be consistent with IMAS, and other relevant national and international standards, regulations, and requirements.

With regard to MRE, specifically, the primary responsibilities of the NMAA are to:

- a) oversee the MRE programme;
- b) establish national standards and/or guidelines, or put international standards into effect in the country and ensure that national law enforces the MRE standards;
- c) approve the criteria for an accreditation system, should one be deemed necessary;
- d) adopt a national strategic plan for MRE;
- e) ensure that MRE is integrated into overall mine action;
- f) liaise with other development actors on strategic planning;
- g) liaise with donors and other supporters, such as capacity-building providers, advocacy organisations and media representatives;
- h) strive to provide MRE with adequate resources, based on the needs identified in the national strategic plan;
- i) organise external evaluations of the MRE programme as a whole; and
- j) provide funding for MRE activities, if possible.

### **13.4. Mine Action Centre**

All mine action activities, including MRE, are typically coordinated by a national mine action centre (MAC). The national MAC may be further supported by area or regional MACs.

The office responsible for the management of MRE should be appropriately structured to facilitate integration with demining and victim assistance activities. It should have both male and female employees who should be appropriately experienced and trained. The MAC should take responsibility for:

- a) identifying and deploying MRE resources according to the national strategic plan;
- b) ensuring that MRE activities are implemented in accordance with the national policies, strategies and standards;
- c) managing the accreditation process for MRE organisations (if it exists) on behalf of the NMAA;

- d) ensuring that MRE is fully integrated into mine action;
- e) coordinating MRE implementation through regular coordination meetings;
- f) monitoring MRE activities;
- g) ensuring that the NMAA's central information management system (such as the Information Management System for Mine Action — IMSMA), meets the needs of MRE organisations;
- h) reporting on MRE activities to the NMAA;
- i) coordinating the implementation of a needs assessment;
- j) recommending policies, strategies, and standards on MRE to the NMAA;
- k) managing the development of a sustainable national operational MRE capacity through local and international MRE partners;
- l) producing regular reports on MRE for stakeholders;
- m) coordinating with other national institutions and government bodies for integrating MRE into their programmes and services, e.g. education and health;
- n) liaising with other development actors at field level; and
- o) providing training and capacity building (either directly or through advisers or contracted implementing organisations) to MRE implementing organisations.

In an emergency, as a minimum, coordination should include regular meetings to agree on:

- p) who will visit which communities;
- q) what messages should be promoted as a priority by the different projects; and
- r) what basic guidelines should be followed by all MRE operators. 'Do No Harm!' should be a key principle for all MRE.

### **13.5. United Nations**

The UN has a general responsibility for enabling and encouraging the effective management of mine action programmes by continuously refining IMAS to reflect developing mine action norms and practices, and incorporating changes to international regulations, requirements and treaties. Such treaties include the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) among others. UNMAS is the office within the UN Secretariat responsible to the international community for the development and maintenance of IMAS. UNICEF is the focal point for MRE within the UN System, and has responsibility for the development, review, and amendment of the MRE component of IMAS.

In certain situations and at certain times it may be necessary and appropriate for the UN, or some other recognised international body, to assume some or all of the responsibilities, and fulfil some or all the functions, of an NMAA and/or a National MAC.

The UN applies IMAS to its mine action programmes, activities and contracts. In circumstances where one or more IMAS is considered inappropriate or not applicable, the UN provides alternative specifications, requirements, and guidance. The UN should ensure that the MRE needs of affected communities are addressed and that appropriate MRE is provided in the existing and new mine action programmes.

### **13.6. MRE organizations**

Ultimately, it is the organisation that implements MRE which is required to establish an appropriate and effective management system, present it to the NMAA, and apply it throughout the MRE project. MRE organizations should be accredited by the NMAA and should apply IMAS or national standards and adapt their SOPs to conform to those standards. Where the NMAA is in the process of formation, MRE organisations are well placed to assist the establishment process by giving advice and assistance, including on the development of national standards.

### **13.7. Donors**

Donor agencies are part of the management process, and as such have a responsibility for ensuring that the projects they fund are managed effectively, and in accordance with national and/or international standards. This involves attention to the writing of contract documents, and ensuring that MRE organizations chosen to carry out such contracts are competent, and likely to meet the national accreditation criteria. Donors should also make provisions for monitoring and periodic evaluation of their projects or programs to ensure their relevance, effectiveness and successful execution. The need to hold MRE organizations responsible for the timely and effective execution of their tasks and accountable to their donors is particularly vital when the NMAA is in the process of formation and has not had the opportunity to gain experience in these areas.

## **Annex A (Normative) References**

The following normative documents contain provisions, which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of this standard. For dated references, subsequent amendments to, or revisions of, any of these publications do not apply. However, parties to agreements based on this standard are encouraged to investigate the possibility of applying the most recent editions of the normative documents indicated below. For undated references, the latest edition of the normative document referred to applies. Members of ISO and IEC maintain registers of currently valid ISO or EN:

- a) MRE Best Practice Guidebooks and Training Manuals;
- b) IMAS 01.10 Guide for application of IMAS;
- c) IMAS 04.10 Glossary of terms definitions and abbreviations;
- d) Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) ;
- e) Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW); and
- f) Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM).

The latest version/edition of these references should be used. GICHD hold copies of all references used in this standard. A register of the latest version/edition of the IMAS standards, guides and references is maintained by GICHD, and can be read on the IMAS website (<http://www.mineactionstandards.org/>). NMAA, employers and other interested bodies and organisations should obtain copies before commencing mine action programmes.



