

Mine Action Innovation Technical Group

Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

This document describes the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Mine Action Innovation Technical Group (ITG).

In 2023, GICHD conducted an initial evaluation of the Mine Action Innovation System¹ through desktop research and stakeholder consultations, culminating in the identification of several primary challenges, including insufficient needs-based and evidence-based approaches, inadequate coordination and collaboration, funding, legal and regulatory frameworks, "silver bullet" bias approach to many initiatives. These challenges received broad acknowledgement during the 2023 GICHD Innovation Conference and follow-up consultations, underscoring the importance of recognizing the need for coordinated efforts that will enable and foster innovation in mine action².

The establishment of a **Mine Action Innovation Hub** has been suggested by the GICHD and widely accepted by stakeholders. Conceptually, the Innovation Hub is a collaborative space and a set of initiatives that foster evidence-based problem-solving and inclusive partnerships to enable innovation within the field of mine action and ammunition management.

The main objectives of the Innovation Hub include:

1. Research - evidence-based needs requiring research and innovation are identified and documented through Research Agendas.
2. Test and Evaluation - potential applications of new technologies and methodologies are identified, tested, evaluated and reported.
3. Innovation activities - good practice on research and innovation is shared and disseminated consistently through coordination between various stakeholders.
4. Partnerships - further development of new technologies and methodologies is promoted through partnerships, dialogue, and cooperation.

To pursue the implementation of the Mine Action Innovation Hub, it has been agreed to establish the Mine Action Innovation Technical Group (ITG).

2. Scope of work

The purpose of the ITG is to serve as an open and inclusive collaborative community of global experts, multistakeholder in nature, envisioned as a collaborative platform bringing together experts from both mine action organizations and relevant national authorities, as well as research and technology entities, academia, and other expert organizations.

¹ In the context of MA **Innovation System** is defined as *the dynamic array of interconnected stakeholders, activities, components, institutions and their respective relationships, either collaborative and/or competitive, that influence the emergence, dissemination, and adoption of innovation in MA.*

² In the context of Explosive Ordnance Risk Reduction (EORR), **Innovation** is defined as *creation or adoption of a new or improved product or process which is novel to EORR, addresses evidence-based problems, and contributes to safer, more efficient, and more effective management of the threats posed by explosive ordnance.* Innovation may take various forms, including a policy, a methodology, a process, or a product (technological or other). It could also take more than one form (e.g. new processes might be only feasible if supported by new tools).

Responsibilities of the ITG

The ITG will be responsible to:

- Identify challenges requiring research and innovation at global, regional, and national levels.
- Share results of research and innovation initiatives and disseminate lessons learned.
- Map cutting-edge technologies and methodologies, including existing innovations within mine action and those from other sectors that can be adapted, including identifying use cases, maturity levels, and collaborative opportunities.
- Contribute to the development and/or review of research and innovation-related documents, such as Research Agendas.
- Contribute to the review and/or revision of relevant national and international normative frameworks, standards and guidelines when requested.
- Contribute to setting the agendas for innovation-related events when requested.
- Coordinate and collaborate with relevant existing bodies addressing innovation in other mine action pillars (e.g. Explosive Ordnance Risk Education, Victim Assistance) and other Humanitarian Innovation entities will be sought to identify synergies and avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts.

ITG members may agree to create specific technical subgroups on topics of particular interest and narrower scope to support their work. These groups report back to the ITG.

3. Structure

Membership

The ITG consists of participants from relevant national authorities affected by explosive ordnance, such as National Mine Action Authorities/Centers (NMAA/NMAC) and mine action organizations (MAOs), including national and international NGOs. Other participants include academia, research and technology organizations, equipment manufacturers and technology providers, relevant UN entities, and donors.

Existing bodies addressing innovation in other mine action pillars, humanitarian innovation organizations, or other interested entities may be granted observer status.

Membership of the ITG is open and voluntary. All members are expected to actively contribute to the work plan based on their expertise and capacity. Non-active members will be invited to withdraw their membership. Any member can withdraw at any time by notifying the Secretariat.

The ITG comprises individuals representing their respective organizations or themselves as individuals. Organizations must appoint a qualified representative and ensure a replacement if the initial representative leaves or is unable to fulfil their responsibilities temporarily.

All ITG members can suggest new or additional members.

Chairs:

The ITG will be co-chaired by two members who will be appointed on a voluntary basis for a period of two years.

These positions rotate, and a simple majority vote will determine the co-chairs if more than two members volunteer. The co-chair organizations must come from different countries or territories.

The co-chairs will share the following responsibilities:

- Chair ITG meetings.
- Provide updates on ITG's work as needed.
- Oversee the production, approval, and implementation of work plans.
- Propose areas of work to address needs or gaps.
- Provide guidance and advice to the Secretary as necessary.

Secretariat:

The GICHD will serve as the Secretariat for the ITG. The Secretariat's responsibilities include:

- Plan and organize ITG meetings in coordination with the Chairs.
- Communicate meeting agendas.
- Produce and distribute meeting minutes, collect comments, and obtain approval from the Chairs.
- Assist the Chairs with the production and implementation of workplans.
- Act as the point of coordination for all ITG information circulation and data collection.
- Liaise and coordinate with other forums and coordination bodies, where appropriate.

Technical subgroups

Technical subgroups may be established to focus on specific tasks, problem statements, or innovative applications on a case-by-case basis and for a specific duration. Participation in these subgroups is voluntary, and each subgroup will be led by a member appointed on a voluntary basis.

Like the ITG, the technical subgroups should have multistakeholder representation, including at least one representative from an NMAA/NMAC, a MAO, and an Academic or Research and Technology Organization.

GICHD will provide a secretariat function to the technical subgroups as needed.

4. Working Procedures

Meetings

The ITG will convene periodically, holding one to two meetings per year. At least one in-person meeting will be conducted annually, ideally in conjunction with other international mine action events. Additional meetings can be organized as needed, based on the consensus of ITG members, and can take place in various locations as required.

The ITG will also use electronic communication to discuss issues and regularly exchange ideas.

The Secretariat will draft meeting minutes in coordination with the co-chairs. These draft minutes will be distributed to members within 20 working days after the meeting, followed by a 10-working-day "Silence Procedure" to allow members to provide comments and remarks before the minutes are approved and distributed.

ITG meeting minutes and recommendations may be circulated within the mine action community.

Workplan

The work of the ITG shall be governed by a work plan, which will be collaboratively and progressively developed. This work plan should be detailed enough to guide the development of key ITG deliverables while remaining flexible to accommodate the dynamic nature of the mine

action innovation system and the emergence of new ideas. The work plan can be revised at any stage and shall be agreed based on consensus.

With the Secretary's support, the Chairs are responsible for drafting the work plan and submitting it to the members for timely revision and review.

External stakeholders may request advice or guidance from the ITG. Such requests will be addressed on a case-by-case basis by the Chairs, with support from the Secretariat.

5. Entering into effect

This ToR was elaborated and reviewed by the ITG members and approved via Silence Procedure on the 04 December 2024. These ToR can be revised at any time per the request of the ITG members and a minimum of every two years.