



The Minutes of the Fourth Quarter 2024 Meeting of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Technical Working Group (Q4,2024)

I. Date, Venue and Participants:

In the morning of 25 September 2024, (8:30 o'clock), the EORE Unit, NRA Office convened the Fourth Quarter 2024 Meeting of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Technical Working Group (Q4, 2024). The meeting was chaired by Mr. Douangsy THAMMAVONG, Deputy Director General of NRA Office and participated by representatives from General Education Department, Department of Teacher Education, International Cooperation Department, Informal Education Department, Department of Sport for All, Physical and Art Education, the Ministry of Education and Sport, Mass Media Department, the Ministry of Information, Cultural and Tourism, Youth Movement Department, the Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union, Lao National Radio Station, the Lao National UXO Programme, Humanitarian UXO Demining of Army 58, HALO Trust, NPA, HI, MAG, World Education, Sepon Mining Company as well as representatives from Planning Unit, Information Management Unit, and Victim Assistance, NRA office. The total number of participants is 34 people (19 females).

II. Objectives of Meeting

- To review on the outcomes of the third quarter EORE technical working group meeting, particularly the points of meeting's agreement, the key achievements and remaining issues.
- To update on the EORE implementation progress in 10 months and directions in 2025.
- To update on the statistic number of UXO accidents, the victims, injuries and deaths in the third quarter, 2024.
- To update on revising progress of the national standards, chapter 13 on EORE.
- To update on the Gender Mainstreaming in UXO Action Sector
- To report on the research findings in KAP survey
- To discuss on EORE in a village, province where the UXO Accident may occurs, but no UXO operator was based in such area.

III. Detail/Content of Meeting

The EORE Unit presented on the outcomes of third quarter of technical working group meeting, highlighting on key achievements, some challenges and remaining tasks in EORE. The EORE Unit also reported on achievements of EORE implementation for 10 months and further plan 2025, determination of indicators for the National Strategic Plan for the UXO

Sector in the Lao PDR 2021-2030, particularly EORE-related indicators: ensure that Lao people can live without UXO risk, UXO action sector is strengthened and effective, people understood and knew the danger of UXO, being safer community and reduced the death from UXO accidents, ensure the reduction of UXO patients and deaths to 380 victims (lower than 38/year).

The meeting was updated on the implementation progress of gender mainstreaming in UXO sector in Lao PDR, the result study and action plan on gender mainstreaming in UXO sector both Lao and English versions as well as role, duty and responsibility of gender mainstreaming coordinators in NRA office, Lao Women's Union, Lao National UXO Programme, Humanitarian UXO Demining of Army 58. Role, Duty and Responsibility of Gender Mainstreaming Coordinator in UXO Sub-technical working groups has been endorsed by NRA Office. For the EORE Sub-Technical Working Group, the gender mainstreaming coordinators are Ms. Buala Thongsavanh and Mr. Vilaysack Xaysana from Handicap International (HI)

The meeting also discussed the determination of indicators under the National Strategic Plan, with a particular focus on EORE-related indicators. Key inputs and comments shared during the discussion included the following:

- When preparing indicators, it is essential to clearly specify which organization is responsible for measuring outputs, whether it is the NRA office, UXO operators, or other sectors.
- Objectives should be set with appropriate references and must be able to explain the sources of information or studies used.
- For data collection, the scope should be clearly defined, such as whether it includes kindergartens, primary schools, or secondary schools

Related unit from NRA office took notes and consolidate all inputs/comments on indicator and will revise accordingly. Subsequently, to propose to MOFA for the approval and adoption of the indicators. The indicators are expected to get approved, used and started to collect data in the beginning of 2025.

In addition, the meeting was also updated on the number of UXO accident from the first quarter to fourth quarter. There are 25 cases, 48 victims, 29 males and 10 females. Among of them, 09 people were death, 6 children, 03 adults. The cause of accident is digging land for farming, playing on UXO, and setting fire.

The meeting also discussed on the conduct of EORE in the province where do not have UXO operators, but the UXO accident occurred, particularly Xayabuly Province. The UXO accidents had occurred twice in this province. It is requested Humanitarian UXO Demining of Army 58 to coordinate with NRA office to address this issue. It is found that the number of accidents is higher than indicated in the National Strategic Plan for the UXO Sector in the Lao PDR and it can challenges our EORE implementation. We already knew the cause of accident was from digging land for cassava plantation. Therefore, we should focus and work harder on these groups of population.

IV. Future Directions

1. To focus on the conduct of EORE for target group, to identify specific area where the people having cassava farm in pursuant to the national strategic plan for UXO sector

in Lao PDR, particularly EORE operations to reduce number of UXO victims to lower than 38 per year.

2. To strengthen and ensure effectiveness of EORE works, people know and understand the danger of UXO, making community safer and reducing the death from UXO accident.
3. To organize a meeting to disseminate result of the KAP Survey to UXO operators and integrate data in its workplan appropriately and accordingly.
4. To organize a separate meeting for deep discussion on revision of the National Standards, especially the EORE-related indicators.
5. To continue updating the revision progress of the National Standards, including EORE-related indicators, in the end of this year.
6. To continue updating the implementation progress of gender mainstreaming in EORE sector
7. To follow up with the UXO operators in providing information and related material on EORE such as publication, poster, short role play, video, etc. These materials will be consolidated and upload on E-Library.
8. As per annual workplan 2025, the UXO operators will submit to EORE Unit, NRA Office for reference and ease monitoring.

V. Guidance of the Chair of Meeting

1. It is agreed to advocate EORE in public schools through their school's local radio or through voice records with speaker, at least twice per week.
2. EORE Unit drafts the official letter to inform UXO operators in providing EORE information/materials for the E-Library of NRA office as the information center for all.
3. It is requested the UXO operators to review and provide training to their advocators who will conduct EORE in the target area. The content of training will be overseen by NRA office for reference and monitoring in pursuant with its mandates.
4. Enhance and expand EORE operations by identifying target groups most effected by UXO accident, including those are working in cassava plantation. The UXO operators to work closely to plan and conduct EORE activities in consistence with their seasonal months for plantation and cultivation, to ensure the right schedule for conducting EORE activities effectively.
5. It is agreed to integrate the result of KAP Survey and its related recommendations in plan of activities, including the following actions:
 - Apply behavioral theory in EORE, particularly insights and outcomes from behavior change approaches.
 - Specify timelines for EORE implementation in the National Standards to address the limitations of working hours. This ensures flexibility in reaching villages, especially adult groups, and supports effective EORE delivery and monitoring.
 - Set a maximum number of participants per EORE session to 20 individuals per group.

- Develop and establish an NRA Office hotline (1603) offering 24-hour service. Ensure call-backs for missed calls and officially announce the hotline service.
- Do not consider that EORE is only a product, but to have quality control, approval and meet with National Standards to ensure EORE is conducted in accordance with our common goal and objective.
- Although those engaging in intentional risk behavior are not identified as the primary risk group, EORE should still be provided. Explore appropriate ways to address their needs while considering solutions consistent with their local lifestyles.
- To consider provide training on Governance and EORE Management for NRA Office and UXO operators involved in EORE activities.

The meeting was officially closed at 12:38 of 25 October 2024.