

Convention on Cluster Munitions

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**Introduction by the President of the draft documents
and key draft decisions**

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) in the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)*

By article 4 Coordinators (Norway and Italy)

The successful transformation of a sector

1. Explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) is a vital protection activity, and a pillar of mine action. Despite its importance, it received limited attention for years.
2. Concerned about rising casualties caused by landmines, explosive remnants of war and other similar devices, Norway, with support from like-minded states and organisations, initiated a transformative process of the risk education sector in 2019. This led to the establishment of the EORE Advisory Group (EORE AG) and a push for increased emphasis on risk education both at multilateral and operational level. Since then, significant progress has been made to revitalise and professionalise EORE, marking a paradigm shift.

From MRE to EORE

3. The terminology surrounding risk education underwent a significant transformation, transitioning from 'mine risk education' (MRE) and 'mine risk awareness' to 'explosive ordnance risk education' (EORE). This shift was codified with the adoption in September 2020 of the revised International Mine Action Standard (IMAS) 12.10 on EORE. This evolution was prompted by a recognition of the need for a more comprehensive preventive approach to addressing threats faced by civilians. The adoption of the term 'explosive ordnance' (EO) signifies an expanded scope that encompasses a broader array of munitions that pose risks to people, as outlined in the definition of EO in the IMAS 04.10 'Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations'. This terminology encompasses threats related to landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war, booby traps and other devices, including improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

From raising awareness to behavioural change

4. In recent years, risk education also further evolved, moving beyond raising awareness and disseminating knowledge on explosive ordnance to applying social and behaviour change (SBC) approaches – already commonly used in the public health sector. In recognition of the need for sustained and long-term behavioural change within at-risk groups, increased efforts have been made for risk education interventions to adopt a context-specific theory of change, and a focus on understanding 'why people do what they do.' This has involved the training of

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risk education practitioners and operators on the application of SBC principles to examine the drivers and barriers influencing the adoption of safe behaviours and subsequently develop tailored and targeted risk education approaches. Although these methods demand additional time for data collection/analysis and to engage with communities meaningfully, they ultimately guarantee enhanced impact and more efficient resource utilisation.

From normative obligations to Action Plans

5. The transformation of the EORE sector gained momentum at the multilateral level with the adoption of specific risk education commitments in the APMBC Oslo Action Plan – OAP – (actions #24 and #28 to 32), the CCM Lausanne Action Plan – LAP – (actions #20 and #27 to 30), and, more recently, with the reference to the provision of risk education in the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences arising from the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA) adopted in Nov. 2022.

Professionalisation and innovation

6. Since the establishment of the EORE AG, the EORE sector has developed innovative guidance, tools, approaches and resources to support national mine action authorities, operators and practitioners. Key examples include the release of an IMAS Technical Note on risk education for IEDs, the launch of an EORE e-learning course, the development of numerous digital EORE projects and specific guidelines, the setting up of an SBC/EORE toolkit, and the creation of a global Theory of Change for EORE, all aimed at elevating the sector's professionalism and designing and implementing risk education projects to achieve better impacts. All the resources are available on the EORE AG platform hosted on the GICHD website.

7. However – as outlined in action 27 of the LAP – EORE as a component of mine action programmes or as a standalone intervention is not sufficient, and efforts have expanded to integrate risk education in wider humanitarian, development, protection and education efforts. The EORE e-learning course has been embedded in other organisations' training platforms and resource libraries (i.e. ICRC, GPC). Additionally, an EORE module has been incorporated into UNHCR's emergency Toolkit, and EORE-related questions have been embedded in IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix Field Companion. Ongoing initiatives aim to enhance synergies between EORE and education in emergencies.

The role of EORE in protecting civilians amid global challenges

8. In the face of a dramatic increase in cluster munition victims in 2022, a global surge in civilian casualties from IEDs, including improvised anti-personnel mines, urban warfare, increased displacement, and the impact of extreme weather events and climate change on explosive ordnance hazards, there is a need for greater attention and resources towards EORE to protect at-risk communities. This is particularly important in areas where conflicts hinder access of humanitarian aid and clearance operators, as it offers the best protection for civilians from EO under those circumstances. The Global Protection Cluster (GPC) also reported that the presence of mines and other EO is a risk across 84% of operations. 60% describe the risk as high or very high. EORE remains also important in the absence of clearance measures for the protection of civilians from the effects of other EO even in case of absence of conflicts.

Linking EORE with global agendas

9. While the importance of EORE in protecting civilians from the dangers of EO and the role of the EORE AG have been recently highlighted in the 2023 Report of the UNSG on Assistance in mine action, it is equally important to build strategic and operational links with other global agendas.

10. Notably, aligning EORE initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is paramount, as demonstrated by studies conducted by the GICHD in countries like Cambodia, Jordan, Somalia, and South Sudan. These underscore the contribution of EORE

to various SDGs and associated targets. Furthermore, highlighting EORE within the realm of the Global Protection Cluster (GPC) and its four areas of responsibility offers a strategic pathway to enhance protection agendas and ensure the delivery of EORE in humanitarian operations. Elevating EORE especially during events such as the Global Protection Forum can foster practical synergies. Furthermore, the UNSG New Agenda for Peace provides an opportunity to emphasise the role of the thematic in protecting civilians in conflict zones. Education in emergencies and the Safe Schools Declaration also offer practical opportunities for collaboration and cooperation. Finally, future meetings of the EWIPA political declaration could be a platform to showcase broader approaches to conventional risk education such as Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP).

Setting ourselves up for success

Elevating risk education

11. A detailed analysis of statements delivered, and extension requests submitted at the Second Review Conference and the CCM 11MSP reveal that most delegations only mention risk education in passing or rarely go beyond listing activities and outputs. The analysis also shows that there have been fewer side events dedicated solely to risk education in formal meetings of the Convention.

12. In addition, despite a notable 52% increase in global mine action funding in 2022 compared to 2021, funding dedicated to risk education constituted only 1% of the overall funding in 2022 (source: 2023 Landmine Monitor). Yet, the acknowledged importance of evidence-based and context-specific EORE as a life-saving activity unites States Parties.

Adopting practical steps

13. The path to the CCM 12MSP provides an opportunity for the Coordination Committee and its article 4 coordinators to take tangible steps towards addressing the current gaps and facilitating substantial progress in risk education. To do so, the following proposals could be considered:

Adjustments to the CCM Machinery

i. The appointment of a dedicated coordinator for risk education within the CCM machinery is a key step in that direction. Similar to existing thematic coordinators for other obligations under the Convention, this strategic move could enhance the overall effectiveness of efforts to address the issue and facilitate effective monitoring of the indicators outlined in the LAP.

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

14. The above points could be achieved by:

- Identifying and engaging with like-minded States Parties that share a strong commitment towards the protection of civilians and risk education, including an ‘EORE’ champion State Party that would be interested in taking on such a role should the decision be adopted at the 12MSP.
- Anticipating and addressing potential concerns from States Parties, and provide clear, evidence-based responses to alleviate any reservations they may have about the proposed appointment of a RE coordinator.
- Relying on the support of the EORE AG, operators, and civil society to support the decision.

Facilitating dedicated exchanges of experience on EORE by CCM States Parties

i. Organise, together with partners and States Parties, a plenary session on EORE during the 28th International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and United Nations Advisers (NDM-UN28) in 2025. This could be done in coordination with NDM organisers and with support of EORE stakeholders.

ii. Facilitate a side event with EO affected States Parties delivering EORE at the 12MSP. Article 4 coordinators would count on the support of EORE AG members to define the scope of the side event.

Global funding for EORE

15. As mentioned above, funding dedicated to risk education constituted only 1% of the overall mine action funding in 2022. In order to raise awareness on EORE funding, the following fora could be used:

i. Explore with Italy, as the co-coordinator for CCM art. 4 and the 2023-2024 Chair of the Global Mine Action Support Group (MASG), the possibility to discuss funding levels for EORE at one of the next MASG meetings.

ii. Facilitate a meeting with donors and affected States in Geneva to share progress achieved in the EORE sector and address funding challenges.

16. Realising the points outlined above would facilitate the implementation of other relevant actions in support of risk education. This includes reporting risk education funds separately from clearance – enabling better tracking and trend analysis – reviewing Article 4 extension requests for RE provisions, encouraging States Parties to organise risk education side events at MSPs and deliver focused statements, and incorporating qualitative risk education data into Article 7 reports.

17. In conclusion, the steps set forth in this paper would position the CCM Coordination Committee and its article 4 coordinators, under its new Mexican Presidency, as pioneers and trendsetters in the realm of disarmament Conventions. By elevating risk education in its machinery and proceedings, the CCM would establish a strong legacy, set a precedent for other Conventions to follow and, most importantly, contribute significantly towards preventing the tragic consequences for civilians of explosive ordnance.
