Digital EORE Bite-Sized Contents

Topic: EORE online courses

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- E-learning
- EORE
- Ukraine
- Online courses

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EORE AG
Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
Advisory Group

Background
Summary

Note: this summary relates to a period beyond the outbreak of conflict in February 2022, but remains relevant for the current context. References made to Non-Government Controlled Areas and Government Controlled Areas refer to pre-2022 locations.

Certain regions of Ukraine are not accessible to all Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) operators. One such area is the Non-Government Controlled Areas where children reportedly have twice as many EO related accidents than in Government Controlled Areas. Accessibility had been further exacerbated by COVID-19. In this context, DRC developed two EORE online courses:

The project had two phases: an 'alpha' phase and then a 'beta' phase. In alpha phases, children and adolescents were the target groups, with the children and adolescents in the NGCA being the primary target and those in the GCA secondary targets. In the 'beta' phase, adults were added as a target group. Qualitative and quantitative data suggests an overall appreciation and effectiveness of this modality.

Target groups:
- Primary: children (6-11 years old) and adolescent (12-17 years old) of eastern Ukraine
- Secondary: adults (18+ years old)

Background
Timeline and Budget

Timeline: The alpha phase took approximately 12 months to complete. In terms of resources, it was done fully in-house using an easy-to-use software (Articulate Storyline 360). The beta phase took about 9 months and was supported by an external IT vendor. In both cases, a 'pre-alpha/beta' phase was conducted for field testing. Monitoring and evaluation was conducted for all phases.

Budget: 38,700 USD

Methodology – Alpha Phase

- Pre-alpha phase: literature reviews of innovative pedagogical methods from Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics disciplines. Creation of lesson plans, testing questions, presentations, photos and video materials. Signing of Memoranda of Understandings with Institutes for Post-Graduate Pedagogical Education in Luhansk and Donetsk Oblast who offer distance learning programmes to students in NGCA – allowed for consultation process and institutional buy-in;

- Alpha phase: technical programming of the course, testing and fixing technical errors, voiceovers, etc. until finalisation;

- Mass digital media campaign to promote the course;

- Focus Group Discussions to gather feedback about the course.

Methodology – Beta Phase

- Beta phase: complete redesign of existing course and development of an additional EORE online courses for adults 18 years of age and above;

- The additional course underwent a similar 'pre-beta' phase as detailed in Methodology – Alpha Phase, but with support of an external IT company;

- Transfer of courses to DRC webpage stopmina.dk, which was turned to a Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (MOODLE) platform with free access to all three online courses;

- Contracting of an external evaluator to assess the effectiveness of the online courses;

- Final mass digital media campaign launched to promote the online courses.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Qualitative M&E system was used;

- Three FGDs conducted internally but independently by DRC. FGDs focused on attractiveness, comprehension, technicalities, effectiveness, relevance, motivation and improvements;

- External evaluator conducted comparative analysis between online beta courses and in-person EORE. Three assessment focuses: measurement of learning outcomes, overall quality of the EORE online courses, and their effect on behaviour change. Evaluators conducted EORE pre- and post-tests, semi-structured interviews, and participant observations of 32 individuals taking the online course and participating in direct EORE sessions in eastern Ukraine.

M&E Findings

Reactions and perceptions: emotions and associations restrained in the course. In-person training cannot be replaced by a voice over.

Training: the expertise of DRC is insufficiently displayed which reduces the legitimacy of the course.

Relevance: participant's found the subject relevant, but in-person EORE remains more relevant as it can be adapted to specific groups and locations.

Pre & post tests:

- Both in-person and online participants improved EO knowledge;
- Both in-person and online modalities were well received, with in-person sessions slightly better received;
- Both modalities are considered useful, again the in-person sessions slightly more useful because of photos shown;
- More direct learning experience with in-person sessions;
- Both modalities equally improved safer behaviour.

Recommendations

- EORE online courses should be free of charge and open sourced, based on scientific data, adult and child teaching methodologies, as well as real world research;

- Certificates should be awarded for the online course to encourage motivation of participants;

- Partnerships with educational and private structures in country is valuable to ensure that the course is developed in line with best pedagogical and technical approaches, and to ensure sustainability;

- As a next step, make the course accessible offline for countries and areas with weaker internet connection.

Lessons learnt

- Further research and knowledge sharing is needed on the impact of digital EORE, specifically on behaviour change, knowledge retention, etc.;

- Scientific findings suggests that digital initiatives work best when complementing the traditional, two-way communication channels;

- Partnerships with IT companies is unavoidable, but they are ill-informed about HMA and hence require extensive support for the appropriate development of the end product;

- It is key to partner with local educational providers and experts to ensure the adequacy, context-specificity, adaptability, and sustainability of digital EORE initiatives;

- Online education platforms have different technical requirements, making integration of the online course difficult across the board.

This bite-sized content was based on...

DRC Brief on EORE online courses

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Read more

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