



REPORT

GICHD Advisory Board Meeting 30 October 2007

1. Date and Venue

The GICHD Advisory Board Meeting was held at the GICHD between 11:00 and 16:00 hrs on 30 October 2007.

2. List of Participants

Advisory Board

Steinar Essen - Deputy Director, Norwegian People's Aid
John Flanagan - Deputy Director, UNMAS
Oto Jungwirth - Director, Croatian Mine Action Centre
Martin Borck- Executive Secretary, Chile National Demining Commission
Ben Lark- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
Benedikt Truniger- Deputy Director General, FSD

Excused:

Etsay Gebre Selassie - Director, Ethiopian Mine Action Office
Heng Rattana - Deputy Director General, CMAC
Steve Wilson - Director for International Relations, MAG
David Hewitson - Director, European Landmine Solutions
Shohab Hakimi- Director, Mine Dog and Detection Centre-Afghanistan
Yasin Majali- Deputy to General Director, NCDR - Jordan
Paula Claycomb- Senior Project Officer, UNICEF
Sara Sekkenes- Senior Programme Advisor- UNDP

GICHD

Ambassador Stephan Nellen - Director, GICHD/Chair of the Board
Ian Mansfield - Operations Director
Ban Yaseen - Programme Officer

3. Opening Remarks and adoption of the agenda

The Director GICHD opened the meeting by welcoming the members of the Advisory Board and thanked them for their presence at the meeting. He explained the absence of some of the members and informed on their replacement by staff of the same organization. In particular Mr. John Flanagan of UNMAS was representing Ms. Paula Claycomb of UNICEF and Ms. Sara Sekkenes of UNDP. He introduced the new members, Mr. Martin Borck, Mr. Ben Lark and Mr. Benedikt Truniger (on behalf of Mr. Hansjoerg Eberle FSD Director) and introduced Ms. Ban Yaseen from Iraq, Programme officer doing an internship at the GICHD. The Director then presented the agenda of the meeting, which was agreed by all members.

4. Adoption of the minutes of the meeting of 27 April 2007

The Director requested if there were any comments from the members on the draft minutes of the previous meeting, which had been previously circulated. As no further comments were made, the minutes were adopted by the meeting.

5. Review of Membership of the Advisory Board

Amb. Nellen informed the meeting that the GICHD intend to expand the Advisory Board to include around 15 members, to ensure that at least 10 to 12 members are in attendance for each meeting. The main idea of this board is to include participants from the UN system, NGO's and commercial firms who can reflect on their experience from the field of mine action to support the work of the centre.

Mr. Mansfield explained the scheduling of the meeting and that it was difficult to find a date for the meeting that is convenient to all of the members to attend. He underlined that this meeting had to be held at this time to discuss the 2008 action plan, which needs to be approved by end of November. The members agreed and pointed out that the members should designate a replacement from their organizations in case they could not attend.

6. Brief overview of the Activity Report Jan - Jun 2007

Amb. Nellen informed the participants that the mid-year Activity Report 2007 is an internal document, but it is available for both the Council of Foundation and the Advisory Board. This report reflects the implementation of the 2007 Action Plan according to the Strategic objectives included in the current GICHD Strategy. He added that there soon will be a new tool to be used on the GICHD website enable certain people, including the Board members, to get access to some internal documents.

The members made the following comments and recommendations on the report:

- ✓ GICHD should concentrate on the outcomes of its achievements, more than the products themselves.
- ✓ The Budget of each project should be added.
- ✓ Some of the members expressed their appreciation of the achievements of the centre.

Amb. Nellen, responded to the comments about adding the budget of the projects in the report, and explained that including the resources of each project might not always give the right impression about the project. Some projects get a small allocation of funds, although that does not mean necessarily the project is less important than the projects with high resources.

7. Main item - review and discussion of the draft "GICHD Action Plan 2008"

Mr. Mansfield presented the draft GICHD Action Plan for 2008. This plan will cover the last year of the current GICHD Strategy. He welcomed the written advice and comments of the Board on the projects to be included to the plan.

The Director informed the meeting that the repository of mine action evaluations project on the GICHD website is available for the organizations and individuals who are looking for these documents. In some cases only the titles of the evaluation are listed.

The following suggestions and comments were made by the members:

- ✓ The Centre should focus on certain priority aspects in its work, and not to spread itself too thinly.
- ✓ The GICHD should assess how well that IMSMA is working in the countries where it was installed.
- ✓ The use of IMSMA in the affected countries by the national authorities and the NGO's should be integrated to make the best use of the data.
- ✓ The Centre should involve NGO operators in the countries where the Centre holds IMSMA workshops or training courses.
- ✓ There was still a general concern among the UN and operators that there was a lack transparency, consultation and access to IMSMA.
- ✓ The latest version of the IMSMA should be first installed and tested in the countries with small programmes, so that it is functioning properly when installed in major programmes.
- ✓ The partners of GICHD should be noted in the action plan in order to give a clear idea about the Centre's work.
- ✓ The GICHD should better coordinate its activities with the UN or ICRC programmes in certain countries.
- ✓ GICHD should focus on the quality control of the organization
- ✓ After providing support in the mine/ ERW affected countries, the GICHD and its partners should follow up to see how effective the support has been.
- ✓ The UN strategic objectives included in its strategy (2006-2011) could be a reference to assist the GICHD to develop its next strategy.

Amb. Nellen responded to some comments as follows:

- GICHD installed IMSMA according to requests submitted by the national authorities. The data in any country is the property of a nation and the government should approve the use of this system in its country by other actors, including the UN.
- IMSMA could be one of the main issues to be discussed in the next Advisory Board meeting

Mr. Mansfield emphasized that the priorities for 2008 are IMSMA, Land Release and Linking Mine Action to Development. Furthermore the GICHD action plan is flexible in trying to address the needs of mine affected countries.

The members agreed with the GICHD priorities for the Action Plan 2008.

8. Initial management response to the evaluation of MDD and MRE (Gasser evaluation)

Amb. Nellen informed that the final report of the Evaluation of the GICHD of Mine Detection Dogs and Mine Risk Education was finalized in June 2007.

The scope of the evaluation was to assess the MDD and MRE programmes in terms of their outcomes, and analyze the programming and project cycle process. The initial management response had been circulated to the Advisory Board members. Amb. Nellen expressed the wish to have a feedback from the operators in the field of mine action to determine the effectiveness of the GICHD contribution to the humanitarian demining work.

Mr. Mansfield explained that the GICHD accepted the recommendations of the Gasser evaluation regarding the project cycle, and will apply them in the programmes such as the MRE, MDD,...etc.

The Board members did not think it was necessary for the GICHD to study certain questions raised by Mr. Gasser, such as “Do dogs work?” or “ Does MRE work?”. The Board also questioned how much longer the REST project needs to continue.

The GICHD welcomes the written comments of the members on the evaluation.

9. Review of draft Terms of Reference for evaluation of the GICHD work in standards and technology

Mr. Mansfield informed that the draft of the Terms of References for the 2008 evaluation of the GICHD work in the two areas of Mine Action Standards and Technology has been finalized. The GICHD has discussed the draft TOR with UNMAS, and is waiting for their comments on the TOR.

No comments were made from the members on the draft TOR

10. Looking ahead - discussion on the next GICHD strategy after the current Strategy 2006 - 2008, which ends in December 2008.

Amb. Nellen explained the next GICHD Strategy will not contain a dramatic changes than the current strategy. The GICHD needs the views and ideas from the members of the Board to include them in the next strategy.

Amb. Nellen suggested that the members could attend an informal seminar (which the Centre will prepare) with the Council of Foundation to be held Spring 2008 to discuss how will the next strategy be developed. In addition, the GICHD will have the Staff Retreat in January 2008, in this event the staff will give their ideas for the next strategy.

The members agreed that the Advisory Board will participate with the Council of Foundation in the seminar to discuss the GICHD 2009-2011 strategy.

11. Next meeting

The next meeting was agreed to be held in conjunction with the strategy seminar in the second week of March 2008 at the GICHD.

Conclusion

Amb. Nellen informed that the GICHD will confirm the participation of the Board in the seminar and the date of the next meeting.

The members agreed that IMSMA will be one of the main points of discussion in the next board meeting.

He thanked the members for their presence and comments.

—————