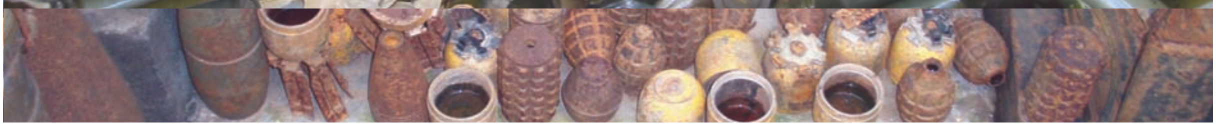
Mine and ERW

Risk Education

A Project Management

Guide



GICHD | CIDHG

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) works for the elimination of anti-personnel mines and for the reduction of the humanitarian impact of other landmines and explosive remnants of war. To this end, the GICHD, in partnership with others, provides operational assistance, creates and disseminates knowledge, improves quality management and standards, and supports instruments of international law, all aimed at increasing the performance and professionalism of mine action.

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MINE AND EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR RISK EDUCATION

A PROJECT MANAGEMENT GUIDE

NOVEMBER 2008

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INTRODUCTION

The nature of mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW)[1] risk education (RE) has changed radically since the programmes of mine awareness in Afghanistan in the late 1980s. It is now generally accepted that stand-alone projects that merely pass on safety messages through a variety of one-way media should be the exception rather than the rule, restricted to emergency situations in which conflict is ongoing. Instead, the typical role of RE is to reduce the risk to civilians through dialogue and cooperation with affected communities, as well as to provide support to the other pillars of mine action, especially demining and victim assistance. The primary challenge for RE projects today is to identify or generate incentives for safe behaviour through collaboration with those engaged in broader relief and development activities.

An overview of risk education resources

Over the past decade, a wide range of materials, publications, and tools have been developed to support RE programmes. In particular, International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) have been developed to advise operators, mine action centres, national authorities and donors on what is necessary and recommended for the development and implementation of effective mine action programmes. First issued in June 2004, there are seven IMAS on (M)RE (www.mineactionstandards.org), 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*

> IMAS 14.20: *Evaluation of mine risk education programmes and projects.*

Subsequently, UNICEF in partnership with the Geneva International Centre for International Demining (GICHD) published a series of *Best Practice Guidebooks* to provide more practical advice on how to implement the relevant IMAS. A total of 12 Guidebooks were published[2].

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The best practice guidebooks, developed in November 2005, are as follows:

1. An Introduction to Mine Risk Education
2. Data Collection and Needs Assessment
3. Planning
4. Public Information Dissemination
5. Education and Training
6. Community Mine Action Liaison
7. Monitoring
8. Evaluation
9. Emergency Mine Risk Education
10. Coordination
11. The Collected IMAS on Mine Risk Education
12. Glossary of Terms and Resources

A Guide to Improving Communication in Mine Risk Education Programmes was researched and developed by the GICHD in March 2004. This fed into the 2005 Best Practice Guidebook 4: Public Information Dissemination as well as Guidebook 5: Education and Training.

In 2008, *"Community Liaison in Mine Action: A Best Practice Guide"* was developed based on the findings of a multi-country study on Community Liaison in 2007/08 by the GICHD, supported by UNICEF. This reflects the role of community liaison not only as a distinct activity within RE but also as a community participatory approach applicable across all mine action pillars.

In 2008, seven training manuals were produced by the GICHD and UNICEF to support the implementation of the Best Practice Guidebooks, enabling managers to build the capacity of staff and partners. The training manuals are as follows:

1. Data Collection and Needs Assessment
2. MRE: Planning for Results
3. Applying a Community Liaison approach to mine action
4. MRE Communication

5. Emergency MRE
6. MRE Coordination
7. Planning for more effective monitoring in mine action

Additionally, in 2008, UNICEF developed an *Emergency Mine Risk Education Resource Kit*, which contains resources for printed material, radio broadcasts, and data gathering tools in the first six weeks of an emergency.

Aim of the Guide and intended audience

This document, *Mine Risk Education: A Project Management Guide*, outlines the principles of project management, illustrating its key steps and components. It links each management step with the existing IMAS Standards and refers the manager to the relevant Best Practice Guidebook and supporting training manual.

Over the last decade, risk education has been moving away from awareness-raising and distribution of basic safety messages, towards a more constructive engagement with affected communities, emphasising problem-solving and risk education. This Guide reflects that change. It is intended for RE staff (or indeed any mine action staff) who manage people or resources. These are likely to be project managers, project coordinators, or team leaders.

While this Guide can be used as a stand-alone document, it is best used in collaboration with the relevant IMAS, Best Practice Guidebooks and supporting training manuals, as referenced throughout the document.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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1. ERW is abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO) and unexploded ordnance (UXO), linked to an armed conflict.

2. The Best Practice Guidebooks can be downloaded free of charge from three website sources: www.unicef.org, www.mineactionstandards.org, or www.gichd.org.

CHAPTER 2

AN OVERVIEW OF RISK EDUCATION

AN OVERVIEW OF RISK EDUCATION

Putting risk education in context

Modern mine and ERW risk education (RE) projects were first carried out in Afghanistan in the late 1980s and then in Cambodia in the early 1990s. The discipline was initially called mine awareness, which reflected its aim — to make civilians aware of the dangers of mines. The projects were largely based on the distribution of leaflets and posters and tended to be one-way, with the "experts" providing information to the "unaware".

Although these projects were replicated in dozens of other countries, their effectiveness began to be questioned. It also became clear that the so-called "unaware" were often better informed about local mine threats than the experts, and that they needed realistic guidance about how to minimise the risks. Another aspect that contradicted previous methods was the realisation that civilians were often forced by poverty to take intentional risks, such as entering a known hazardous area, for economic reasons.

This led to two major changes to mine awareness. The first was the realization that simply warning people about the danger of mines and ERW was not enough; sustained behavioural change was necessary if RE was to have a positive impact. The second was the recognition of the importance of community liaison. As the discipline developed to incorporate these new aspects, mine awareness was renamed mine risk education (MRE) and efforts were made to professionalise it, including international guidelines, which later became IMAS.

Today, MRE (or RE as it is increasingly being called, in recognition that the mine threat is reducing while the threat from ERW is increasing) is carried out in more than 40 countries at an annual cost of some US$20 million per year. The discipline continues to evolve. As the problem changes, so does the response. There are fewer emergencies. In many places younger generations have grown up knowing about the dangers of mines or ERW. They no longer need to be taught about them in the same way. As resources for RE correspondingly diminish, so the messages have to be far better targeted and more relevant. Before we talk about project management, let's first reflect on the basics of RE.

RE definition and goals

RE is one of the key five components of mine action. The others are: demining (i.e. mine and ERW survey, mapping, marking and clearance); victim assistance, including rehabilitation and reintegration; advocacy against the use of landmines and cluster munitions; and stockpile destruction.

CHAPTER 2

AN OVERVIEW OF RISK EDUCATION

The term "mine risk education" refers to "*activities which seek to reduce the risk of injury from mines/unexploded ordnance by raising awareness and promoting behavioural change, including public information dissemination, education and training, and community mine action liaison.*" [1]

Although the discipline is widely called mine risk education, it seeks to prevent harm to civilians from all types of victim-activated explosive devices. RE therefore covers the dangers not only of landmines (whether anti-personnel or anti-vehicle) but also of explosive remnants of war (ERW). ERW are defined under international law to mean unexploded ordnance (UXO — bombs, shells, grenades and other munitions which have been fired or dropped but have not exploded as intended) and abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO — abandoned stockpiles or weapons caches). ERW includes cluster munitions.

RE has three main goals:

- To minimise deaths and injuries from landmines and ERW
- To reduce the social and economic impact from landmines and ERW
- To support development.

These goals are interlinked and interdependent, though each has distinct elements as part of the strategy to achieve them.[2]

Guiding Principles

IMAS 07.11 lays down eight guiding principles for RE projects and programmes. It states that:

- All stakeholders should be involved throughout the programme or project cycle
- Coordination requirements should be respected
- Projects and programmes should be integrated
- Communities should be empowered to be active participants in RE
- Good information management and exchange should be at the centre of projects and programmes
- Projects and programmes should ensure effective targeting of those most at-risk in the community
- They should use appropriate educational tools and methods
- Appropriate training should be provided throughout the programme.[3]

Who are the "risk-takers"?

There are a number of different reasons why individuals are at risk from mines and ERW. Risk-takers are broadly put into five categories:

> **The Unaware** (the person knows nothing about the dangers that mines or ERW represent—typical examples are refugees or young children);

> **The Uninformed** (the person knows that mines and ERW exist and are potentially dangerous but doesn't know about safe behaviour—typical examples are the internally displaced or older children);

> **The Misinformed** (the person has been given the wrong messages or thinks, wrongly, that he or she knows about safe behaviour—typical examples are former soldiers);

> **The Reckless** (the victim knows about safe behaviour but deliberately ignores it—typical examples are adolescent boys playing with mines or other explosive devices); and

> **The Forced** (the victim has little or no option but to intentionally adopt unsafe behaviour—typical examples are adults in highly-impacted communities who need to forage for food or water for their families to survive).

As we will see, understanding who is at risk from mines and ERW and why is critical to an effective RE project or programme.[4] The hardest risk-taking category to address through RE is the "Forced". To be successful, you will need to identify alternatives to intentional risk-taking and promote them (typically with the help of a development actor), or to persuade demining organisations that certain communities in which such risk-taking is prevalent are a priority for clearance.

The role of community liaison in RE

Community liaison (CL) emphasises community participatory approaches, communicating directly with communities, mobilising their own knowledge and commitment, and putting the needs and priorities of communities first in mine action interventions.

According to the IMAS, which categorises CL as a strategic principle of mine action, CL is "liaison with mine/ERW affected communities to exchange information on the presence and impact of mines and ERW, create a reporting link with the mine action programme and develop risk reduction strategies. Community mine action liaison aims to ensure community needs and priorities are central to the planning, implementation and monitoring of mine action operations."[5]

Essential Reading

Throughout the present Guide, resources and tools are highlighted in relevant sections. The "Essential Reading" list at the end of every chapter provides valuable information to guide you in your management role.

As you have seen in the introduction, there are many tools and resources available to assist you in managing your RE project or programme. To broaden your knowledge of RE approaches and tools, it is essential that you read also the following two documents:

> *IMAS 07.11: Guide for the management of mine risk education*, December 2003, and

> *Community Liaison in Mine Action: A Best Practice Guide*, 2008

ENDNOTES

1 IMAS 07.11: Guide for the management of mine risk education, December 2003.

2 MRE Best Practice Guidebook 1: An Introduction to Mine Risk Education, UNICEF/GICHD, November 2005 .

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 IMAS 04.10, Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations, Second Edition, 1 January 2003.

CHAPTER 3

UNDERSTANDING PROJECT MANAGEMENT

UNDERSTANDING PROJECT MANAGEMENT

"Many of you may already be 'accidental project managers' who carry out many of the activities outlined here but view it as simply 'getting things done' whilst recognising that you also rely heavily on luck, perseverance and strength of will. What we are offering is a structured approach and a set of tools that help you to 'get things done better'." [1]

This Chapter provides an overview of the project cycle as applied to RE. It describes the concept of project management and the reasons why projects fail. It ends by clarifying the differences between managing a project or a programme and how these differences affect your work.

What is project management?

Project management *"is the discipline of planning, organizing, and managing resources to bring about the successful completion of specific project goals and objectives"* [2], within a given timeframe. Over the years, a number of formal methods have been developed which together provide a framework for managing projects throughout the "project cycle". The key elements are:[3]

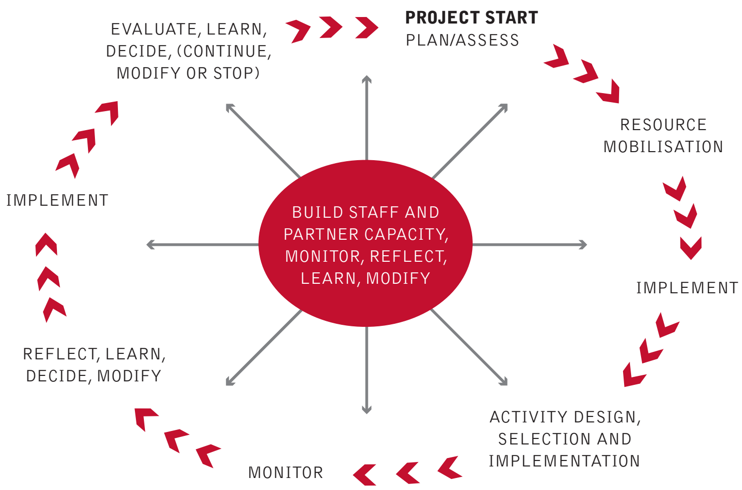
> Defining the project accurately and identifying SMART objectives
> Dividing the project up into manageable tasks and stages
> Steering the project through all stages of the project cycle, being guided by the objectives and planned results
> Identifying risks and developing specific procedures to deal with them
> Providing simple but effective monitoring mechanisms to deal with quality issues, and
> Clarifying individual and group roles to provide the basis for effective teamwork

Remember, you will need to show accountability and ensure effective communication with your stakeholders throughout this process.

The RE Project Cycle

An RE project, like every other project or programme (defined loosely as a set of individual projects integrated into a national or regional programme, see below) incorporates all stages of the project planning and management cycle. Each stage is essential to the process of setting up and managing a successful RE project. The stages flow from the planning and capacities assessment stage (or phase), to implementation, through to monitoring and evaluation.

Figure 1 | The RE Project Cycle



As Figure 1 demonstrates, the RE project cycle is circular, rather than linear. Completion of one project typically leads into another project plan or, if circumstances have changed, a further assessment of needs and capacities. The project cycle only works effectively if every stage is carried out. Central to the process is a constant focus on capacity development of staff, organisations, and institutions as well as a continuous monitoring cycle in support of project reflection and learning—modifying if necessary to keep the project on track.

Why do so many projects fail?

Many projects fail. They fail to achieve their objectives for one or all of the following reasons, because they are:

> Not realistically planned from day one
> Not sufficiently controlled or monitored
> Not well organised or their resources are not well managed
> Staff or stakeholders do not have the necessary knowledge, skills or techniques to effectively implement or monitor an activity, and
> Run over budget

In mine action they can also fail when equipment or materials are not in place at the right times, or when inadequate safety precautions lead to loss of staff lives (or project beneficiaries) leading to project suspension.

The difference between a project and a programme

As a manager, it is important to be aware of the difference between a project and a programme. The IMAS defines a project "as an activity, or series of connected activities, with an agreed objective. A project will normally have a finite duration and a plan of work. An RE programme is defined as "a series of related RE projects in a given country or area"[4] In the mine action sector, many countries have a national mine action programme that seeks to reduce the incidence of mine/ERW deaths and injuries and support reconstruction and development in affected areas. A mine action programme should ideally have a well defined strategy. Mine action operators and NGOs should then implement a series of projects that fit within this national strategy and programme.

Implications for management

Though there is clearly a difference between projects and programmes in terms of size, both entities emphasise the need for effective management. Additional tasks performed for a national mine action programme (normally by an interministerial "National Mine Action Authority" and/or the "National Mine Action Centre") include the following:

- setting the overall programme strategy
- accreditation of individual mine action operators, including RE operators
- establishing and maintaining a national mine action database with information on contamination, clearance operations, casualties, RE activities, and sometimes victim assistance efforts
- ensuring external "quality management" (i.e. monitoring and evaluation) of the programme as a whole
- ensuring the commitment of the national and local authorities to the programme as a whole, including political and financial support.

Essential Reading

- IMAS 07.11: *Guide for the management of mine risk education*, December 2003
- *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 3: Planning*, November 2005
- *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 7: Monitoring*, November 2005

ENDNOTES

1 Mullaly, M.E., "The Accidental Project Manager: Coming in from the Cold", 2003, available at: www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/infokits/project-management.

2 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_management.

3 The elements are adapted from www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk/whatisprojectmanagement.

4 Best Practice Guidebook 4: Public Information Dissemination

CHAPTER 4

GETTING YOUR PROJECT STARTED

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GETTING YOUR PROJECT STARTED

In this Chapter, we examine the project start-up phase. This covers the assessment and planning stage when you are required to know and understand the local context through an assessment of existing needs and capacities. The findings will assist in determining the scope of the project. It will include involvement from target communities—ensuring that their priorities, rather than your priorities, are being covered in the planning process.

This is the stage where you design a simple but effective monitoring system to enable you to measure or gauge if your project is on track. During this phase you need to ensure that the scope of your project will match your existing or planned budget. Finally the plan should include an exit strategy.

Why do we need to plan?

In Chapter 2 we mentioned that poor planning is often the cause of project failure ("Fail to plan, plan to fail!" is the cliché). A plan is the roadmap that guides you towards a successful conclusion. It reflects the amount of thought that has been given to a project or programme from the design phase through to its conclusion. Planning never ends in a project. A project must be regularly reviewed and plans adapted to suit a changing situation or operating environment. More often than not, these will be subtle changes to redirect activities, not complete changes in direction. While a plan in itself is useful, it's HOW you plan and the continuous planning process that's really important for guiding your programme. "Plan your work, and work your plan!"

Effective planning contributes to the following essential steps in project development (among others):

> provides sound analysis of the "local" situation

> sets SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound) objectives and results

> establishes performance standards through the setting of indicators

> helps to minimise risk and uncertainty by examining risks and assumptions

> provides a solid basis for allocation of available resources such as financial, human and material, and

> ensures greater project sustainability by putting 'locals' first, contributing to an effective exit strategy.

Therefore, a series of critical steps are required to have an effective plan.

CHAPTER 4

GETTING YOUR PROJECT STARTED

This document assumes that the RE operator is already established in a country, has been accredited by the relevant authority (if needed), and is familiar with the role of key UN and other agencies in the mine action sector.

When you plan, always remember that planning for RE should be carried out in support of the national mine action programme and annual plan, or be linked to its development where a programme and plans have yet to be developed. Planning should equally be linked to multi-sectoral community development initiatives.

Know the local context

The planning interventions highlighted throughout the following sections contribute towards the achievements of those steps.

Step 1: Get tentative approval from national and local authorities for the project concept. Before undertaking any assessment or survey, get the approval of relevant authorities to ensure open and mutually beneficial relations throughout the project cycle.

Step 2: Undertake a needs and capacities assessment. The purpose of a needs assessment in RE is to identify, analyse, and prioritise the local mine and ERW risks; to assess existing capacities and vulnerabilities of communities; and to evaluate options for conducting RE.

This assessment is a time-bound event, which should ideally take place at the start of a project or programme cycle, when objectives and the identification of those in need of RE are being identified. A localised needs assessment should take about a month to conduct, depending on the context and country concerned; a nationwide assessment (typically for the RE programme as a whole) is likely to take longer. It will be necessary to continuously amend and update the assessment based on additional data collected during the course of the project/programme and changing circumstances.

Remember that active community involvement during the capacities and needs assessment phase will positively impact on the sustainability of the project.

Step 3: Analyse roles and interests of stakeholders. In Step 2, you identified existing capacities and challenges and you will have studied their "cause and effect" relationship as part of your analysis. Now you need to give further consideration to the challenges and who they actually impact on most. It is important to identify the roles and interests of the different stakeholders who might be involved in addressing the challenges and reaching solutions.

Stakeholder analysis is about asking the questions: "Whose problem?" and, if a project intervention strategy is proposed: "Who will benefit?"

Know your project and define the scope

The process of producing an RE project plan is best done by the team who will be responsible for implementing it. Sometimes it is helpful to have an external facilitator (or at least someone not involved in the project) to check the plan and make observations about how logical and achievable it may or may not be.

Armed with your knowledge on capacities, needs, and stakeholders, it is now time to determine the scope of your project. What do you want to achieve, how do you want to accomplish it, with what, and with whom? We have now reached Step 4 of the planning process.

Step 4: Set your project goal and objectives. One of the most important elements of project planning is setting your overall goal and determining your specific objectives. This outlines the scope of your project and gives it boundaries, making it easier to manage.

Step 5: Establish your project results. Once you have identified and agreed your goal and objectives, you need to establish your expected results. The three main development results are referred to as outputs, outcomes, and impacts.

Step 6: Identify activities that will help you achieve the results. After agreeing on your project goal, specific objectives, and results, you then need to identify the activities that will help you to achieve you results. Look at every result you have outlined and list one or more essential actions that must be undertaken to accomplish the result.

Step 7: Arrange the results of Step 4, 5, and 6 in a logical framework matrix. The Logical Framework Approach (LFA) is a project planning and monitoring tool, designed to trigger a logical thinking process when identifying activities towards the achievement of a goal or objective. One of the most popular analytical tools of the LFA is the Logical Framework Matrix, better known as the "logframe".

GETTING YOUR PROJECT STARTED

We have noted what the planning above involve. We have not however, told you how to undertake the exercises or project planning process. There are three vital documents that you should consult for this process (among others noted later):

- IMAS 12.10: *Planning for mine risk education programmes and projects*
- *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 3: Planning*
- *MRE: Planning for Results, A Training Manual in support of IMAS MRE Best Practice Guidebook 3*. The manual provides useful tools and techniques for a trainer or RE programme manager to guide his/her team in the planning process though a four-day training workshop. The training manual provides guidance on how to do the following:
  - Content and analysis of an RE needs and capacities assessment
  - The importance of planning for results and basic principles
  - Setting objectives
  - Developing strategies for RE
  - The use of the logical framework, and
  - Practice in action planning.

Establish an effective monitoring system

Step 8: Establish an effective monitoring plan. The early establishment of a monitoring (performance measurement) system to collect and use information to improve a project is crucial for the successful achievement of project goals and objectives. A monitoring plan promotes evidence of performance-based decision-making. Without it, project management staff would not be able to track progress or know when the project was off schedule; nor would they know when a project required changes to successfully achieve its intermediate objectives or final goal.

Implementing a project without a monitoring plan could be compared to steering a ship without a compass or radar. When you design a monitoring system, you are establishing a system that will provide useful information on an ongoing basis so that you can improve what you do, and how you do it.

What does monitoring involve?

Monitoring involves:

- Identifying measurement indicators that focus on relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. (An indicator is a measureable or visible sign that something has been used or that some people have benefited (or not) from an intervention. It can be qualitative or quantitative. For example in RE, an indicator could be "an increase in the number of children under 16 who are aware of the dangers of mines/ERW". This indicator could be a plausible measurement for the output level result "improved knowledge of school-children on mine/ERW risk")[1]
- Establishing systems to collect information concerning these indicators
- The process of collecting and recording the information
- Analysis and interpretation of the information
- Using the information to inform day-to-day project management, and
- Adapting the project based on the results of monitoring to ensure that activities support the achievement of objectives.

What results are measured during the monitoring phase?

Field coordinators or project managers are often confused about which ones to measure during the monitoring phase. During the monitoring phase, what you are measuring is the achievement of the three developmental results: outputs, outcomes, and impacts.

Outputs are evident within days, weeks or months after an activity or series of activities have been implemented. In RE, anticipated outputs could perhaps be one of the following, "high-risk groups have accurate knowledge of ERW threats", or "youth groups are competent in conducting RE activities".

Outcomes may become evident after one to two years of project implementation depending on the goal of the project. In RE, some possible outcomes are as follows: "increased capacity of National Mine Action Centre to coordinate and monitor RE programmes" or, "annual action plans developed, implemented, and monitored by national and sub-national government mine action agencies". Those of you who work in mine action will know that it is unlikely that these results will be achieved within the first year of the project. Timing of measurement will very much depend on the type of outcome selected.

Impact is usually measured at or after the end of a project. In mine action an impact could be "sustained reduction in ERW/mine incidents in Microbia". If this achievement is sustainable, it will most likely be evident after a minimum of three years, or maybe longer.

Many development agencies undertake internal reviews or internal evaluations during the course of a three to five-year project or programme to ensure that potential impacts are positive rather than negative. This is essentially an internal 'monitoring' process. It is a healthy way of keeping a project on track and feeds well into a final external evaluation.

How to develop a monitoring plan

When you are developing your monitoring plan, refer to two key documents:

> *Planning for More Effective Monitoring in Risk Education: A Training Manual in support of Best Practice Guidebook 7*, 2008

> IMAS 07.41: *Monitoring of mine risk education programmes projects.*

The 2008 monitoring training manual looks at the identification of appropriate indicators for RE project outputs, outcomes, and impact. It outlines how and when information for these indicators will be collected and also addresses the issue of targets and what influences the achievement of project targets. The manual helps you to distinguish between key terms such as result, efficiency, effectiveness, and impact.

It will also help you to organise your thoughts in a logical fashion by representing all of the monitoring details on a logical framework matrix.

Set a realistic activity timeline

Step 9: Set a realistic project timeline. Time is money for most projects. In Step 6, you identified a list of essential activities to help you achieve your planned results. Look at those activities and think through how many steps are required to implement each one. Make a judgement about the time required. When you have considered all activities, and adjusted for unforeseen events, set your project timeframe. Make it realistic, as your organisation, your donors and your project beneficiaries will hold you to those dates. Major discrepancies between plans and reality suggest poor planning.

Remember, if community participation is an underlying principle throughout the project cycle, the timeframe of the project may need to be adjusted to enable deeper engagement with the community.

Know your budget

Step 10: Develop a project budget. You may be in a position where you've been handed a fully funded project to manage. Most managers however, find they have to seek donor funding for their RE projects. This entails developing a detailed budget. Most agencies have software and financial managers to assist with this process, so we will touch on the basics only in this section. As a project manager, however, you are the one who knows what activities are going to be implemented. Each activity must be costed.

More and more donors are keen to see 'unit cost' to judge the cost-effectiveness of specific interventions within a project or programme. For example, can you tell your donor how much did it cost to raise the awareness of 200 school-children in 2007?

Key questions when developing a budget:

> What personnel will be expending effort on this project and how much of their time? Will external consultancies be required for supporting innovative interventions?
> What equipment and materials are required? For example in communication projects, printing and design costs can be high, there may be TV/radio broadcasting costs, etc.)
> What level of budget is required for capacity development (training, coordination, workshops, study tours, etc.) of staff and key stakeholders?
> How much support is required to ensure adequate community participation in the project? Will they require travel costs, transport?
> Transport costs (car hire, fuel, public travel costs)?
> Research and evaluation (relevant to multiyear projects)?
> Sub-contracting (if allowed) to local partners?
> Administration costs, etc., plus a contingency fund, if appropriate?

Also check if the community can contribute in any way – perhaps via in-kind contributions, such as the use of community halls …

Involve project beneficiaries

Step 11: Plan to involve project beneficiaries at all stages of the project cycle. There is a growing body of evidence since the late 1980s that community participation (or "beneficiary participation") leads to more positive project outcomes. The GICHD multi-country study of community liaison in mine action found that different forms of participation added varying degrees of value to projects. Participation enabled beneficiary communities to influence the choices of priority assets and project design features. Regular communication with communities helped to build a sense of local ownership, increasing cooperation and the maintenance of assets. It further demonstrated that community involvement increased women's share of employment.

It was also observed that while participation can introduce a degree of conflict, lack of participation could result in even more conflict between communities and project implementers, and even greater delays further down the line, when time becomes more expensive. These are fairly substantial impacts that cannot be ignored. Community liaison provides opportunities for participatory engagement in the context of mine action.

The ethics of beneficiary participation

As a project manager you and your staff must be aware that the rights and welfare of all project beneficiaries who become involved or participate in a mine action project must be protected. Before undertaking a community liaison intervention it is important to understand the following principles about individuals or groups in any given community, namely that they:

- should be offered the opportunity to participate in a project, but should not be put under undue pressure to do so. They should be made aware of the opportunity cost, etc.
- must be told the purpose, process and activities of the project and be informed of its limitations, so that false expectations are not raised. This is also particularly relevant to surveys and assessments
- must be aware that though they may find solutions to their own problems by participating, it may not lead to direct financial or other personal gain
- should not be prompted to give highly sensitive information to project staff if it makes them feel threatened or uncomfortable
- must be reassured that confidentiality of information sources will be respected
- must be permitted to express themselves freely without being harassed or interrupted
- should be aware that information will not be manipulated for ulterior motives, and

> should be aware of how future project information will be shared and via which project staff.

Affirmative action may be required to include the marginalised or those who are not often included in development initiatives (e.g. women, mine/ERW survivors, and children).

There are two useful resources for community liaison in mine action. *"Community Liaison in Mine Action: A Best Practice Guide"* was developed in 2008 by GICHD, based on the outcome of a multi-country study. The second is a training manual based on that Guide: *"Applying a Community Liaison Approach to Mine Action: A Training Manual"*, 2008, which gives a step-by-step approach to more effective community liaison in mine action.

Factor in cross-cutting themes

Step 12: Ensure cross-cutting issues are addressed. It is possible that your mine action organisation has adopted a number of cross-cutting themes, such as gender equality, the environment, HIV/AIDS, or perhaps community participation. Whatever the theme, you must ensure that there are plans for it to be adequately addressed throughout the project cycle. You may find that a checklist can be applied during each phase to ensure. A good example of a Gender checklist is contained in UNMAS's gender guidelines for mine action.[2]

Plan an exit strategy

Step 13: Develop a clear exit strategy. While it is sometimes difficult to establish an RE project, it is often more difficult to close a project—the decision of when to close being the issue. Planning to ensure the sustainability of results is central to a project's or programme's success.

In an exit strategy, the emphasis is on ensuring that the "outcome level" of your project is maintained after the project ends or is handed over to the local authorities. Spend time analysing what level of capacity development is required for this to happen and identify interventions that will improve this potential.
On a practical level, as a manager, your organisation in cooperation with your counterpart or local partner can ensure that an explicit capacity development strategy is developed for your counterpart and implementing partners demonstrating a clear transition within a given timeframe. The assumption is that your agency hands over when the results of the strategy have been achieved.

If the country you are working in has an established mine action programme, advocate for inclusion of RE in the national strategy so that it is owned by the authorities. If possible, support the role of a national RE coordinator within the national mine action centre. This could ensure greater cooperation and coordination between RE and the other four components of mine action—and possibly greater possibilities of joint funding.

And finally, ensure that RE is linked to wider livelihood and income generation programmes so that mine/ERW 'at-risk' groups can have access to alternative lifestyles and income opportunities. As a manager, create the link between your project and multi-sectoral agencies.

Essential Reading

- IMAS 12.10: *Planning for mine risk education programmes and projects*, 2003
- *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 3: Planning*, UNICEF/GICHD, November 2005
- *MRE Planning for Results – A Training Manual in support of IMAS MRE Best Practice Guidebook 3*, 2008
- IMAS 08.50: *Data collection and needs assessment for mine risk education*;
- *Best Practice Guidebook 2: Data Collection and Needs Assessment*, UNICEF/GICHD, 2005
- *Planning for More Effective Monitoring in Mine Action: A Training Manual in support of Best Practice Guidebook 7*, 2008
- IMAS 07.41: *Monitoring of mine risk education programmes and projects*
- *Applying a Community Liaison Approach to Mine Action: A Training Manual*, 2008
- *Community Liaison in Mine Action: A Best Practice Guide*, 2008
- UNMAS, *Gender guidelines for mine action programmes*, February 2005

ENDNOTES

1 For further information on indicators see IMAS MRE Best Practice Guidebook 7 and the accompanying training manual.

2 See UN Mine Action Service, Gender guidelines for mine action programmes, February 2005.

CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT

IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT

In Chapter 4, based on the findings of your assessments, you and your team identified the main activities that will assist you in achieving your intended results. Now it's time to consider your activities in more depth and define a step-by-step approach to implementation. This is the stage where many organisations develop a detailed 'Action Plan', outlining what actions they are going to do, and how, when, and where they are going to do them.

Know your RE activities

In a mine action programme, RE goals are usually achieved through the implementation of three key activities, namely:

> Public information dissemination
> Education and training; and
> Community liaison.

The nature of these activities is quite different and they require individual skills and techniques to ensure effective and efficient implementation.

Some specific requirements for the three main components of RE are discussed below.[1]

Public information dissemination: Public information dissemination as part of RE is a one-way form of communication transmitted through mass media to reduce the risk of injury from mines and ERW by raising awareness of the risk to individuals and communities and by promoting behavioural change. As an exception to general good practice, these projects are implemented independently, and often in advance of other mine action activities, in an emergency during or immediately following armed conflict.

Public information dissemination activities might include the following:

> Radio broadcasts with basic safety messages (in different languages for minority groups)
> Posters with a key message (remembering that posters have limited value alone and should always be used in support of a wider RE initiative)
> Small brochures or booklets with mine/ERW facts and prevention messages (such media may be disseminated to areas with reduced access to mass media or as a support to mass media approaches), or
> Mobile youth or child groups disseminating messages to communities.

Education and training: Education and training is a two-way process, which involves the imparting and acquiring of knowledge, attitude and practice through teaching and learning. RE education and training activities may be conducted in formal and non-formal environments. Activities can include the following:

> teacher to child education in schools, where RE is mainstreamed into the school curriculum or is approved by the educational authorities as an additional 'health and safety' subject
> parent to children and children to parent education in the home
> child-to-child education—children teaching children
> peer-to-peer education in work and recreational environments
> mine safety training for humanitarian aid workers, and
> incorporation of safety messages in health and safety campaigns in the community.

The implementation of education and training activities will differ according to the type of activity planned. Some organisations will conduct the training directly to affected communities, and others will work with implementing partners to conduct the education and training to the target groups. The implementation of a train-the-trainer (TOT) programme will require more time to be spent working with partners on training, supporting, and monitoring activities.

Community liaison: Community liaison seeks to support the community in its own efforts to manage its mine or ERW problem—and to help others inside and outside mine action to better meet the needs of affected communities.

The main goal of community liaison is to ensure the involvement of mine/ERW affected individuals or communities during the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stage of mine action projects or programmes. This establishes CL as a distinct participatory approach (or as a guiding principle, as affirmed in the IMAS).

A CL component in your RE project might have the following features:

> allocation of adequate funding or logistical support to ensure that key individuals and community groups can be actively involved in the project at pre-determined periods

- assignment of adequate time for each phase of the project to allow for community involvement
- formal cooperation with a development actor who can provide alternatives or incentives to safe behaviour
- during the design stage, the establishment of a formal or informal partnership with a like-minded local agency or agencies to promote sustainability
- development of an explicit capacity development strategy to strengthen local partners, ensuring that one such capacity is access to alternative funding sources
- design of a detailed communication strategy clearly outlining the evolutionary chain that leads from increased knowledge to behavioural change, identifying appropriate communication channels
- employment of innovative community mobilisation techniques to ensure wider involvement of under-represented members of the community
- joint agency-community annual planning and strategic planning sessions to instil a sense of community ownership in the project
- advocacy and action for the rights of ERW survivors to ensure greater access to appropriate medical services and employment opportunities where possible. Encouragement of their independence and advocacy for their inclusion in regular community activities. Additionally, the provision of support to their carers where appropriate
- effective participation of both women and men (including children, youth, the elderly) in project decision-making, as well as equal opportunities for influencing programme direction.

As a manager, remember that community participation does not always equate with community representation. Poor community penetration by NGOs/CBOs is one of the big obstacles to genuine participation. The most visible and vocal are often those chosen to participate. In your project, try to make sure that those participating truly represent affected communities.

Understand the process of adopting new behaviours[2]

As one of your main aims in RE is to encourage the adoption of safer behaviour, it is important to understand why and how people change what they do. A large body of behavioural research shows that we react differently to accepting and adopting new behaviours. 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 RE communication strategy therefore should be to:

> Provide the information, assurance and encouragement that is needed to encourage safe behaviour
> Identify and promote model safe behaviour
> Teach the skills that are needed and ensure people can use the new skills
> Provide a social environment that supports safe behaviour
> Provide ongoing encouragement to continue with safe behaviour, and
> Encourage people to pass the information and new skills on to others.

For the people your project is designed to reach, you will need to explore:

> The messages that are most useful and practical to them
> The people they most trust
> The communication channels they prefer, and
> The ways they would most like to be involved in RE activities.

Develop a communication strategy

All communication strategies in RE should be based on a general understanding of how to bring about behavioural change together with a detailed understanding of the local context. Your communication strategy should be based on careful research and developed specifically for each region, ethnic or social group. It should combine a mix of different processes and communication channels and repeat messages over time.

The strategy should focus on encouraging safe behaviours that are appropriate to the specific situation and people's existing knowledge. The behaviours being communicated must be feasible. There is no point in promoting behaviours that are not possible for economic, political, social, or religious reasons.

IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT

The most effective way we learn new behaviour is from other people, either directly through personal contact or indirectly through the media. Both can be used to demonstrate people "like us" practising safe behaviour and to stimulate discussion among families, friends, and communities.

The most successful efforts to achieve safe behaviours use a variety of interpersonal, mass media, and traditional media channels. These include individuals who practice safe behaviour, local influential people and community leaders, radio and television networks, community training programmes and—most important of all—those who encourage communities to participate in planning, implementing, monitoring, and improving their own interventions.

Although interpersonal communication channels have often been used in programmes, RE practitioners have tended to prefer using trained instructors paid by the programme, or media "products" such as T-shirts or posters. On the other hand, valuable local radio and television have been underused.

Set targets

In the project planning phase you set project objectives and then performance indicators to measure the degree of success towards achieving those objectives. Next you defined your activities in more detail. Now, you need to set some short-term targets to keep the implementation phase on track.

If you have, for example, chosen to train 10,000 children over five years in child-to-child (C2C) methodologies, then your target for first quarter might be: 500 children trained in C2C by the end of April 2009. Like indicators, the targets must be realistic and agreed by the team. If they have not been achieved, then you must ask the question, why not? Targets aim to improve the quality and efficiency of a service and can be used to demonstrate performance to your organisation's management as well as to your donors.

Coordinate with other stakeholders

RE is best coordinated within a broader mine action structure, rather than separately. This helps to ensure that RE is integrated with the other "pillars" of mine action, namely: demining (including clearance, survey and marking); victim assistance; advocacy; and stockpile destruction.
RE coordination requires ensuring the coherent and effective involvement of all relevant actors in every component of the project/programme cycle: planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of strategies and activities. This is ideally done through a national mine action coordination

body. The national mine action authority is normally responsible for coordination of strategy and policy, whereas the national mine action centre is responsible for operational, day-to-day coordination of activities. In your role as manager, make sure you actively coordinate with key stakeholders in your region or community. Link with your local authorities, and complete and submit any necessary reporting forms to the relevant authority to ensure information flow.

Coordination is essential to the implementation of an effective RE programme in order to:

- provide a common understanding of the needs and context of RE, and the sharing of information and expertise
- ensure that resources are directed in the most efficient and effective way, through coordinated planning. Duplication of activities not only wastes resources, it also imposes unnecessary burdens on the beneficiaries and may reduce their willingness to cooperate with RE implementation
- increase RE's contribution to the reduction of the impact of mines and ERW
- involve stakeholders at all levels so they can feel some ownership of the programme, helping to ensure its success, and
- ensure that risk reduction messages delivered to affected communities are consistent and do not contradict each other (this may be done by developing a national core curriculum and national standards).

As a manager keep all the project stakeholders informed of progress on a regular basis. Let them know of your successes and challenges as they come up along the way. Other agencies may have had similar problems and found effective solutions. Don't forget to keep your team informed. If changes have to be made to the project, tell the team about them as soon as possible and let them be part of the restructuring process. And if it's a significant change, eg, an outcome or impact level change, then it's best to inform your donor as it may alter the project objective.

Manage risk

All projects or programmes are prone to risk. At the planning stage you identified all risks that could possibly affect the project and probably ranked them in terms of level of risk (low, medium, high), adapting your project design to mitigate risk. While risk analysis occurs primarily at the planning stage, as a manager you must ensure it continues throughout the implementation stage. This gives you more control over the conditions necessary for achieving results and leaves less to chance.

When risks are identified during the implementation stage, identify options for reducing the risk as a team. Then develop interventions that clearly mitigate or reduce the risk. Ensure that the mitigation interventions are included in your budget.

Essential Reading

- IMAS 12.20: *Implementation of mine risk education programmes and projects*
- *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 4: Public Information Dissemination*, UNICEF/GICHD, 2005
- *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 5: Education and Training*, UNICEF/GICHD, 2005
- *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 7: Monitoring*, UNICEF/GICHD, 2005
- *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 10: Coordination*, UNICEF/GICHD, 2005
- *Community Liaison in Mine Action: A Best Practice Guide*, 2008
- *A Guide to Improving Communication in Mine Risk Education Programmes*, March 2004
- UNICEF, *Emergency Mine Risk Education Resource Kit,* 2008
- UNMAS, *Landmine & ERW Safety Handbook*, October 2005

CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTING YOUR PROJECT

ENDNOTES

1 As outlined in Appendix 4: A Guide to Improving Communication in Mine Risk Education Programmes

2 This section is an extract from "A Guide to Improving Communication in Mine Risk Education Programmes", GICHD, 2004.

CHAPTER 6

MANAGING RESOURCES

MANAGING RESOURCES

This Chapter complements the previous one, focusing this time on managing the project resources required during implementation. Let's first determine what we are talking about when we refer to project resources. A project can be an activity or a set of activities. In order to implement an activity, you will need certain resources, such as people, money, equipment, materials, energy, time, communication and motivation, among others. The focus here is on making more effective use of your project resources, with an emphasis on building the capacity of people, and improving communication.

Build an effective team

As a manager, you are required to motivate a small or large group of people towards a common goal. Some people have qualities and skills that make them naturally good managers. Others do not. Leadership is therefore an essential quality in a manager. There are some qualities and skills that are essential for good leadership that may assist you in your new role, namely:

> Develop good communication skills. Communication is viewed as the key to good leadership. Never assume that your team knows what you are doing. Communicate regularly through verbal communication (informal and formal), email, or other media. And encourage two-way communication from your team, and among your team.

> Build individual and team capacity. RE requires in-depth knowledge about mine action. It demands special attributes and behaviour in a team. It requires particular skills and techniques in order to facilitate community meetings and to enable effective communication, to name but a few. Therefore, all members of the team must be fully equipped to undertake their specific roles and responsibilities and supported with regular training and capacity development opportunities each year.

> Delegate and build trust. Share management responsibility when possible and build the capacity of some team members to manage key tasks.

> Be honest and consistent. As a manager, your team needs to respect you in order to follow you. If you compromise your integrity, this respect will be lost. Inconsistency in actions or management style may confuse your team.

- Clearly define tasks and responsibilities. Make sure that each team member is aware of their role and responsibilities and how they link with each other. This will reduce overlaps and prevent tensions arising between staff over duplication of roles. It will further support more effective and efficient use of time and resources.
- Know when and how to give constructive criticism and praise. Always give constructive criticism in private, and never publicly humiliate a team member. Team praise, on the other hand, can be given in public as it can give a positive boost to individuals and groups and re-motivate staff. And remember, always accept constructive criticism by your team or boss with grace…and adapt as appropriate.
- Be a strategic thinker. This requires looking beyond what you and your team are doing this week and planning for the future. Make sure that your project is going in the right direction. If not, change directions. Involve your team in regular reviews so that you can jointly agree on the course ahead.
- Listen and observe. Know what is going on in your office, among your team and among the project beneficiaries. Listen and observe and learn to anticipate their needs.

Keep your team safe

Now that you have your team, you need to keep them safe. As a manager or team leader of a project, it is your responsibility to ensure your team is fully aware of risks in the operating environment. One useful resource to assist you in creating awareness is the Landmine & ERW Safety Handbook developed in 2005 by UNMAS in cooperation with NGOs and UN agencies. The handbook provides basic safety information concerning the threat of landmines and ERW to organisations and individuals working in war-torn areas, helps them to establish appropriate safety procedures and avoid contact with mines and ERW; and gives guidance on appropriate action in emergency situations.[1]

Safety measures in a conflict area (even if the conflict ended some time ago) should be practical and based on an assessment of the local threat. As a manager you can support the process by taking the following steps[2]:

- Collect detailed information on the mine/ERW threat in your area of operations, and update this information regularly

- Ensure staff who may be at risk (including drivers, interpreters and guides) receive awareness training and are familiar with mine/ERW safety procedures
- Keep a visual brief available (map or spreadsheet identifying dangerous areas)
- Establish mine/ERW safety procedures adapted to your area of operations. Establish, in particular, a vehicle and travel reporting system
- Maintain updated and verified contact details of mine action centres and demining agencies, UN security officers, local police and medical facilities
- Provide mine/ERW-related information to staff, including information on safe routes and dangerous areas in areas of operation and emergency contact information
- Ensure staff receive first-aid training, with special focus on trauma care, and that vehicles are equipped with first-aid and trauma care kits, and
- Equip vehicles and staff with effective communication equipment and maps, and provide training in their use.

Remember, there is often a greater risk of staff being injured or dying from non-mine/ERW-linked road accidents or tropical diseases (eg, malaria) and sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Put health and safely high on your list of management priorities.

Communicate effectively

The following 12 steps to effective communication are useful for project managers.[3]

1. Define clearly what behaviour you are trying to promote
2. Decide exactly who in the population you are trying to influence
3. Determine whether the new behaviour requires new skills
4. Learn about the present knowledge, beliefs, and behaviour of the target audience
5. Enquire whether the behaviour you are trying to promote has already been introduced to the community

6. Investigate the target audience's present sources of information
7. Select the communication channels and media which are most capable of reaching and influencing the target audience. Do not rely on a single means of communication. Always use a mix of various channels and media so that the target audience receives the message from all sides and in many variations
8. Design messages which are:
   - Easily understandable — using local languages or dialects and colloquial expressions
   - Culturally and socially appropriate
   - Practical, brief and technically correct
   - Relevant and positive.
9. Develop and test your educational materials. And then revise your materials accordingly before mass production and distribution
10. Synchronise your programme with other mine action and multi-sectoral development programmes
11. Evaluate whether the intended behaviour is being carried out
12. Repeat and adjust the messages over several years

Be a good communicator

As a manager, you will have to communicate with all stakeholders ranging from the village chief, the local administrator, women leaders, or perhaps the head of the National Mine Action Centre. So, you and your team need to be strong and adaptable communicators.

Being a good communicator requires special skills. Some skills can be learned but some cannot. Some people are just naturally better communicators or better teachers than others, but we can all do it. Some basic pointers to communicating well are:[4]

- Listen to what other people have to say
- Speak the language they understand and feel comfortable with; don't use unusual vocabulary or references
- Use a tone of voice that is friendly and appropriate to the culture—in some cultures, for instance, it is rude to confront someone or to speak loudly

- Create a friendly environment where everyone feels equal and everyone has a chance to speak
- Encourage discussion rather than give a lecture
- Give women an opportunity to take part in discussions or learn new behaviour
- If appropriate to the culture, sit on the floor or the ground or at a table, don't stand while others sit
- Be mindful of people's status in the community
- If you are using flipcharts or posters or modelling safe behaviour make sure everyone can see and hear and explain each point carefully
- Repeat your information in different ways
- If you are not a confident communicator make sure you have illustrations and supporting materials to help
- As with any other communication channel, keep it relatively short, don't try to cram in too much information, don't talk for too long. Repeat the important facts
- The key is to be creative. And remember: local facilitators or instructors need to be highly motivated—and monitored—if they are to carry out RE effectively over the longer term.

Now that you know how to be a good communicator, it is vital that you transfer those skills to your team and your local partners. Always remember that some local partners and counterparts may have much more expertise in communicating messages and be ready to learn from them.

There are two RE guides and one RE resource kit that will be invaluable for fine-tuning your RE communication activities and training staff or partners, namely:

- *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 4: Public Information Dissemination*
- the GICHD *Guide to Improving Communication in Mine Risk Education*, both of which provide guidance on how to develop a communication strategy, how to create appropriate messages, how to target 'at-risk' populations, as well as advice on selecting the correct communication medium, and
- UNICEF's *Emergency MRE Resource Kit*, 2008, which provides key messages and advice on media and broadcasting.

Develop staff and partner capacity

Mine action agencies and their staff require capacity development if participatory development approaches such as community liaison are to be effectively institutionalised. The facilitation of participatory rural appraisal methods and techniques is a complex management task and requires exceptional skills and expertise to accomplish it well. While there are many more opportunities for learning on participatory development, the following four components are the minimum standards for the staff of any mine action organisation.

Knowledge and understanding of participatory approaches, benefits and challenges, and in particular, its application throughout the project cycles. At times there is cynicism among mine action technical experts about the value of community participation. This is mostly due to the fact that they believe an activity can be achieved just as effectively and possibly more efficiently with minimal if any contact with affected communities. While that is true to a degree, it misses the bigger picture–the achievement of sustainable development. The process of how an outcome is achieved is where the longer-term learning lies, not just on the action which achieves a short-term output (eg, safe disposal of a mine or item of ERW).

The attitude of the 'outsiders' towards local authorities and communities is just as important as the end result. At the end of this training all staff and partners should also be aware of the value of community liaison in mine action.

An understanding of the term 'facilitation' and its functions. The emphasis is on assisting individuals or communities to think through their issues and to find meaningful solutions rather than being told what the problem is by an outsider. This requires solid facilitation skills, including an ability to listen.

An understanding of participatory tools and techniques. Knowledge of a number of innovative tools will support community diagnosis and priority setting. While their application supports the overall participation process, it is important to remember that the mine action agency's attitude towards affected communities is even more crucial to the participatory development process.

Partnering with local institutions. All staff should be aware of the value of creating a partnership with a local institution or community-based organisation to forward the concept of sustainability.

Further capacity development initiatives will no doubt be identified as projects or programmes evolve, with knowledge gaps becoming more evident over time.

For details on how to train staff on the above skills and techniques refer to the following two documents:

> *Community Liaison in Mine Action: A Best Practice Guide*, GICHD, 2008
> *Applying a Community Liaison Approach to Mine Action*: A Training Manual, 2008.

Monitor expenditure

As a manager, have regular meetings with your finance staff to monitor budget expenditure to ensure spending is on track. Make yourself familiar with your project donor guidelines and ensure that all expenditures charged to the donor's project are consistent with donor and organisational guidelines.

Check that costs are reasonable and necessary. Do spot checks on unit cost of certain key activities to make sure your agency and the donor are getting value for money.

Document and learn

Although many mine action agencies monitor and review programmes on a regular basis, very little is documented or shared on websites for learning purposes. Few, if any, guidance manuals are publically available from mine action NGOs for shared learning with other organisations. Additionally, over the past decade, there has been little if any evidence-based documentation on the value of RE and community liaison in mine action.
Documentation of the challenges and successes of RE interventions is vital for future learning. Sharing lessons on positive and negative practices and taking appropriate action on the ground leads to more successful and potentially more sustainable programmes. Many mine action agencies collect lots of information, but little of it is channelled for wider learning. This is a practice that must be encouraged in the future of RE and community liaison. Then and only then can mine action agencies sell the benefits of RE and community liaison and the added value of community participatory approaches within its sector.

MANAGING RESOURCES

Essential Reading

- *Applying a Community Liaison Approach to Mine Action: A Training Manual*, 2008
- *A Guide to Improving Communication in Mine Risk Education*
- *Planning for More Effective Monitoring in Mine Risk Education: A Training Manual in support of Best Practice Guidebook 7*, 2008.

ENDNOTES

1 UNMAS, 2005, Landmine & ERW Safety Handbook, available in Arabic, Dari/Farsi, French, Pashtu, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

2 As outlined in UNICEF, "Emergency Mine Risk Education Resource Kit", Section G, 2008.

3 As outlined in "A Guide to Improving Communication in Mine Risk Education Programmes", GICHD 2004.

4 As outlined in the MRE Best Practice Guidebook 4: Public Information Dissemination, UNICEF/GICHD, 2005.

CHAPTER 7

CLOSING YOUR PROJECT

CLOSING YOUR PROJECT

This Chapter acknowledges that every mine action agency has its own organisational rules and regulations on project closure. But let us assume you have made the decision to close your RE project because your project has achieved its milestones or benchmarks as established in the exit strategy. We will focus on the importance of documenting lessons learned, key steps in project handover, as well as the value of post-end-of-project evaluations.

Document lessons learned

In the last project quarter, conduct an internal project review with your team. Identify what went well, what did not go well, what to replicate in future RE projects, and what to change or stop. The aim of this exercise is to document and learn. Learning from mistakes and breakthroughs will help to improve future RE projects. As we mentioned in the previous chapter, this is the stage so often missing in mine action.

As a manager, it is your responsibility to see that the final report is completed—not just to meet with donor requirements, but as a "lessons learned" tool for your own and other mine action organisations. If your agency agrees, post the lessons learned section on your website so that it can be accessed by other agencies working in RE.

While your current project may be ending, a new one may begin, so make sure that your new learning is built into the new project design, where appropriate.

Project handover

You have already factored in project handover or closure during the planning phase of your project. And you have a detailed exit strategy in place. Review your exit strategy well in advance of handover and ensure that all goals and milestones have been met. Have your local partners the capacity and resources to continue RE at the level that is required in their community. If not, what can you do to ensure this is addressed before handover? If your RE project was directly linked to mine/ERW clearance or land release, has the land been officially handed over to the community, and have all necessary confidence building measures been put in place to ensure their effective use of the land?

No doubt your organisation will have a set of rules and regulations on project handover, and particularly in relation to handover of assets. Remember that donors also have restrictions on asset handover. Check this out prior to finalising your handover plan. What about employment for your local staff? Have they been transferred to other projects, or if not,

have you followed correct and fair procedures to end their contracts? Have you given them references to enable them to get work in the future?
And don't forget, before you leave an area, share your successes with the project beneficiaries and give them the credit they deserve for achieving those successes.

Post-end evaluation

If your RE project has been in existence for three or more years, it may be useful to schedule a 'post-end' evaluation to determine the level of impact your project had in a particularly community. It can build on any internal reviews or mini-evaluations during the course of the project. This is the moment when you will see just how effective, or not, your monitoring system was. Continuous monitoring and documentation of progress will feed into the evaluation.

A post-end evaluation will provide feedback and information on outcome and impact level results. It will make judgments on effectiveness, efficiency, impact, relevance, and sustainability of the project and confirm whether it satisfied the needs and priorities of the affected populations. It will also determine whether or not there were any positive or negative unintended consequences.

Evaluations provide important recommendations which may be used to improve future programmes and projects. The evaluation may be carried out by members of your own organisation; however, to add greater credibility to the findings, a post-end evaluation is best carried out by external consultants to give an unbiased view.

One purpose of the post-end evaluation is to generate knowledge and learning for wider application in mine action.

You will need to decide what you want to know from the evaluation. This is best done as a team exercise involving the key stakeholders where appropriate. These issues will contribute to your detailed evaluation Terms of Reference. Some of the key issues are often those linked to the eight guiding principles for RE highlighted in Chapter 1.

There are a number of important questions and considerations to be made in planning an evaluation:

- Why is the evaluation being done – what are the objectives?
- What kind of approach should be emphasised?

- Are separate evaluations needed?
- How should the terms of reference be prepared?
- When should the evaluation take place?
- How much should the evaluation cost?
- Who will be involved, and in what ways?
- How to prepare for the arrival of the evaluation team?
- How should I analyse, report and use the findings of the evaluation?
- How to make sure an evaluation will be useful and lead to change?

These issues are considered in detail in the *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 8: Evaluation*. This guide will end with a checklist of principles for evaluating RE projects or programmes, as follows (adapted from Guidebook 8):

- Evaluations need to be built into the project during the planning phase. Projects and programmes run through a cycle that usually lasts several years. Decide when you want to evaluate aspects of programmes in the initial planning phase, although you may need to adjust this later
- Evaluations must be undertaken for a purpose. You need to be clear about why you are spending time and money on it: What do you hope to achieve by doing it? What changes will you see?
- Evaluations should be realistic. Set your goals and objectives at a level you can reach with your available resources.
- Evaluations should have clearly defined objectives, timeframe and a verifiable and workable methodology.
- The timing of evaluations should take account of when outcomes or impact are most likely to have occurred. When planning for evaluations during the life of the programme consider what is likely to have changed as a result of your project or programme, and whether this fits with your evaluation schedule and objectives
- Evaluations must be adequately resourced, in terms of finance, staff and time
- Evaluations should comprise both qualitative and quantitative data. The different possibilities are highlighted in Guidebook 2: Data Collection and Needs Assessment

- Evaluations should involve all relevant stakeholders. They should also build on partnerships wherever possible
- Strategies for disseminating, discussing and acting on the recommendations of an evaluation need to be built into the process from the outset. There is no point in providing resources for an evaluation if you do not intend to use the information afterwards.
- Impact evaluations should, ideally, be conducted externally.
- Combining a financial and programme evaluation provides a basis for cross-checking financial and activity data. This will help to ensure a programme that is well grounded financially and substantively.

Essential Reading

- IMAS 14.20: *Evaluation of mine risk education programmes and projects*
- *MRE Best Practice Guidebook 8: Evaluation*

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