

EORE AG

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Advisory Group

Minutes of the EORE AG Meeting

Date: 7 March 2024
Time: 14:30 – 16:30 Geneva time (CET)
Location: Virtual (Teams)

Summary of Action Points

Action	Responsible	Suggested Deadline
EORE AG Task Teams		
Consider joining the EORE Competencies Task Team.	AG members	Ongoing
Consider joining the Emergency Task Team.	AG members	Ongoing
Organise the first meeting of the Emergency Task Team.	Héloïse & Colin	15 May
Draft the Terms of Reference of the Emergency Task Team, to be shared with the AG.	Héloïse & Colin	15 May
Other Activities		
Define a clear methodology for the upcoming MAA election process, to be shared with AG members.	Co-Chairs & Secretariat	1 May
Provide inputs to the APMBC Review Document.	AG members	15 March
Consider volunteering for drafting the statement and/or organising an AG side event at the Fifth Review Conference.	AG members	15 May
Confirm participation to the AG Retreat to the Secretariat.	AG Members	15 April
Share draft agenda of the AG Retreat for inputs.	Matthieu	30 April

Participants

Co-Chairs: Furat Al Malkawi (The HALO Trust) & Hugues Laurence (UNICEF)

Secretary: Faustine Auger (GICHD)

Core members:

- DCA: Mark Wilkinson
- DRC: Mario Quiñones
- FSD: Angela de Santis
- GICHD: Matthieu Laruelle
- HALO Trust: Svitlana Arutiunova
- HI: Sofía Cogollos
- ICBL-CMC: Eléa Boureux

- LMAC: Lt. Col. Ali Makki
- MAG: Sebastian Kasack
- NPA: Colin Bent
- UNDP: Gahyun Lee
- UNICEF: Bakhtiyar Salimov
- UNMAS: Bojan Vukovic

Associate member:

- IOM: Séverine Lacroix

Observers and other attendees:

- GICHD: Hamid Ibrahim
- MA AoR: Lisa Anouk Müller-Dormann
- MA AoR: Yoshiyuki Shiomi
- MAG: Myriam Rabbat
- UNDP: Qadeem Tariq

Detailed Minutes

1. Welcome

Hugues opened the meeting by welcoming the participants to the first meeting of the year, inviting everyone to introduce themselves in the chat. Additionally, he welcomed to the group three newcomers:

- Gahyun Lee, new representative for UNDP, Programme Specialist, UNDP Crisis Bureau, based in New York.
- Eléa Boureux, new representative for ICBL-CMC, and project manager for the Landmine Monitor.
- Svitlana Arutiunova, alternate for the HALO Trust in the absence of Kim, and EORE Senior Supervisor for the HALO Trust Ukraine.

New attendees were given the floor for a quick introduction and Gahyun took this opportunity to introduce her colleague Qadeem Tariq, Programme Specialist - Mine Action for UNDP at Istanbul Regional Hub.

Hugues continued by providing a brief overview of the agenda of the meeting. As a preamble to the important discussions to come, Hugues shared some insights from the [‘Regional Conference on Addressing the Humanitarian Impact of Improvised Anti-Personnel Mines within the Framework of the Convention’](#), hosted from 13-15 February 2024, in Accra, Ghana. This Conference included a panel discussion dedicated to EORE which was the opportunity for UNICEF to highlight the critical need for increased focus on risk education, pointing out that only one percent of the funding for mine action, totalling over \$700 million, is currently allocated to risk education. He further emphasised the importance of the EORE AG in elevating the profile of risk education and mobilising the donor community to address this issue.

Before moving on to the next agenda item, Hugues introduced Hamid Ibrahim, EORE Advisor at the GICHD, temporarily replacing Celine Cheng as co-lead of the EORE Competencies Task Team.

2. Updates on the EORE Competencies Task Team

Hamid was given the floor to provide an update on the EORE Competencies Task Team (activity 1.4.3 of the [2023-2024 Work Plan](#)).

Hamid first recalled that, following the adoption of the Terms of Reference of the Task Team in last December, the group welcomed some new participants and is now composed of 11 members. Since its creation, the Task Team held three meetings to initiate the discussions around the draft T&EP.

After deciding at the second meeting to introduce 'functional levels', like for EOD, the group proceeded with identifying the different levels as well as key 'categories' or 'areas of expertise' to further breakdown competencies. The decision to use 'levels' was motivated by the fact that organisations use different titles or positions with varying understandings of the responsibilities attached to them. However, for greater clarity, the group agreed to create definitions for every functional level identified.

The work to identify competencies by levels and populate the T&EP is ongoing. The Task Team intends to complete its work on the draft T&EP by the end of the year and has decided to hold monthly meetings to move forward with the identification of competencies. The next meeting will be scheduled at the end of March or beginning of April.

Hugues thanked all members of the Task Team for their active participation and the interesting discussions within the group. He also mentioned that should new colleagues be interested in joining the Task Team this is still possible. While the maximum number of members on the group has been set at 15, there are still a few places left. Interested colleagues are invited to contact Hamid or Hugues to join the group [\[action\]](#).

3. Discussion on the Emergency Task Team

Furat started by providing context for today's discussion, recalling the numerous emergencies which arose last year, including natural disasters in various regions such as southern Turkey and northwest Syria, Afghanistan, Libya, or the conflict in Gaza and the sub-region. She noted the increase in requests for materials and guidance received during these crises. However, despite identifying and sharing resources, they were only circulated within the EORE AG and not broadly disseminated.

As a result, a discussion was initiated at last December's meeting regarding the creation of an Emergency Task Team to better respond to the needs and requests. During this discussion, it was emphasised that the EORE AG's mandate is not that of a coordination body but rather to strengthen the sector globally, including through the production and adoption of guidance. Following this discussion and a subsequent vote in January, the creation of the Emergency Task Team was officially approved.

Since then, several organisations, including MAG, HALO, HI, and NPA, proposed volunteers to join and co-lead the Task Team. More specifically, Furat thanked Lana from HALO and Robin Toal from MAG for volunteering to join the newly created Task Team, as well as Héloïse Pihery from HI and Colin from NPA for proposing to co-lead the Team.

After this introduction, Furat further enquired if other colleagues would be interested in joining the team. Ali (LMAC) and Lisa (MA AoR – DRC) confirmed their willingness to take part. Commitments were also received from UNICEF and UNMAS, which will confirm the names of their volunteers at a later date. UNDP is also considering joining and will confirm its participation in the coming weeks.

Sofia outlined the proposed scope of work for the Task Team, which will focus on collecting and consolidating existing resources as well as producing bite-size content for emergency response on specific topics. It was also suggested that the Task Team could be a platform to initiate more in-depth discussions on the integration of risk education and CPP. Finally, Sebastian proposed developing guidance for scoping emergency visits as one potential topic.

Finally, the next steps for the newly created Task Team were presented **[actions]:**

- The co-leads will soon send an email to all AG members to call for additional volunteers.
- A Doodle will also be sent to organise the first meeting of the Task Team.
- Terms of Reference will be drafted and shared with members to provide more information on the Task Team.

As communicated by Furat, Christelle also proposed to send an email to MA AoR colleagues once the ToRs are approved, to invite other volunteers to join the group.

4. Update on the nomination process for the future MAA representatives

Moving on to the next agenda item, Hugues reminded the group about the upcoming nomination of new MAA representatives to the EORE AG, to replace Lebanon and Colombia after the end of their terms.

As an introduction, Faustine recalled that in December 2021, the ToRs of the EORE AG had been revised to accept 1 to 3 mine action authorities (MAAs) as Core Members based on their nominations and election by MAA counterparts. From April to June 2022, the process for the nomination of the first MAA representatives to the AG was conducted, resulting in the appointment of Lebanon and Colombia for a term of two years. Lebanon (LMAC – Ali) and Colombia (OACP, now represented by Mauricio) officially took office as representatives on 1 September 2022.

As their mandates are coming to an end, a new nomination process for MAA representatives will be conducted this year, tentatively between May and July, following a similar process to that of 2022. Following a letter to MAAs/Mine action Centres inviting nominations, a virtual meeting with MAAs candidates will be held for them to present themselves and their vision before an online vote is organised. Particular attention will be paid to the neutrality, transparency and democratic nature of the nomination process, which should enable the MAAs to decide for themselves on their representatives. The results of the vote should be announced during the summer, with the new representatives taking up their functions from September 2024.

Hugues then recalled the challenges encountered during the last nomination process, as well as the importance of having MAAs as part of the group. He invited Ali, current MAA representative to the EORE AG, to share his perspectives and recommendations for the upcoming elections. Ali expressed gratitude for the opportunity to represent mine action authorities at the EORE AG. He noted that initially, he perceived the group's work as somewhat distant from national concerns, but participating broadened his understanding of global perspectives on risk education. Joining various task teams within the EORE AG has enabled Ali to contribute to important discussions and work beneficial to the sector. He encourages other national authorities to consider joining the group, emphasising its potential to broaden their perspectives and promote global thinking, and will advocate for Arabic national authorities to participate in the upcoming vote.

Hugues thanked Ali for his commitment and great feedback. Reflecting on Ali's comments, he enquired whether the same election process should be applied or if some changes should be considered. For example, the group was invited to reflect on whether the nomination process should remain open to all MAAs, or if another system, allowing for the rotation of regions, should be envisaged.

The Group agreed that the election should remain open to all, to encourage the widest participation possible and ensure that the decision comes from the national authorities themselves.

Matthieu also suggested taking advantage of the NDM-UN and potential linguistic group meetings (French-speaking, Arabic-speaking and English-speaking countries) to inform MAAs of the upcoming elections and encourage nominations.

Finally, it was noted that a strong methodology, clearly outlining all information and criteria for the election, should be defined before the process starts to avoid any difficulties at a later stage. The Co-Chairs and Secretariat will work on it in the coming months and update the group accordingly [action]. Should members have any further suggestions or recommendations, they are invited to contact Faustine directly.

5. Update on the NDM-UN 27 & key EORE-related events

As noted by Hugues, the NDM-UN27 is scheduled to take place from 29 April to 1 May, in Geneva. The deadline for registration and proposing side-events has elapsed.

It is important to note that one **plenary session**, organised by UNICEF, will be **dedicated to EORE** this year, offering a great opportunity to elevate its profile. This marks a significant improvement from the previous year where there was no dedicated plenary on EORE. It should be the first plenary session following the opening ceremony, strategically positioned to attract maximum attendance. Advocacy from various organisations played a crucial role in securing this dedicated slot.

Apart from the EORE plenary, other plenaries will cover topics such as food security, mine action and broader agendas, and innovation. The second day will primarily focus on national authorities, featuring a brief plenary led by MAAs followed by breakout sessions by linguistic groups (French, Arabic and English). Additionally, several side events are expected, including a couple possibly centred on risk education. The NDM-UN also serves as a platform for organisations to hold side meetings with diverse stakeholders. For instance, the MASG intends to hold its meetings during the NDM.

After this short update, Hugues enquired about AG members' plans for the NDM. In terms of participation, UNDP confirmed that they will attend the NDM without organising a specific side event on EORE. However, their representatives are open to contributing if other AG members decide to organise an event. Other confirmed participants include representatives from GICHD (Matthieu and Hamid), FSD (Angela), MAG (Sebastian), MA AoR (Lisa, Christelle).

Regarding the organisation of the EORE plenary, the focus will be on resilience and EORE, more specifically on the interconnectedness between EORE, resilience, peace building, development, and SDGs. While some speakers have already been identified, final plans will be solidified in the coming weeks. Members are encouraged to contact Hugues or Gahyun for any inquiries or clarifications regarding the NDM-UN.

6. Discussion around the Fifth Review Conference

Background and timeline

To introduce this agenda item, Furat reminded everyone of the upcoming Fifth Review Conference of the APMBC, scheduled to be held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, from 25-29 November 2024. This Conference holds significant importance for the mine action sector as it occurs only once every five years.

In preparation for the Fifth Review Conference, several crucial meetings and deadlines should be highlighted. Notable meetings preceding the Conference, under the Cambodian Presidency, include:

- Intersessional Meetings from 17-19 June
- First Preparatory Meeting for the 5th Review Conference on 20 June
- Second Preparatory Meeting for the 5th Review Conference 18 September

The Cambodian Presidency, with the APMBC ISU, has released a concept note outlining key dates and documents for consideration and input before the final Conference:

1. Input to 'The Review Document', detailing the implementation status of the Convention, is due on **15 March**.
2. Suggestions and inputs to 'The Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan', which will build on and respond to the analysis in the Review Document, will be due on **21 May**.
3. A Political Declaration will be drafted to express the political commitment of States Parties to implement the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan and fulfil the Convention's obligations. Suggestions for the Political Declaration should be provided by **28 June**.

Based on the above timeline, it shall be noted that most input and advocacy efforts should be made in the coming months, particularly by June. Given the importance for the EORE AG to contribute to this work, the aim of today's discussion is to determine:

- Key advocacy messages the Advisory Group wishes to convey during the preparatory stages and the Review Conference.
- The AG's participation in the Fifth Review Conference.

Despite the tight deadline, Matthieu echoed Furat on the importance for the EORE AG to provide inputs to the Review Document, as it sets the context for the new action plan based on stakeholders' contributions. The Review Document poses five guiding questions, and input should focus on global trends and developments over the past five years.

Finally, the group agreed on the following timeline for the provision of inputs to the Review Document, which is the first step on the "road to the Fifth Review Conference" **[actions]**:

- AG members are invited to provide their input to the guiding questions by Tuesday 12 March COB.
- Final review and consolidation will be done by the EORE AG Co-Chairs on 13 March.
- The consolidated version will be shared with AG members for a silent procedure on 14 March.
- The inputs will be submitted to the ISU on behalf of the AG on **15 March**.

Based on the group discussion, the **following key advocacy messages** were identified...

⇒ **Machinery**

The appointment of a **dedicated coordinator for risk education** within the APMBC machinery would be a key step. Similar to existing thematic coordinators for other obligations under the Convention, this strategic move would enhance the overall effectiveness of efforts to address the issue and facilitate effective monitoring of progress under the new action plan. This adjustment has been highlighted in statements by the EORE AG and civil society and is also supported by some States Parties.

⇒ **Programme of Work**

An equally crucial decision involves deliberately **separating risk education from clearance in the agenda of formal meetings** of the Convention, including during the 5RC. This intentional distinction would align with the current structure of the OAP and offer enhanced visibility to the thematic. Such separation would also catalyse more robust conversations on risk education within the broader APMBC community, fostering a focused and strategic approach to this critical aspect of protection.

⇒ **Integrated Approaches**

It is important to **go beyond traditional approaches for EORE** to achieve better results. Other practical risk reduction solutions - other than EORE and clearance - are particularly relevant in transition and protracted crisis contexts where more holistic approaches and integration with other sectors to provide alternative solutions could reduce the risk of communities being forced to conduct unsafe practices due to socio-economic reasons.

⇒ **No Completion for Risk Education**

As for victim assistance, all stakeholders should be reminded that there is **no completion for risk education**.

Participation to the Review Conference

The discussion continued regarding the forthcoming Review Conference, with a specific focus on potential actions by the AG, notably the **prospect of hosting an AG side event and drafting an AG statement**. Furat emphasised the unique nature of the event and underscored its potential as a platform to enhance the visibility of EORE. She strongly advocated for the planning of both a side event and a statement, a sentiment echoed by Hugues.

In relation to the statement, Lisa suggested emphasising the "human faces" behind risk education, highlighting personal elements and experiences across different contexts. Additionally, the idea of a joint statement between the EORE AG and select State Parties sharing the view of the AG was proposed to amplify the group's messages. This coalition would strengthen the AG's voice and present a unified stance at the Conference. The presence of new national authorities within the Advisory Group in the coming months could help build this coalition.

Diverse topics for an AG side event were proposed by members, including on EORE and national ownership, SBCC, EORE and CPP, and best practices in coordination efforts. Furat also briefly outlined some findings from the 2023 Stakeholder Survey, which identified priority topics for mine action authorities and donors. These findings should guide the group in determining relevant topics for the Review Conference.

In summary, consensus among AG members emerged regarding the importance of both drafting a statement and organising a side event at the Fifth Review Conference. Therefore, members are encouraged to volunteer for drafting the statement and/or organising an AG side event at the said Conference. Those interested are invited to come forward and inform the Co-Chairs and Secretariat as soon as possible [\[action\]](#).

7. Update on the in-person EORE AG retreat

Matthieu was then given the floor to update on the organisation of the in-person EORE AG retreat scheduled on Friday 21 June 2024 in Geneva.

In terms of organisation, the one-day retreat will take place at the GICHD and a professional facilitator, specialised in experiential learning, will join the group to facilitate discussions and team building activities. Lunch, dinner and coffee breaks will be covered by the GICHD for all participants during the day.

All members are kindly requested to **confirm their participation by accepting or refusing the 'Save The Date' outlook invite** sent by Faustine on 16 January 2024 [\[action\]](#). This will enable the GICHD to start planning catering, facilities and other services. Sponsorship has been confirmed to those who requested support to attend. Should additional colleagues require assistance, please contact Matthieu and Faustine as soon as possible to explore possibilities, depending on the budget.

In terms of content, the overall objective of the retreat is two-fold. One is to pause and reflect at strategic level, to take stock of where the EORE AG stands and where the group wants to go through different methodologies. The other is to take this opportunity to connect and get to know each other better to move forward as a group. A draft agenda has been produced in coordination with the Co-Chairs, which will soon be circulated to all members for input [\[action\]](#).

8. AOB

Faustine shared two additional updates as part of this agenda item. First, she recalled members to have a final look at the consolidated 2023-2024 Work Plan with contributions on 2023 activities (mid-term review) by 10 March, after which date the document will be finalised and published on the EORE AG webpage.

Second, the group was informed that a [Summary Report](#) on the results of the 2023 EORE Stakeholder Survey was produced, with the support of Audrey Torrecilla, which will be published on the EORE AG webpage. Members are invited to contact Faustine in case of questions on this summary report.

Participants were invited to provide any other information or comment they may have to the Secretariat by email.

In this light, Yoshi (MA AoR) took the opportunity to share a special request with the group. In connection to the ongoing Humanitarian Programme Cycle, the MA AoR would like to enquire whether members could share any guidelines on **activity-based costing for EORE**. Members are invited to share any reference documents to unmasgeneva@un.org.