

Communication Risk Education

A Training Manual in support of IMAS MRE Best Practice Guidebooks 4 and 5

B

Before each suggested training segment the manual includes **background information** (marked with a "B") for the trainer on the critical elements that (s)he should know in preparation for the training. It is assumed that the trainer will have read the relevant Best Practice Guidebook. Guidance is then given on the appropriate activity or activities to transfer the information and required skills to the workshop participants.

T

Instructions to the trainer on how to carry out the training activities are marked with a "T".

A

Suggested answers for each activity follow the materials and are marked with an "A".

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Introduction

USING THIS TRAINING MANUAL

This training manual has been developed to **support the assessment of needs and capacities for mine and explosive remnants of war risk education (MRE) interventions**. Although some basic “do’s and don’ts” on how to train are given below, the manual is **intended primarily for use by those with previous experience in providing training**.

The training manual is generic in nature, which means that **the curriculum and activities suggested** in the manual **must be adapted to the specific context** in which training is taking place. It uses a fictitious case – Autobia – that draws on real-life examples, but avoids participants at a training workshop being drawn into political discussions or arguments about facts.

As part of preparing for the training workshop, the trainer(s) should have read the IMAS MRE Best Practice Guidebook on Data Collection and Needs Assessment.

BACKGROUND TO THE IMAS MRE TRAINING MANUALS

In October 2003, UNICEF completed a set of seven MRE standards, which were formally adopted as International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) in June 2004. The seven standards are as follows:

- > IMAS 07.11 | Guide for the management of mine risk education;
- > IMAS 07.31 | Accreditation of mine risk education organisations and operations;
- > IMAS 07.41 | Monitoring of mine risk education programmes and projects;
- > IMAS 08.50 | Data collection and needs assessment for mine risk education;
- > IMAS 12.10 | Planning for mine risk education programmes and projects;
- > IMAS 12.20 | Implementation of mine risk education programmes and projects; and
- > IMAS 14.20 | Evaluation of mine risk education programmes and projects.¹

In 2005, the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in partnership with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) published a series of Best Practice Guidebooks on behalf of the United Nations to support the MRE IMAS.² This training manual, one in a series of seven, has been produced by the GICHD and UNICEF to facilitate the implementation of the IMAS on MRE through the provision of training in support of the relevant Best Practice Guidebook. The seven training manuals are the following:

- > Needs Assessment for Risk Education
- > Planning Risk Education
- > Communication in Risk Education
- > Community Liaison in Mine Action
- > Monitoring Risk Education
- > Coordinating Risk Education
- > Emergency Risk Education

CONTENT OF THE TRAINING MANUAL ON COMMUNICATION IN RISK EDUCATION

This training manual links directly to Best Practice Guidebooks 4 and 5. The manual provides useful tools and techniques for a trainer or MRE programme manager to guide his/her team in communication of risk education over a two-and-a-half day workshop. A proposed agenda for the training is included below. **It is assumed that participants in the training have some previous experience of MRE.**

The training manual covers the following six issues:

- > Behavioural change in MRE (half a day's training);
- > Targeting MRE communication (half a day's training);
- > MRE communication channels (half a day's training); and
- > Preparing an MRE communication strategy (half a day's training).

Before each suggested training segment the manual includes **background information** for the trainer (marked with a 'B') on the critical elements that (s)he should know in preparation for the training. It is assumed that the trainer will have read the relevant Best Practice Guidebook. Guidance is then given on the appropriate activity or activities to transfer the information and required skills to the workshop participants.

At the beginning of each activity, one or more **learning objectives** are set. Guidance is then given on how to carry out the appropriate activity or activities to meet these learning objectives.

Instructions to the trainer on how to carry out the training activities are marked with a 'T'.

Materials needed for these activities follow.

Suggested answers for each activity follow the materials and are marked with an 'A'.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES NEEDED FOR THE WORKSHOP

- > Tables and chairs that can be easily moved
- > Flipcharts and markers for each group of five workshop participants
- > White T-shirts (one for every five participants) and a variety of coloured markers
- > Coloured paper and scissors
- > Internet access

At the end of the course, hand out the relevant Best Practice Guidebooks (Nos. 4 and 5) as well as the GICHD publication, *A Guide to Improving Communication in Mine Risk Education*.

PROPOSED TRAINING AGENDA

Workshop Day 1 | Behavioural change and MRE messages

09:00 – 10:30

- > Introductions and review of the provisional agenda
- > Key terminology in project cycle management (icebreaker)
- > Thinking outside the box (icebreaker)

Coffee break

11:00 – 12:30

- > Common risk-taking behaviours (brainstorming and exercise)
- > Behavioural change in MRE (group discussion and exercise)

Lunch break

14:00 – 15:30

- > MRE messages (exercise)

Coffee break

16:00 – 17:00

- > Targeting MRE (group discussion)
- > Feedback on the day's training

End of Day One

Workshop Day 2 | Designing an MRE communication strategy

09:00 – 10:30

- > MRE communication channels (brainstorming and exercise)

Coffee break

11:00 – 12:30

- > Practice in communicating MRE (exercise)

Lunch break

14:00 – 16:00

- > Designing a communication strategy (exercise)

Coffee break

16:15 – 16:30

- > Feedback on the day's training

End of Day Two

Workshop Day 3 | Presentation of MRE communication strategies

09:00 – 10:30

- > Presenting MRE communication strategies (presentation of group work)

11:00 – 12:30

- > Wrap-up
- > Feedback on the workshop

End of Workshop

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR TRAINERS

Good training is based on five basic principles.

- > Adults learn best in an atmosphere of active involvement and participation.
- > Adults have knowledge and experience and can help each other to learn.
- > Adults learn best when it is clear that the context of the training is close to their own tasks or jobs. This means that training should be as realistic as possible.
- > Adults are voluntary learners. They have a right to know why a topic or session is important to them.
- > Adults have usually come with an intention to learn. If this motivation is not supported, they will switch off or stop coming.

Although the basic objective of training should be to create a learning environment, regrettably, often workshops contain a series of lectures. Adults have a particular problem with learning because as we grow older, our short-term memory becomes weaker. We find it harder to translate what we see or hear to long-term memory. Any method that relies too much on short-term memory, such as lectures, is therefore doomed to failure. For learning to stick, it has to be internalised.

Remember the words of Confucius:

“I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand.”

WHAT MAKES A GOOD FACILITATOR?

A facilitator is a generic term for a person who teaches or trains through workshops, training courses, or classes. To be a good trainer/facilitator requires time and experience, and ‘learning by doing’ is the best way. Remember that you can never fully satisfy every participant. If you have managed to encourage learning among the majority, then you have done your job well. The most effective trainers and facilitators have a range of key characteristics:

- > A warm personality, with an ability to show approval and acceptance of workshop participants
- > Social skill, with an ability to bring the group together and control it without damaging it
- > A manner of teaching which generates and uses the ideas and skills of workshop participants
- > Organising ability, so that resources are booked and logistical arrangements smoothly handled
- > Skill in noticing and resolving workshop participants’ problems
- > Enthusiasm for the subject and capacity to put it across in an interesting way
- > Flexibility in responding to workshop participants’ changing needs, and
- > Knowledge of the subject matter

Following on from this, there are a number of basic facilitation skills that must be used by a successful facilitator:

- > I listen intensely. I am a model for listening, often paraphrasing and “mirroring” what was said.
- > I always use people’s first names.
- > I am a facilitator, not a performer. My work is being interested, not interesting.
- > I encourage everyone to express themselves, and I accept varying points of view offered. I keep track of who talks and who does not, encouraging balanced participation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FEEDBACK

“Teaching adults is complicated enormously by the difficulty of criticising an equal. Not giving the right quantity or quality of feedback is one of the main reasons why adult learning fails... There are two dangers: giving it in the wrong way and not giving enough.” Rogers, 1989

If you do not let workshop participants know when they are doing things well, then they will not be able to reinforce the good things they are doing. As a trainer, you will have to guide self-reflection and give feedback immediately in order to address some of the mistakes from the past. There are five simple rules for giving feedback:

- > Give feedback as soon as possible. Do not wait until the error or success is repeated.
- > Limit comments to only two or three aspects of good or bad performance. There is a limit to how much we can absorb at any one time.
- > Don’t immediately correct every mistake yourself. The most difficult thing for a trainer is to keep quiet and let participants learn by doing it themselves. It might take longer, but the learning impact will be greater.
- > Give praise before offering negative comments. However poor the performance, there must be something you can praise. Build up participants’ self-esteem.
- > Criticise the performance not the person. Whenever you offer feedback, make sure it encourages the participant to act upon it.

DAY 1

BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE AND MRE MESSAGES

Issues covered in this training day

- > Introduction and review of the provisional agenda
- > Jargon used in MRE communication
- > Common risk-taking behaviours
- > Behavioural change in MRE
- > MRE messages
- > Targeting MRE

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

There are many ways to do introductions. One way is to divide the group into pairs and inform them that they will have to introduce their partners in five minutes time. This forces people to ask their partner basic questions about who they are and where they come from.

If you have more time, you can ask each person to say three things about themselves, two of which are true and the other is false. The rest of the group has to guess which is false.

For a review of the agenda, you can use PowerPoint/an overhead projector or simply present briefly the key topics that will be covered and ask whether anything is missing.

Try not to spend more than 30 minutes on the introductions and review of the agenda.

THE ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN MRE: BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TRAINER

MRE communication delivers information – safety messages – on the mine/ERW threat through:

- > The use of mass media techniques or other communication means, and
- > Formal and non-formal education systems.

MRE communication informs and demonstrates safe behaviour, teaches mine-safe skills and creates support for mine-safe behaviour among communities and leaders. Communicators can be adults, whether volunteers or employed by an organisation or agency, or children when delivering peer MRE or child-to-child MRE.

Effective communication is critical to MRE. Communication can, of course, (and should!) also support community liaison activities.

Changing behaviour is not easy. As a rule, we do not suddenly begin to do something we have never done before: we learn and weigh the benefits of doing it or not doing it; we look around to see if anyone else is doing it — and if our friends and community accept the new behaviour. If it seems socially acceptable, valuable and practical, we learn the skills to undertake the new behaviour and we may apply it to our own lives. We then evaluate whether it is worthwhile to continue. From our experience we may reject the new behaviour, or we may encourage others to follow our example.

The focus of an MRE communication strategy therefore should be to:

- > Provide the information, assurance and encouragement that is needed to encourage mine-safe behaviours
- > Identify and promote model mine-safe behaviours
- > Teach the skills that are needed and ensure people can use the new skills
- > Provide a social environment that supports mine-safe behaviours (so you're not just targeting a person exhibiting unsafe behaviour but also, and especially, those who can influence his/her behaviour)
- > Provide ongoing encouragement to continue with mine-safe behaviours; and
- > Encourage people to pass the information and new skills on to others.

T

ACTIVITY 1.1 | PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT JARGON

Learning objectives

- > This first icebreaker activity is intended to clarify misunderstandings and misconceptions about key terminology used in simple project cycle management. It will also give the training facilitator the chance to gauge the level of knowledge of the trainees.

Materials needed

- > Enough T-shirts for each group of five trainees
- > Different coloured marker pens for each group

Time needed

- > Approximately 30 minutes

Conduct of activity

Write up on pieces of paper the following words and then fold the paper so the writing is hidden:

- > Safe behaviour
- > Strategy
- > Community-based
- > Communication
- > Monitoring

Divide the trainees into groups of five or less and go round each group asking one member to take a slip of paper. Tell them they have 15 minutes to draw the word or concept on the T-shirt but **without using any words**. They will then show the T-shirt to the other groups who have to guess what the word or phrase depicted is.

The idea is to encourage a discussion in a group of key terminology that is often used in an MRE communication initiative without a full understanding of what exactly is meant. Once the groups have all had a go, ask them to put the T-shirts in chronological order (if possible put them up on the wall or have people wear them and then stand in a circle and take a photograph!) so they will serve as a constant reminder during the workshop.

T

ACTIVITY 1.2 | "THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX"

Learning objectives

- > This second icebreaker activity is intended to put the participants in the right frame of mind for the rest of the workshop, helping them to understand the importance of going outside existing approaches to make their work more creative and effective.

Materials needed

- > Whiteboard and markers
- > Overhead projector

Time needed

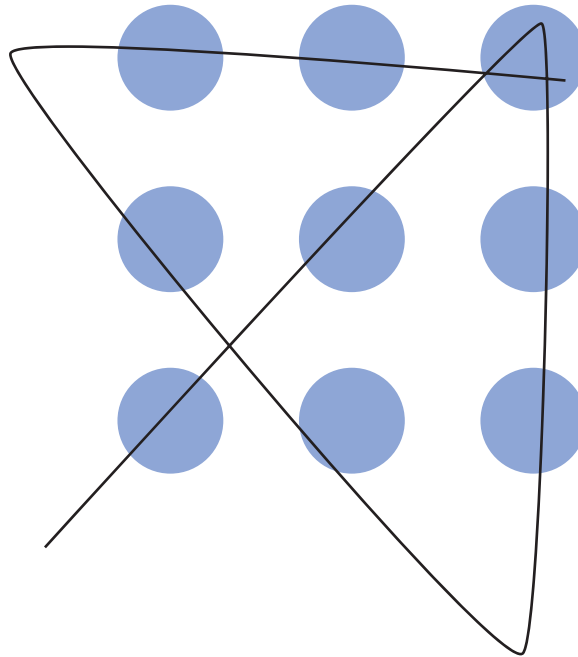
- > Approximately 10 minutes

ACTIVITY 1.2 | “THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX” (CONTD)

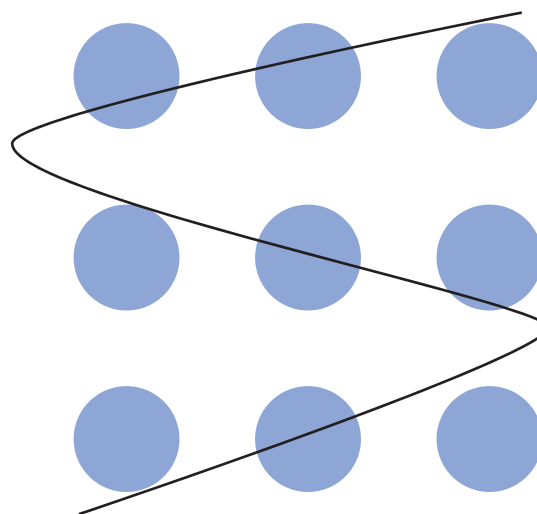


Conduct of activity

Ask participants to draw nine dots in a square on a piece of paper. They must then connect all nine dots using four straight lines without taking their pen off the paper. Give them a few minutes to have a go. If someone finds the answer (or already knows it) ask them to demonstrate to the others. Ask him or her to explain how it was done. Try to elicit the response – by going outside the square/box. This is the key to the exercise. See below for the answer.



Then tell them that since that was easy, now they should connect the dots using only three lines. This requires further innovation. See below for the answer.



Finally, ask participants how the dots could be joined with just one line. There are a number of possible answers: using a thick paintbrush perhaps, or by folding the paper three times so all the dots are touching.

B

COMMON RISK-TAKING BEHAVIOURS: BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TRAINER

“Risk-takers” are broadly put into four categories:

- > The Unaware (the person doesn't know anything about the danger of mines or ERW);
- > The Uninformed (the person knows about mines/ERW but doesn't know how to adopt safe behaviour);
- > The Reckless (the person knows about safe behaviour but ignores it); and
- > The Intentional (the victim has little option but to intentionally adopt unsafe behaviour).

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ACTIVITY 1.3 | RISK-TAKING BEHAVIOUR

Learning objectives

- > This group exercise is intended to enable trainees to understand the different reasons why people are at risk from mines and ERW, how information can be gathered to assess risk-taking behaviour, and how to influence behaviour.

Materials needed

- > Flipcharts for each group of five participants and one for the facilitator with markers

Time needed

- > Approximately 90 minutes (including review)

Conduct of activity

Brainstorm the reasons why people step on mines or detonate unexploded ordnance. Write up on the flipchart the four main categories. Ask which is the most important in the country the trainees are working in. The answers will typically be a mixture. Then ask whether particular segments of the population (children, male adult farmers, etc.) fit neatly into the different categories (they don't!). Ask how this information can be obtained. Refer to the importance of a KAPB (Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices and Behaviour) study.

Then ask how people's behaviour can be changed. Get beyond the mere provision of information (examples of smoking campaigns can be useful), to identify those who influence our behaviour (friends, family, community, public figures, laws, etc.).

Then in groups of five or six, ask each group to identify strategies for each of the different risk-taking categories. Clearly the most difficult are categories three and four, especially the intentional (forced) risk-taking. Ask for a volunteer group to present its work. Elicit peer review and suggestions to improve the proposed strategies. This should lead into a discussion of the importance of linking into to other mine action and broader emergency and development activities, so people understand that MRE communication does not take place – successfully – in a vacuum.

MRE MESSAGES: BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TRAINER

There is no right and wrong message, but simple is not always most effective. The golden rule for every campaign is that there must be a positive message – people need to feel that they are able to take action and that by taking action they can improve their and their families' lives. And, with MRE, be careful – the wrong message can kill.

Messages to be communicated depend on target audiences, behaviours to promote and factors likely to influence target audiences to adopt the desired behaviour. You will probably have to refer constantly to your research results to ensure that the messages are culturally and socially appropriate.

Good messages should do the following:

- > Reinforce positive factors
- > Address misunderstandings and areas of deficient knowledge
- > Address attitudes
- > Give the benefits of behaviours being promoted
- > Urge specific action
- > State where to find the services being promoted
- > State where to find help, if needed
- > Address barriers to action.

Repeating messages is essential to effective communication, which is an organic process. People can easily miss just one “spreadshot” message, even if it is carried in all media available.

But messages must also be adapted as a project or programme progresses. Don't push one message to the point where it bores people. Plan messages to support your programme cycle: often this will have to start with “emergency” messages but then they should be developed into messages covering “what to do in a minefield”, about marking, surveying and clearing, about restoring agriculture in the communities, about caring and rehabilitation services, about political and economic attention to the mine/ERW-affected.

ACTIVITY 1.4 | MRE MESSAGES

Learning objectives

- > To enable trainees to practice designing and targeting MRE messages.

Materials needed

- > One flipchart for each group of five trainees with markers; and
- > Situation cards (to be plastified, if possible, examples contained overleaf).

Time needed

- > Approximately 90 minutes, including review.

T

ACTIVITY 1.4 | MRE MESSAGES (CONTD)

Conduct of activity

Explain to the participants that they are going to practise designing MRE messages for an MRE project in mythical Autobia. They are going to be given situation cards for which they must identify:

- > The target population(s); and
- > The message(s) to be transmitted.

Point out that they can (and should) target more than one group and that they should try to develop positive messages (e.g. Keep to the safe path!) rather than negative messages (e.g. “Don’t touch!”). This will make their work more effective.

Hand out one different (preferably plastified) situation card to each of the groups and give them 30 minutes to develop their communication strategy. They must then present their proposal to the group. Ask for peer review and suggestions to improve the proposed strategies. Discuss what will work well in their country.

Stress in feedback that it is not just targeting the people exhibiting the behaviour, but also those who can influence them.

Situation Cards

SITUATION CARD N° 1

Teenage children are playing with items of unexploded ordnance that they are finding around their village. They like to light fires and watch things explode.

SITUATION CARD N° 2

Former Autobian government troops who have been demobilised are offering their services as deminers to mine- and ERW-affected villages, although they have no clearance expertise or equipment.

SITUATION CARD N° 3

Ethnic Decepticon refugees are planning to spontaneously return to Autobia now that the war is coming to an end. Although they do not know it, there are mines and ERW all over the territory.

SITUATION CARD N° 4

Autobian villagers are going into a forest that they know is affected by mines because they need firewood to cook their food and heat their homes.

SITUATION CARD N° 5

An ethnic Decepticon community is affected by mines but believes that if they run very fast across a piece of contaminated land they will outrun the blast of the mine.

ACTIVITY 1.5 | TARGETING IN MRE

Learning objectives

- > To enable trainees to further comprehend the need for a broad communication strategy that targets not only those engaged in risk-taking behaviour but also those who can influence their actions.

Materials needed

- > None

Time needed

- > Approximately 45 minutes

Conduct of activity

Finish the day's training with a discussion of how trainees have communicated risk education in their own countries, and the challenges and obstacles they have to overcome. Encourage them to think "outside the box", even though that may demand advocacy within their own organisation first!

ACTIVITY 1.6 | FEEDBACK

Complete the day with a short formal feedback session from the trainees. For instance, you can draw a smile, a frown and a normal face on three different flipcharts and ask people to stand in front of the one that reflects their feelings. Ask for suggestions on how things could have been better and then what people enjoyed, so you (hopefully!) end the day on a high note.

End of day one of the workshop

DAY 2

DESIGNING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Issues covered in this training day

This second day of the training focuses on the selection of communication channels and the determining of a communication strategy.

- > Identifying communication channels and their comparative advantages and disadvantages
- > Elements to include in a communication strategy
- > Pre-testing of a communication strategy

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS: BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TRAINER

Communication channels are the various media available to disseminate your MRE message. In selecting the appropriate channel, it is essential to ensure that the people you want to reach:

- > Have access to it;
- > Understand it easily;
- > Trust it; and
- > Believe it!

Communication channels can broadly be divided into four major categories.

Person-to-person or interpersonal communication

This is direct, face-to-face contact and interaction between people. It allows for questions and answers and clarification of meaning. It helps to ensure mutual understanding and is one of the most effective means of promoting behavioural change. When done well, it can provide highly relevant information with strong credibility, afford an opportunity to discuss sensitive or personal topics, and allow immediate feedback on ideas, messages and practices. Interpersonal communication is the primary means of formal and non-formal education, for teaching, for encouraging the use of new skills and for helping individuals and affected communities to become involved in reducing mine/ERW risk.

Interpersonal communication can take many forms. Some of the most useful for MRE are:

- > Community outreach, including meetings and workshops with community groups;
- > Deminers discussing the dangers of mines with village people;
- > Mine victims/amputees providing MRE;
- > School teachers, health workers and local leaders providing MRE to school children and community members;
- > MRE providers building partnerships with development NGOs; and
- > Project managers advocating among politicians and leaders for support for MRE.

The limitations of interpersonal communication are that it is inherently time-consuming, with a high cost per person/contact; it typically reaches only a small number of individuals; and it demands practical skill-training and support for field workers.

Small media

“Small media” are often used to support larger communication initiatives or to illustrate interpersonal communication. Examples are posters, cassettes, leaflets, brochures, slide sets, video, flip charts, flash cards, T-shirts, badges, even the use of loudspeakers.

Small media provide accurate, standardised information in a handy and reusable form that can be used as visual aids in workshops, discussions and teaching. They attract attention and can be distributed to areas where the mass media do not reach.

The limitations of small media are that, most commonly, they are used in isolation from other MRE activities and, as a result, have little meaning or impact on the at-risk groups. Research shows that posters, brochures and flip charts have limited use and are seldom cost-effective or durable. They are expensive to produce and to distribute, have a short lifespan, and training is necessary for effective design, production and use.

B

Although experience shows that the bulk of small media production remains in store rooms and is never distributed, communicators are often seduced by the “ease” of production and the possibility to control (“plan”) the communication. Too often they are used to illustrate that the project is “doing something”.

Posters may look good, but they are often the least effective medium for disseminating MRE messages, particularly among the poor and those with limited literacy skills. If you must use posters, brochures and flip charts, they must have a specific purpose and be carefully integrated into other communication activities. They may be designed to support a key message and to provide an ongoing reminder of that message. Or they may be designed to promote easier understanding of messages during interpersonal communication. As the cost of developing flip charts and other visual aids can be high, there is a tendency to develop a prototype that is used for a number of ethnic groups and situations. These need to be adapted to local situations – and field tested – if they are to be effective.

Traditional media

Traditional media are performance arts used to illustrate and convey information in an entertaining way. Live performances provide special opportunities for interaction between performers and audience. They include drama, traditional forms of theatre, puppet shows, street theatre, storytelling, songs and dance.

The strength of traditional media is that they are entertaining and attracts and hold people’s attention. Traditional media put messages and situations in a familiar context, use local jargon and slang, employ local talent and get the community involved, with the potential to be self-sustaining at low/no cost. They can be used to provide new information, introduce new attitudes and stimulate discussion of MRE among families, friends and neighbours in the community. Drama has also been used to encourage children to support each other’s mine-safe behaviour.

The limitations of this form of media are similar to those of small media: they only reach a relatively small group and it is difficult to guarantee and monitor consistent accuracy of messages, especially across language and cultural divides.

Mass media

The mass media provides indirect, one-way communication and include community, national and international radio and television as well as newspapers, magazines, comic books, cinema or other situations where a large number of people can be reached with information without personal contact.

Radio is often ignored in MRE projects. Yet it reaches a wider audience than any other medium: there are an estimated 94 radios per 1,000 people in the least developed countries – ten times the number of televisions or copies of daily newspapers available. Since landmines and ERW tend to be found in rural communities, some of which are remote, make sure you fully check radio’s reach.

Radio builds on oral traditions and audio projects are cheap, quick and easy to make. Radio listening is often a group activity, which encourages discussion of issues after the broadcast. This is an important stage in the process of behaviour change.

On the other hand, radio is not usually appropriate for teaching practical new skills, nor is it appropriate in some cultures for sensitive messages. Some MRE messages need to be discussed and demonstrated. And some more sensitive issues, for example related to reporting and handing over of unused ordnance, might be best communicated using traditional media. To a large extent, this is a matter of common sense. But information that is given by visiting MRE teams, teachers in schools or in community workshops should be regularly reinforced by local radio, television or other media.

ACTIVITY 2.1 | COMMUNICATION CHANNELS



Learning objectives

- > To enable trainees to understand the different communication channels and their comparative advantages and disadvantages

Materials needed

- > Four flipcharts for four groups of trainees with markers

Time needed

- > Approximately 90 minutes

Conduct of activity

Brainstorm from the group as a whole the four different channels of communication available. If they identify specific types (e.g. TV) rather than mass media, put them in a list leaving space for the heading of mass media. When you have the four categories, make sure there are examples of each so people understand what traditional media includes, and what small media includes.

Then divide the group into four groups and ask each to list the advantages and disadvantages of a different communication channel. Ensure each group presents its work while the other groups add in things they think are missing or suggest corrections to what they believe is wrong.

ACTIVITY 2.2 | USING COMMUNICATION CHANNELS



Learning objectives

- > To enable trainees to practice using communication channels

Materials needed

- > The set of five situation cards used previously, and
- > One flipchart for each of four groups of trainees with markers.

Time needed

- > 90 minutes

Conduct of activity

Tell the four groups they now have an opportunity to practice with communication channels. Using the situation cards prepared previously, go round each group and let them pick blind one of the cards. Allocate a different communication channel to each of the four groups and this is their task: to prepare an MRE session (role play) for this target group using the given communication channel. They have 40 minutes to prepare and then give each group in turn the chance to perform.

B

DESIGN OF A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY: BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE TRAINER

A communication strategy for MRE is composed of the following elements:

- > The target populations;
- > The behaviour(s) to be modified;
- > The messages to be transmitted;
- > The communication channel(s) to be used; and
- > The people/groups to be involved in disseminating the message.

T

ACTIVITY 2.3 | DESIGNING A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Learning objectives

- > To enable trainees to practice designing an MRE communication strategy.

Materials needed

- > One fact sheet on Autobia for each trainee (contained overleaf)
- > Communication strategy framework
- > One flip chart for each group of six trainees with markers.

Time needed

- > Remainder of the day for preparation

Conduct of activity

Brainstorm the components of a communication strategy. Explain that the participants now have an opportunity to put into practice all they have learned during the workshop by developing a communication strategy. Hand out to each participant the fact sheet on mine action in Autobia and then divide them into four (different) groups. Tell them that they are the new project team for four different organisations interested in conducting risk education in Autobia and have until 9am the following morning to prepare their communication strategies for a target group that they decide on (e.g. returning refugees, children, communities in the east of the country, farmers, etc.). They will each be given 15 minutes to present their strategy at the first meeting of the new national mine action centre, AUTOMAC. The facilitator is the director of AUTOMAC and will decide whether each of the strategies is good enough.

Each group will plan for a six-month project on behalf of a different organisation: the Red Cross; EuroBatt, a UNOBIA peacekeeping battalion; Solidarity for Decepticons (a local relief NGO with no prior experience in risk education); and International Help (an international demining NGO). This means putting themselves in the role of the organisation with its strengths and weaknesses (and hopefully working together with the other groups!). There is also likely to be distrust of outsiders, so risk education projects will need to take account of this.

Communication strategy framework

A communication strategy for risk education should be composed of the following elements:

- > The target populations (i.e. those engaged in risk-taking and others who can influence their behaviour)
- > The behaviour to be modified
- > The messages to be transmitted
- > The communication channels to be used
- > The people/groups to be involved in disseminating the message

AUTOBIA FACT SHEET

A bitter internal armed conflict has just ended in Autobia, with a peace deal brokered by the United Nations between the government and ethnic Decepticon rebels, based in the mountainous east of the country. A government of national unity has been appointed under the terms of the peace accord; one of their main tasks is to draft a new constitution paving the way for elections to be held within 18 months. It is expected that the constitution will give considerable autonomy to the eastern regions.

Deployment has now begun of a UN peace-keeping mission – UNOMICRO – which will be 20,000 strong. Ethnic Decepticon refugees that fled the country to neighbouring Deceptica are planning to return and those displaced internally by the fighting have already begun returning to their homes. The ethnic Decepticons are mainly subsistence farmers and herders but they have very little seed, agricultural implements or livestock left. It's too late in the season to plant crops so they will be reliant on international food aid until the following spring. The government of Deceptica has announced that it will open border routes to facilitate the delivery of aid coming in through its eastern seaport (Autobia is land-locked).

The World Bank is planning to convene a major donors' conference to support the rebuilding of Autobia, whose economy has been devastated by two decades of conflict. A joint World Bank/European Union/Japanese government assessment mission is about to visit the country and will prepare a report in advance of this conference. Nordic countries are expected to play a significant role at the conference as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Denmark had initiated the latest peace efforts.

Autobia is not well known to the outside world but there are reports of substantial natural gas reserves, mostly in the former rebel-held areas; if true, a pipeline could easily be built to enable gas to reach European markets.

Meanwhile, the number of civilian mine victims is said to be increasing. Information on victims is being collected by the International Committee of the Red Cross, as part of its national mine risk education and victim assistance programme. The health system is not functioning and is dependent on outside assistance from the ICRC and Médecins sans Frontières to provide even basic primary health care.

There are no foreign organisations working actively in demining although three international NGOs have been carrying out "integrated demining" projects in Deceptica along the border with Autobia where the refugees were temporarily resettled.

Reports from Human Rights Watch based on interviews in the refugee camps suggest that there are many victims of both mines and other unexploded munitions, including cluster bombs, especially in the east. All the bridges have been destroyed and the few asphalt roads in the country have deteriorated and many in the east are believed to be mined. Press reports suggest that roads and some communities are "littered" with unexploded ordnance.

Claims that the national armed forces continue to lay mines have been strenuously denied, although it was acknowledged that they held "significant" stockpiles around the country. The previous government blamed the rebels for mine-laying and had indicated that it was planning to join the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. The newly-appointed government of national unity has not yet made its position known.

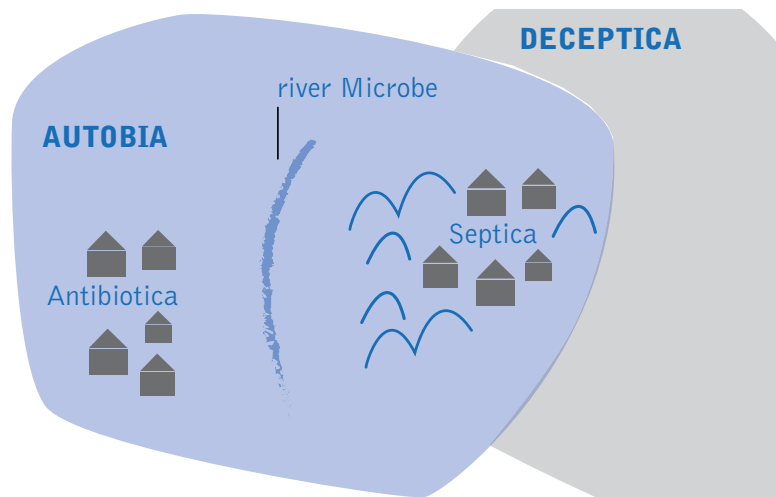
The peace accord foresees the creation of a new national army recruited from the ranks of both warring parties.

There are no functioning newspapers or TV/radio stations inside Autobia that service the ethnic Decepticons in the east but rebel organisations have set up a propaganda arm, including newspapers and radio programming produced in western Deceptica.

Key facts

Official name	Republic of Autobia
Member of	United Nations, Council of Europe, Commonwealth
Area	110,912 km ² (roughly the size of Bulgaria)
Population	9,000,000 (1994 estimate)
Capital	Antibiotica (1 million inhabitants in 1994)
Major cities	Septica (200,000 inhabitants in 1984)
Official language	Autobian (Decepticon is widely spoken in the east of the country)
Religion	Christian Orthodox (93%)
Government	According to the existing Constitution, the President of Autobia is elected by universal suffrage every five years. He was last elected in 1995 with 97% of the vote just before the declaration of a State of Emergency. The President appoints a Prime Minister and a Cabinet. There is a bicameral assembly – Parliament House and the Oversight Chamber. Members of Parliament House are elected by popular vote and the Oversight Chamber representatives are appointed by the Prime Minister.
Geography	The Microhill Mountains run from north to south in the east of the country – Lumpi is one of the highest peaks in Europe. Autobia is landlocked, with its neighbour to the east, Deceptica, holding a valuable warm water port.
Economy	With fertile soils in the west and centre of the country, Autobia has a strong agricultural base. Production is centred on large-scale mechanised cooperatives, although these have been badly affected by the conflict. Natural gas reserves have been found in the east of the country but there has been little exploitation to date because of the conflict. A planned pipeline will go through the mountains from south to north through the west of Deceptica and into Central Europe.

Map of Autobia





ACTIVITY 2.4 | FEEDBACK

Complete the day with a short feedback session from the trainees. For instance, you can ask each of four groups to propose three suggestions that could be used to improve a future workshop on MRE communication.

End of day two of the workshop

DAY 3

PRESENTATION OF MRE COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

Issues covered in this training day

The third day of the training is the opportunity to review the communication strategies the participants have put together and which each group will present in turn.



ACTIVITY 3.1 | PRESENTATION OF MRE STRATEGIES

Allow each group to present their strategy and elicit peer review and feedback from the other participants. You hope that they have coordinated their strategies with each other (though that is likely not the case). Point out the importance of coordination (messages, target groups, geographical areas) for communication to be effective. Then broaden the discussion into a wrap up by reviewing the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the different bodies in communicating MRE.



ACTIVITY 3.2 | FEEDBACK

Complete the workshop with a formal feedback session from the trainees. Hand out a form and ask them to fill it in (a suggestion is contained overleaf). If possible ask someone in the group to facilitate an oral review behind closed doors (i.e. without you in the room). He/she can then give you a summary of how people think it went.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ As of July 2009, the IMAS on MRE were in the process of being revised.
- ² The IMAS on MRE and the Best Practice Guidebooks can be downloaded free of charge from the Internet at www.mineactionstandards.org.

TRAINING WORKSHOP ON COMMUNICATION IN MRE

Workshop Feedback Form

(Place, date)

1. Was the workshop useful to your work?

Yes _____ No _____ Don't know _____

2. Was the workshop ... long enough? _____ ...too long? _____ ...too short? _____

3. Was the workshop well organised?

Yes _____ No _____ Don't know _____

4. Were the presentations useful?

Yes _____ No _____ Don't know _____

5. Were the group work/exercises useful?

Yes _____ No _____ Don't know _____

6. What would you change?

7. How would you change it?
