

MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL ERW (MORE) MILESTONE ASSESSMENT WORKSHOP

On 10-12 Sept, 2014

Hanoi- Vietnam

1 Sharing management approaches for residual risk of ERW



On 12 September, 2014 in Hanoi, The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (IC-VVAF) held a workshop to introduce on a Project of the management of Residual Explosive Remnants of War.



Workshop participants (Photo: vov.vn)

At the Workshop, Mr Guy Rhodes- Director of Operations of GICHD introduced the Project of management of residual risk of ERW, he said: “The purpose of this project is to research the development of policies and practices applied in solving contamination caused by ERW. This is also the basis of the reports that could help managers, policy-makers in decision-making, and promote a change in the application of approaches to minimize the risks from ERW in countries affected by the recent conflicts, especially in Southeast Asia.

According to Mr. Guy Rhodes, the aim of this project is to support and encourage each country in development of management mechanisms in solving ERW and introduction of practical plans and time frames to resolve ERW contaminations. The project also helps identify sustainable solutions including effective policies and risk management in order to enhance efficiency of financial allocation.

Sharing information about mine action in Vietnam, representative of VNMAC (Vietnam National Mine Action Centre), Mr. Nghiem Dinh Thien emphasized that: “Vietnam is one of the countries that severely affected by ERW, demining activities in Vietnam has been conducted immediately after the war ended which lead to the fact that thousands of tons of bombs were successfully disposed. People are increasingly more aware of the potential of mine accidents. Although the work of investigating and identifying contaminated areas has been implemented nationally, extensive areas of contamination with a large variety of types of bombs and mines are the main challenge to mine action in Vietnam”.

A representative of the Vietnam International Mine Action Center revealed that currently, there have been new development steps in mine action of Vietnam, especially in management and policy making: Vietnam has launched a National Mine Action Plan. In addition, Vietnam has established a National Steering Committee to monitor, manage and establish the Vietnam National Mine Action Center (VNMAC) along

with the establishment of National Mine Action Standards and the establishment of Vietnam Bomb and Mine Action Assistance Fund and Association. Vietnam is taking prompt action in developing a decree on mine action in accordance with current situations of demining activities.

The project can help to connect with not only nations and technical officers, but also managers and policy-makers in mine action. Vietnam highly appreciated the meaning of the project, and is willing to coordinate closely with other nations to finalise the next stage of the project regarding management of residual ERW, Mr. Nghiem Dinh Thien stressed.

Nguyen Hong Diep

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2 Appreciation of Vietnam for a meaningful mine action project of GICHD



Vietnam – one of the countries severely contaminated from explosive remnants of war (ERW), be part of MORE project

On 12 September in Hanoi, The Geneva International Centre of Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) held a milestone assessment regional workshop regarding the management of residual ERW (MORE)

MORE project is the result of the collaboration among 15 countries in Europe and Asia. The project researches the development of policies and practices in response to the presence of ERW in many countries in order to assist decision makers and promote changes in solutions to minimize and overcome consequences caused by ERW in countries affected by recent conflicts (in particular Vietnam, Lao PDR, and Cambodia).

Mr. Guy Rhodes, Director of Operation of GICHD said risk management procedures, applied to decision-making and prioritization of tasks based on criteria relevant to each country, are used in most countries regardless of differences in quality.

In the short term, the research indicates that countries could clearly recognize improvement in their national

ERW responses by updating the policies and practices in risk assessment.



Workshop conducted in Hanoi

Vietnam – one of the countries that suffer severe consequences from explosive remnants of war (ERW), is one of the countries that takes part in this project.

Demining activities in Vietnam have been conducted immediately after the war ended which lead to the fact that thousands of tons of bombs were successfully disposed. People are increasingly more aware of their risk of mine accidents; the work of investigating and identifying contaminated areas has been implemented nationally. However extensive areas of contamination with a large variety of bombs and mines are the main challenge to mine action in Vietnam”.

According to the representative of Vietnam National Mine Action Centre (VNMAC), the response to mine action of Vietnam has many similarities to the countries in the region and some European countries participating in MORE project as well as differences can be consulted, cooperated and learned from each other. The MORE project can help connect not only experts and technical officers but also managers and policy-makers in mine actions.

Vietnam highly appreciated the meaning of project, and willing to coordinate with other nations to successfully implement the project in the next stage.

Ngoc Thanh/VOV.VN

<http://vov.vn/xa-hoi/viet-nam-danh-gia-cao-y-nghia-du-an-ve-xu-ly-bom-min-cua-gichd-351486.vov>

(Dan Tri) - In 2013, there were approximately 60 accidents caused by explosive remnants of war (ERW) compared to only 1 to 2 accidents in European countries. The work of locating contaminated areas remains to be a challenge to Vietnam.



Speaker of the workshop (Photo: N.Hang)

This is the opinion from Mr. Guy Rhodes, Managing Director of The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), when answering the question from Dan Tri reporter about the greatest challenge to Vietnam in mine action at Milestone Assessment Workshop regarding the project Management of Residual ERW on 12 September in Hanoi.

In 2013, the country witnessed about 60 ERW-related accidents while the statistic in many European countries is only 1 to 2 cases. According to Mr. Guy Rhodes, the biggest problem facing Vietnam in mine actions is locating the specific contaminated areas.

Talking with Dan Tri reporter on the sideline of the workshop, Colonel Phan Duc Tuan, former Deputy Commander of Engineering Command revealed that Vietnam has implemented two projects on mapping ERW-contaminated areas on a national extent. The first project from 2004-2008 was implemented in six central provinces and the second project, which ended in 2013, was conducted nationally but the mapping of contaminated areas in the ocean has not been developed yet.

However, these maps only identify the scope of impact of ERW rather than indicating specific locations of mines and bombs.

“Vietnam is piloting a project that helps narrow down the suspected ERW-contaminated areas including 3 stages: Non-technical survey through interview; then, technical survey will be conducted on that basis to examine the impact zone and final stage is demining contaminated area” Colonel Phan Duc Tuan said

According to Mr. Tuan, Vietnam has a valuable data source to help locate ERW but has not been used effectively. For instance, during war time between Vietnam and America, La Thi Tam was a brave girl who counted bombs dropping from aircrafts in an observing tower. This would be a very useful source of data to locate the location of ERW rather than using American bombing map. On the basis of American bombing map, the military can only know the coordinates of the bomb but the exact location is hard to define.



Sr.Col Phan Duc Tuan, former Deputy Commander of Engineering Command answering Dan Tri reporter

Apart from difficulties in mapping contaminated areas, the matter of resources is also a concerning issue in mine action in Vietnam

Colonel Phan Duc Tuan emphasized that: "We have to build the coordinating agency for demining. Machinery and equipments have been improving but the matter of resources is still a pressing issue. Demining one hectare is already very expensive, while the contaminated area in Vietnam is 6.6 million hectares then how significant of resources for this work?"

Therefore, the National Mine Action Program (Program 504) needs to mobilize resources from society to prevent, minimize and eliminate the threat from ERW.

According to Mr. Nguyen Dinh Thien, representative of Vietnam National Mine Action Centre (VNMAC), Vietnam is one of the countries that suffered severe consequences caused by ERW. Demining activities in Vietnam have been conducted immediately after the war was ended which lead to the fact that thousands of tons of bombs were successfully disposed. People are increasingly more aware and cautious of mine accidents; the work of investigating and identifying contaminated areas has been implemented nationally. However extensive of contamination areas with the variety of types of bombs and mines are the main challenge to mine action in Vietnam".

Statistically, after nearly 40 years, the heavy consequences of war are still visible and persistent which lead to the death of more than 42000 people and over 62000 injuries result from ERW. In Vietnam, all of 63 provinces are identified as ERW-contaminated areas.

The Management of Residual ERW (MORE), Milestone Assessment workshop was held by IC-VVAF and GICHD.

MORE is the result of the collaboration among 15 countries in Europe and Asia. The project researches the development of policies and practices in response to the presence of ERW in many countries contaminated by post-1945 conflicts, in order to assist decision makers and promote changes in solutions to minimize and overcome consequences caused by ERW in countries affected by recent conflicts (such as Vietnam, Lao PDR, and Cambodia).



On 12 September, the Milestone Assessment Workshop of Management of residual ERW (MORE) project was organized in Hanoi.

“2014 has marked a milestone in mine action sector in many countries all over the world”, said Mr. Guy Rhodes, Director of Operations of the Geneva Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). Belgium, dealing with ERW for the past 100 years since World War I, disposes of 200 tons of ammunitions annually. In Germany, UXO/Landmine clearance has been conducted for 75 years. In Berlin alone, the number of ERW to be disposed annually is 45 tons. In Japan, although 69 years have passed by since the World War II ended, on an average, EOD teams still receive emergency calls every day.

MORE is a joint-project of 15 different countries from Europe and Asia. It explores the development of policy and practice in response to the presence of ERW in countries still contaminated by pre-1945 conflicts. It aims to inform today’s decision makers and promote change, apply measures to mitigate the hazards of residual ERW in countries affected by more recent wars (such as Vietnam, Lao PDR, Cambodia)



"We cannot determine the extent and nature of contamination or the complexity of the situation. The problem of Vietnam is also similar to Lao's. Therefore, based on calculations and actual figures, we think that it may take thousands of years to clear ERW in Laos. One third of the total territory is contaminated by ERW left by the war. MORE is an appropriate starting point for countries to evaluate the situation and based on the calculations and data gained through MORE, we can handle the problem in a more appropriate manner"
**Bounphamith Somvichith,
Deputy Director, NRA Laos**

"MORE does not aim to reduce the scale of contamination but to explore the policies and experience of European countries in order to identify best practices and policies to overcome this problem. Another aspect of the project is to study the aging, the features and components of ERW, their impact as well as the level of risk posed by ERW thread" said Mr. Guy Rhodes.

According to Mr. Nghiem Dinh Thien, Representative of Vietnam National Mine Action Center (VNMAC), Vietnam is one of the countries heavily contaminated by ERW. Mine action has been on-going actively since the wars ended. Thousand tons of ammunitions have been disposed; the awareness of people on the risk posed by mine/ERW has been improved. However, large contaminated areas, diversified types of mine/ERW together with other conditions always are great challenges to mine action in Vietnam.

Up to now, much progress has been seen in Vietnam's mine action operations, especially the management, coordination and issuance of policies and mechanisms. In particular, Vietnam established the National Mine Action Program (a.ka Program 504), VNMAC and the Mine Action Partnership Group, just to name a few. Vietnam's approach to mine action

is quite similar to other regional and European countries participating in MORE. "However, there are differences in management system or disposal procedures due to specific traits of each country for which we can consult, cooperate and learn from each other" said Mr. Thien. "MORE is a channel for not only experts and technicians but also managers and policy-makers".

At the workshop, GICHD also highly appreciated the achievements and experience in over 55 years since the wartime of Vietnam, Lao PDR and Cambodia. In addition to the review of previous policies and practices, the workshop also aims at exploring new solutions to enhance risk management policy and focusing efforts on areas prioritized for sustainable development.

The findings of MORE will be presented at the next major stakeholder meeting, scheduled in May 2015.

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) is an international expert organisation based in Switzerland that works to eliminate mines, explosive remnants of war and other explosive hazards. By undertaking research, developing standards and disseminating knowledge, the GICHD supports capacity development in mine-affected countries. It works with national and local authorities to help them plan, coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate mine action programmes. The GICHD also contributes to the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on Cluster Munitions and other relevant instruments of international law.

K.C- The World and Vietnam Report

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5 Sharing of experiences in management of explosive remnants of war (ERW)



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QĐND -On September 12th in Hanoi, The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA) organized a seminar introducing the project Management of Residual ERW (MORE) to share knowledge about risk management approach of ERW.

At the conference, Director of Operations of GICHD (Mr. Guy Rhodes) addressed that the MORE project is designed to support and encourage each country in development of management mechanisms in solving ERW and introduction of practical plans and time frames to resolve ERW contaminations. The project also helps identify sustainable solutions including effective policies and risk management in order to enhance efficiency of financial allocation.

Sharing information about demining activities in Vietnam, representative of Vietnam National Mine Action Centre (VNMAC), Mr. Nguyen Dinh Thien addressed that currently, there are new developments in mine actions in Vietnam, especially in management control and policies publication, Vietnam has launched a national mine action program after war in the period of 2010 to 2025 (Program 504) along with an urgent development of a decree on mine action in accordance with current situations of demining activities. “Vietnam highly appreciated the meaning of project, and is willing to coordinate closely with other nations to finalise the next stage of the project regarding management of residual ERW”, Mr. Nghiem Dinh Thien stressed.

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