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Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning in mine action

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Warning

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Contents

Foreword

International standards for humanitarian demining programmes were first proposed by working groups at an international technical conference in Denmark, in July 1996. Criteria were prescribed for all aspects of demining, standards were recommended and a new universal definition of "clearance" was agreed. In late 1996, the principles proposed in Denmark were developed by a UN-led working group and the International Standards for Humanitarian Mine Clearance Operations were developed. A first edition was issued by the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in March 1997.

The scope of these original standards has since been expanded to include the other components of mine action and to reflect changes to operational procedures, practices and norms. The standards were re-developed and renamed as International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) with the first edition produced in October 2001.

The United Nations has a general responsibility for enabling and encouraging the effective management of mine action programmes, including the development and maintenance of standards. UNMAS, therefore, is the office within the United Nations responsible for the development and maintenance of IMAS. IMAS are produced with the assistance of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

The work of preparing, reviewing and revising IMAS is conducted by technical committees, with the support of international, governmental and non-governmental organizations. The latest version of each standard, together with information on the work of the technical committees, can be found at www.mineactionstandards.org. Individual IMAS are reviewed at least every five years to reflect developing mine action norms and practices and to incorporate changes to international regulations and requirements.

Introduction

Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) efforts constitute an essential component of any mine action programme. An up-to-date overview of the progress and results of a mine action programme enables evidence-based adjustments. Such adjustments enhance the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and the overarching impact of a given mine action programme.

The ultimate goal of MEAL is to assess the performance and impact of a given programme, as well as make improvements based on lessons learnt. Effective implementation of MEAL for mine action requires active participation of diverse stakeholders, each contributing through their unique roles and responsibilities.

This document provides general guidelines for MEAL activities in mine action programmes. These guidelines apply to all mine action organizations and are intended to assist in the development and implementation of MEAL policies, standards and standard operating procedures.

The individual sections on monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning provide an overview of each component, core concepts and key considerations. Such considerations include the various types of monitoring and evaluation and their associated information requirements, key mechanisms for mainstreaming accountability and methods for maximizing learning across programmes.

The roles and responsibilities section outlines the contributions of national mine action authorities, mine action organizations and donors to MEAL processes. These roles and associated responsibilities help to ensure not only that MEAL processes are being implemented, but that they are of high quality and of practical use for all stakeholders involved in a mine action programme.

Annex C summarizes MEAL requirements across the programme life cycle. The requirements at the various phases of a programme ensure that MEAL efforts are implemented throughout the course of a programme and facilitate continual improvement, contributing overall to enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of mine action programmes.

Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning in mine action

1   Scope

This IMAS provides general principles and guidelines for monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) in mine action programmes. These principles and guidelines apply to all mine action organizations and are intended to assist in the development and implementation of MEAL policies, standards and standard operating procedures.

2   Normative references

A list of normative references is given in Annex A. Normative references are important documents to which reference is made in this standard and which form part of the provisions of this standard.

3   Terms and definitions

A complete glossary of all the terms, definitions and abbreviations used in the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) series is given in IMAS 04.10.

In the IMAS series, the words "shall", "should" and "may" are used to indicate the intended degree of compliance:

−   "shall" is used to indicate requirements, methods or specifications that are to be applied in order to conform to the standard;

−   "should" is used to indicate preferred requirements, methods or specifications; and

−   "may" is used to indicate a possible method or course of action.

3.1
accountability
state of being answerable for decisions and activities to the organization's governing bodies, legal authorities and, more broadly, its stakeholders

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.1]

3.2
effectiveness
extent to which the intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance

3.3
evaluation
<in the context of IMAS> process that attempts to determine as systematically and objectively as possible the merit or value of an intervention

Note 1 to entry: The word "objectively" indicates the need to achieve a balanced analysis, recognizing bias and reconciling perspectives of different stakeholders (all those interested in, and affected by, programmes, including both male and female beneficiaries as primary stakeholders) through the use of different sources and methods.

3.4
gender mainstreaming
mainstreaming a gender perspective
process of assessing the different implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels

Note 1 to entry: It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of both women and men an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated.

3.5
impact
<in the context of IMAS> level of social and economic suffering experienced by the community resulting from the harm or risk of harm caused by explosive ordnance hazards and hazardous areas

EXAMPLES: The positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

3.6
learning
process through which information generated from tracking, monitoring and evaluation is reflected upon and intentionally used to continuously improve the capacities of project partners and the ability of the project to achieve impacts

[SOURCE: "Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning concepts principles and tools" Agrinatura/FAO]

3.7
mine action organization
MAO
organization (government, military, commercial or non-governmental organization/civil society) responsible for implementing mine action projects or tasks

Note 1 to entry: The mine action organization may be a prime contractor, subcontractor, consultant or agent.

3.8
monitoring
continuing function that uses systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing project, programme or policy with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives, and progress in the use of allocated funds

[SOURCE: OECD/DAC]

3.9
national mine action authority
NMAA
government entity, often an inter-ministerial committee, in a country affected by explosive ordnance charged with the responsibility for broad strategic, policy and regulatory decisions related to mine action

Note 1 to entry: In the absence of an NMAA, it may be necessary and appropriate for the UN, or some other body, to assume some or all of the responsibilities of an NMAA.

3.10
outcome
<in the context of IMAS> likely or achieved short- and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs

Note 1 to entry: Outcomes are related to the *effectiveness* (3.2) of an intervention.

3.11
output
<in the context of IMAS> products, capital goods and services which result from a mine action intervention

Note 1 to entry: Outputs may also include changes resulting from the intervention which are relevant to the achievement of outcomes (such as the development of local capacities).

4   Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning in mine action

4.1   General

Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) is a crucial component for the success of mine action programmes, enhancing the overall impact and sustainability of interventions and ensuring that they effectively address the needs of mine-affected communities and contribute to their safety and development.

The main objectives of MEAL are to:

− ensure that a given programme is on track to deliver on commitments made to various stakeholders;

− indicate during the course of an intervention if adjustments are necessary to fulfil these commitments;

− track long-term effects, including achievement of outcomes and desired impact;

− ensure that individuals and teams involved in carrying out a programme are aware of their duties and are held accountable for their performance and the programme's outcomes;

− to collect, document and share, both within individual organizations and with relevant external stakeholders, knowledge gained from the implementation of mine action programmes to promote learning among stakeholders and improve ongoing and future interventions.

4.2 General principles for monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning

Professional norms and standards for MEAL serve as a framework to contribute to the improvement of MEAL functions, as well as to the greater effectiveness of its interventions.

The scope and scale of MEAL varies across mine action interventions. Certain overarching principles that apply to mine action in general apply equally to MEAL, including the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. Additionally, the principle of "do no harm" applies to MEAL as it does to mine action in general. Other principles that should be applied to MEAL in mine action include:

1) **national ownership** – national authorities should take leadership in setting priorities, defining the scope of MEAL and ensuring alignment with national policies and strategies. Data should be drawn from national sources as much as possible, contingent on the availability of relevant and robust data in the required frequency. National partners shall be involved in reviewing mine action related data.

2) **participation and inclusion** – MEAL activities should be carried out with the participation of relevant stakeholders, such as affected populations or beneficiaries, donors, national authorities and intergovernmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, the private sector and/or representatives of local communities.

3) **utility** – MEAL activities should serve the information needs of the intended users for maximum benefit. Monitors should ensure that the work is well informed, relevant, timely and clearly and concisely presented. Monitoring reports should present evidence, progress, issues and recommendations in a comprehensive and balanced way. Reports should be both results- and action-oriented. Evaluation should be conducted when there is a recognized requirement for additional evidence.

4) **transparency** – all stages of the monitoring processes and evaluation should be transparent. Consultation with major stakeholders is essential and involves clear and regular communication, including the scheduling and scope of specific monitoring missions and activities. Documentation resulting from monitoring should be easily consultable and readable to guarantee transparency and legitimacy.

5) **credibility** – monitoring should be based on data and observations using systems and tools that can guarantee quality and reliability. Monitoring reports shall reflect consistency and dependability in data, findings, judgements and lessons learnt.

6) **sustainability** – monitoring mechanisms and systems supported by stakeholders should be sustainable and should reflect transition and phase-out arrangements as necessary. Support to national capacity development on monitoring, data collection and analysis should reinforce the sustainability of actions.

7) **continuous Improvement** – MEAL should promote learning within the mine action programme or organization, providing regular feedback to improve implementation. Findings from MEAL should inform adaptive management, allowing for changes to be made to programmes in response to real-time data and emerging needs.

4.3   Financing monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning

A general rule is that the MEAL budget should not be so small as to compromise the accuracy and credibility of results. Conversely, it should not divert project resources to the extent that programming is impaired either. The MEAL budget may account for 5 % to 10 % of the total project budget. Related costs should be considered during the intervention development phase. The budget depends on the national laws and regulations of the funding organization (that is, the national authority or donors).

4.4   Approaches to monitoring and evaluation

A variety of elements can be monitored in a mine action programme. The selection depends on the specific information needs of the programme and stakeholders. IMAS 07.40, *Monitoring of mine action organizations*, emphasizes the need to take a results-based management (RBM) approach, which is more strategic and aims at achieving specific outcomes and impacts. Within such an approach, a 'theory of change' is a tool that can be used to further illustrate the desired impact of an intervention and how this impact will be achieved. IMAS 05.10, *Information management for mine action*, focuses on the "Plan, Do, Check and Act" model which uses similar principles as the RBM approach, but is more suited for operational contexts where ongoing process improvements are needed. This document further emphasizes the use of RBM in strengthening accountability in the mine action sector.

Emphasizing gender, diversity, rights, protection, accountability, environmental awareness and sustainability can assist programmes to effectively overcome systemic inequalities and obstacles that impede progress. This helps to enhance the results-based approach and can also facilitate other intervention impacts as desired by stakeholders (national authorities, donors), for example, in equitable post-clearance opportunities or environmental sustainability.

5   Monitoring

5.1   General

Monitoring is necessary throughout the life cycle of a mine action programme, as the context, constraints and perspectives associated with the programme change and evolve over time. Regular monitoring of mine action programmes ensures that the implementation status of the concerned programmes is known to relevant stakeholders. In the case where implementation is not on track, regular monitoring allows for adjustments to be made in a timely manner to ensure implementation is more efficient and/or effective. Regular and reliable data collection is a key component of monitoring and shall respect the minimum data requirements outlined in IMAS 05.10.

5.2   Types of monitoring

There are different types of monitoring focusing on: situation/context, risk, processes, compliance, performance, results, quality, finances and beneficiaries.

Programme and performance monitoring practices are dependent on the purpose, focus, timing and audience. The monitoring variations are not mutually exclusive; they can be used in different combinations to leverage the full potential of each programme. For example, long-term projects that are incrementally funded may have multiple mid-term reviews before a project is complete and may not require formal reviews for certain periods of performance.

Mine action programmes should monitor different aspects of the programme as illustrated in Figure 1.
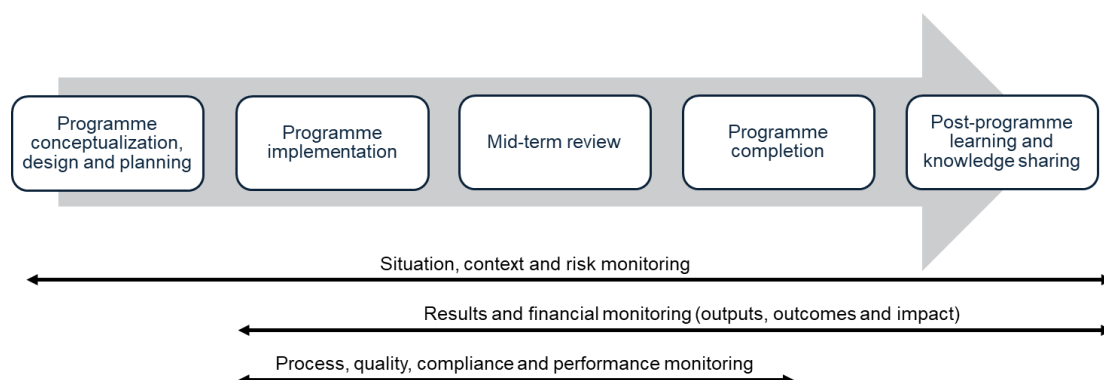
Figure 1 – Monitoring different aspects across the programme life cycle

IMAS 07.40 outlines the key monitoring types, how to conduct them and specific stakeholder obligations in monitoring. In IMAS 07.40, output monitoring is referred to as product monitoring while compliance and quality monitoring is referred to as non-conformity monitoring. In addition to the types of monitoring listed above, IMAS 07.40 also outlines what NMAAs should implement to monitor customer satisfaction: beneficiary monitoring.

5.3   Information requirements

Mine action monitoring requires comprehensive information to effectively assess, manage and mitigate the risks posed by explosive ordnance. IMAS 05.10, Annex B, lists minimum data requirements for mine action programmes. The exact information needs depend on the nature of the programme and which specific thematic areas are covered. The main areas of key information needs for which NMAAs should consider collecting data, depending on the exact activities covered under a given programme, are as follows:

1) **explosive ordnance (EO) contamination data** – information on the location, type, and extent of EO contamination, including maps, survey reports and clearance data. Accurate geographical coordinates and mapping of EO-contaminated areas are crucial for planning and prioritizing clearance efforts.

2) **type and extent of contamination** – detailed information about the types and extent of contamination remnants present helps in selecting appropriate land release techniques and equipment.

3) **socio-economic and environmental factors** – understanding the broader socio-economic and environmental context, such as land use patterns by diverse groups, economic activities, cultural and environmental sensitivities, informs decision making and ensures that clearance efforts align with broader development goals.

4) **coordination and partnership data** – data on coordination mechanisms, partnerships and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, international organizations, NGOs and local communities involved in mine action activities.

5) **land release operations data** – data on land release operations, including the number of explosive ordnance cleared, types of assets used, areas surveyed (cancelled and/or reduced) and cleared, survey and clearance methodologies used, and clearance quality assurance/quality control measures. This also includes regular updates on the progress of land release operations, which are essential for monitoring and adjusting land release strategies.

6) **accident and casualty data** – information on EO accidents and casualties, including demographic data on victims, types of injuries sustained, locations of accidents, item type (if known), activity engaged in by victim at the time of the accident, and socio-economic impacts on affected individuals and communities.

7) **victim assistance data** – information on ongoing needs and capacities of those who require prosthetics and orthotics as well as relevant interventions, including psychosocial interventions or trainings related to livelihood opportunities.

8) **risk management data and incident reporting on activity implementation** – data on accidents, near misses and incidents involving EO help to identify areas of high risk and improve safety protocols for both clearance personnel and affected communities.

9) **explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) data** – data on risk education activities, including the number of beneficiaries reached by gender and age groups, types of EORE interventions conducted, changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to EO safety, and the effectiveness of EORE messages and materials.

10) **quality management data** – information on effectiveness of clearance operations, including quality assurance and quality control procedures, ensures that clearance activities meet international standards and minimize the risk of accidents or missed ordnance.

11) **resource mobilization, allocation, utilization and funding data** – information on funding sources, budget allocations and utilization, expenditure, and resource gaps is essential for advocating for increased support for mine action activities and ensuring the sustainability of clearance efforts over the long term.

12) **community liaison and engagement data** – information on community liaison and engagement activities, including stakeholder consultations and community-driven mine action initiatives. Feedback from affected communities regarding their needs, concerns and perceptions of risk is vital for designing effective EO risk education programmes and clearance strategies.

Further data may be required by relevant national and international legal frameworks, policies and national strategies to support compliance with such frameworks, policies and strategies. Sufficient, reliable information is needed at both output and outcome levels during the monitoring process. For additional guidance on the output-level information requirements refer to IMAS 05.10, Annex B.

6 Evaluation

6.1 General

Evaluation involves systematic gathering and processing of data to identify critical issues, analyse causes and effects and forecast likely outcomes to continuously improve programme performance.

Evaluations of mine action programmes may be conducted depending on:

1) the availability of time and financial resources to support the evaluation;

2) requests from commissioning bodies, such as donors;

3) programmatic need for additional information on specific aspects or at specific times within the programme life cycle.

6.2 Evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria should be designed during project development. Evaluations for mine action examine the achievement of short-, mid- and long-term objectives based on the following factors:

1) **relevance** – the extent to which the objectives of an intervention are consistent with country requirements, beneficiary requirements, national priorities and donor policies.

2) **efficiency** – a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results (outputs and outcomes).

3) **effectiveness** – the extent to which the intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

4) **impact** – the positive and negative long-term effects produced by an intervention, including any indirect and/or unintended consequences.

5) **sustainability** – the continuation of benefits from a mine action intervention after major assistance has been completed.

6) **coherence** – the degree to which an intervention harmonizes or is compatible with other mine action interventions in the country.

7) **economy** – inputs bought of appropriate quality at the right price.

8) **equity** – how fairly are the benefits distributed in particular among marginalized groups (spending fairly).

9) gender responsive - degree to which an intervention is inclusive participatory and respectful to all stakeholders irrespective of cultural and social structures

Depending on the type of evaluation conducted (see 6.3), other criteria may also be included:

10) **priority setting** – ensuring that there is a logical and transparent method for setting priorities for tasks or activities

11) **cost-effectiveness** – assesses ultimate impact relative to the inputs invested.

12) **cost–benefit analysis** – assesses whether the benefits outweigh the costs and to what extent, thereby guiding decision-making about the allocation of resources.

13) **client (including donor) satisfaction** – disaggregated by all social inclusion criteria.

14) **beneficiary satisfaction** – disaggregated by all social inclusion criteria.

15) **replicability** – whether a project or programme can be duplicated in a different environment.

16) **scalability** – whether a project or programme can be increased or decreased in size (that is, scaled up or scaled down).

In addition, NMAAs and MAOs may collect additional data depending on the specificity of the evaluation commissioned.

6.3 Types of evaluations

Evaluations may be commissioned to examine only certain aspects of mine action interventions, or they may encompass the complete range of programme cycle and results, including the impact. The scope and scale of any evaluation depends on the specific requirements of the commissioning body, and the time and funding available to conduct the evaluation.

Generally, evaluations may be broken down into four categories based on the following criteria:

1) **time** – an evaluation conducted before the intervention (ex-ante), during the intervention (real time), halfway through the intervention (mid-term) or following the intervention (ex post);

2) **purpose** – an evaluation to inform improvements required for an ongoing intervention (formative evaluation) or for future interventions (summative evaluation);

3) **scope and technical specifications** – the scope can vary greatly from one specific technical component of a project (such as the efficacy of a certain type of detector against locally encountered mines) to an entire national programme;

4) **who conducts the evaluation** – a distinction can be made according to where personnel come from that conduct the evaluation. An internal evaluation is conducted by personnel from the organization; an external

evaluation is conducted by personnel from a separate organization from the one conducting the intervention; and a mixed evaluation is conducted by personnel from a separate organization assisted by personnel from the organization conducting the intervention.

Mine action programmes may conduct evaluations depending on the availability of financial resources to support such evaluations, based on requests from commissioning bodies (such as donors) and the programmatic need for additional information on specific aspects or at specific times within the programme life cycle.

7   Accountability

7.1   General

Accountability in programme management refers to the responsibility of individuals or teams to answer for the success or failure of specific tasks, activities or objectives within a programme. It involves being answerable for decisions made, actions taken and results achieved. This accountability helps ensure that all stakeholders understand their roles, duties and expectations, fostering transparency, trust and effective communication within the programme.

Accountability is simultaneously a value, a product of and a reason for undertaking monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation help to ensure the following types of accountabilities:

1) **upwards accountability** – this includes the accountability of MAOs to the NMAA in a given country, as well as to donors. This further includes accountability for NMAAs and donors to their own governments. This accountability helps to not only ensure that a mine action programme has been executed according to established planning, but also that the programme has complied with applicable agreements, contracts, laws and/or regulations.

2) **accountability to affected populations** – this includes the accountability of MAOs, NMAAs and donors to mine action programme beneficiaries, including all populations directly or indirectly affected by the programme's actions.

3) **horizontal accountability** – this includes the accountability of MAOs, NMAAs and donors to their respective partners with whom they collaborate to coordinate and implement mine action programmes.

4) **self-accountability** – this includes the accountability of MAOs, NMAAs and donors to their own internal structures. This helps to ensure that a given entity is acting in accordance with its established internal standards, procedures and overall strategic direction.

7.2   Mechanisms for accountability

Mechanisms for accountability in programme management help ensure that individuals and teams are responsible for their actions, decisions and the programme's outcomes. By implementing accountability mechanisms, mine action programmes can foster a culture of responsibility, transparency and trust, thereby enhancing programme effectiveness and achieving desired outcomes. Mine action programmes should foster accountability by:

1) clearly defining roles and responsibilities of individuals and teams involved in a mine action programme;

2) establishing measurable performance metrics and targets, allowing stakeholders to track progress and hold responsible parties accountable for meeting defined objectives and standards of mine action interventions;

3) implementing regular reporting mechanisms and programme reviews, enabling implementers and stakeholders to assess progress, identify challenges and address issues promptly;

4) establishing channels for stakeholders to provide feedback, raise concerns and lodge complaints, thereby enabling individuals and teams to address issues and improve performance based on stakeholder input;

5) implementing robust risk management processes to identify potential risks that may affect programme outcomes, to proactively manage those risks, and mitigate negative impacts. Additional information on risk management can be found in IMAS 07.14;

6) engaging stakeholders throughout the programme lifecycle through consultation, collaboration and participation, ensuring that their diverse interests, needs and perspectives are considered in decision-making processes;

7) conducting periodic performance evaluations and reviews to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of programme activities as well as identify areas for improvement and hold parties accountable for results;

8) establishing and adhering to ethical standards and codes of conduct that guide the behaviour and actions of individuals and teams involved in programme management, ensuring integrity, transparency and fairness;

9) ensuring the responsible stewardship of funds and resources through effective financial management systems.

8   Learning

8.1   General

Learning is the process through which information generated from monitoring and evaluation is reflected upon and intentionally used to continuously improve the capacities of project partners and the ability of the project to achieve impacts. It is the product of and benefit derived from the monitoring, evaluation and accountability components of the MEAL process. Learning is also the vehicle through which NMAAs, MAOs and donors can apply MEAL evidence-based information to adapt strategies, refine approaches and optimize resource allocations to improve ongoing operations as well as enhance the planning process for future ones.

8.2   Application of learning

Learning is only useful to the extent that what has been learnt through the gathering and analysis of programmatic information is applied to ongoing and future operations.

To ensure that lessons learnt are not lessons lost, MAOs should consider the following to maximize the benefits obtainable through the MEAL process.

− Identify programmatic shortfalls (that is, those areas where the goals and objectives of the programme plan are not being met), the reasons why these occurred and what actions/resources (people, money, machinery) are required to overcome them.

− Identify programmatic successes that are meeting the goals and objectives of the programme plan, the reasons why these occurred and what actions/resources are required to ensure they continue to be successful in the future.

− Identify programmatic successes that are exceeding the goals and objectives of the programme plan, the reasons why these occurred and whether or not the results are replicable.

− Apply the MEAL-derived learning points to current and future programmes as appropriate and possible within programme funding and other resource constraints.

− If necessary, request additional resources with rationale based on information derived from the MEAL process.

− Make available lessons learnt to other programmes.

9 Roles and responsibilities

In addition to the roles and responsibilities set out in this document, additional MEAL roles and responsibilities are included in other relevant IMAS documents. Provisions related to MEAL shall be followed in: IMAS 05.10 Information management in mine action; IMAS 07.40 Monitoring of mine action organizations; IMAS 07.42 Monitoring of stockpile destruction programmes; and TNMA 07.11/02 Key performance indicators for land release and stockpile destruction operations.

9.1 National mine action authority

The NMAA holds final ownership of any data or information collected during mine action operations. This data is vital for MEAL processes. The NMAA is responsible for ensuring access for MAOs to relevant data required for the fulfilment of their obligations in the associated mine action programme.

The NMAA approves national MEAL standards and is responsible for ensuring that related processes and requirements outlined in such standards are managed according to national requirements and in line with international good practice.

An NMAA may incorporate or appoint a national mine action centre that is responsible for the day-to-day coordination and implementation of mine action activities in a programme. In such cases, this national body is generally responsible for coordinating MEAL efforts and implementing national MEAL standards.

The NMAA is responsible for ensuring that MEAL efforts are in line with established plans and reporting obligations for the national mine action programme.

The NMAA is also responsible for ensuring that the results from MEAL efforts are used to adjust programming to fulfil programmatic objectives and commitments.

9.2 Mine action organizations

9.2.1 General

Organizations that implement mine action activities should conduct MEAL in line with requirements set out through relevant national mine action standards, donor requirements and internal organizational procedures. To this effect, the operating organizations shall maintain, and render available, relevant documentation, reports, records and other data on mine action activities to the NMAA.

In addition, MAOs often have their own stakeholders with MEAL requirements to whom they need to report, such as donors. Furthermore, the role of operating organizations in terms of handling data specifically for MEAL purposes is further outlined in IMAS 05.10.

9.2.2 Programme management unit

The programme management unit is responsible for ensuring that everyone understands the importance of MEAL and that the roles and responsibilities regarding MEAL are clearly defined and understood. As an end user of MEAL products, it also plays a part in defining MEAL requirements in line with its own organizational needs, needs communicated by the NMAA and contractual obligations from donors. The programme management unit should:

1) ensure that a MEAL unit is established and has access to adequate resources and training;

2) ensure the development and implementation of policies, standards and regulations for MEAL. These standards and regulations shall be consistent with this IMAS, and other relevant national standards;

3) clearly define the role of the MEAL unit in the organization and ensure that other units understand how it relates to their own areas of responsibility;

4) communicate the benefits of MEAL to all stakeholders;

5)   ensure a close collaboration between the MEAL unit and other units, and that the MEAL unit is included in discussions or meetings on topics requiring MEAL support or input;

6)   ensure that the MEAL unit has the authority to access relevant information and stakeholders;

7)   continually provide input on quality requirements for MEAL products.

9.2.3   Operations management unit

The different operations management units in the organization shall understand the MEAL needs of their areas of responsibility. They need to understand the reason for which MEAL and its associated processes are being used. They shall:

1)   actively and continually contribute to MEAL requirements for mine action activities and products within their areas of responsibility;

2)   ensure that information is reported for eventual use by the MEAL unit in a timely manner by entities operating in their areas of responsibility;

3)   include representatives from the MEAL unit in meetings and discussions, either internally or with external organizations where relevant;

4)   request and make use of MEAL products for decision making and provide input for improvements where necessary;

5)   ensure that MEAL products are distributed to and used by entities operating in their area(s) of responsibility.

9.2.4   MEAL unit

The MEAL unit is responsible for ensuring that all MEAL components are carried out according to well-defined processes, and to create MEAL products that meet stakeholder requirements in a timely, accurate and consistent manner. The MEAL unit shall:

1)   develop and continually improve MEAL requirements based on input from stakeholders and in line with diverse contractual obligations, as communicated by the programme management unit;

2)   define and document the MEAL processes of the organization;

3)   develop and implement appropriate MEAL standard operating procedures in accordance with defined processes and the national standards of the NMAA;

4)   analyse information products created by the information management unit, and make use of them for MEAL purposes where relevant;

5)   request additional data from the operations management unit as needed for MEAL processes;

6)   ensure that relevant mine action MEAL products are available to all stakeholders in a timely and easy-to-access manner;

7)   cooperate regularly with relevant partners and external organizations on matters concerning MEAL;

8)   actively contribute to meetings and discussions concerning MEAL;

9)   provide guidance and assistance in matters of MEAL to stakeholders through training, workshops and/or responding to individual requests;

10)   consult with stakeholders regularly to evaluate and update MEAL quality requirements.

9.3   Donors

Donors should include an appropriate level of funding for MEAL requirements in the budgets for their mine action programmes, subject to national laws and regulations and subject to the availability of funds.

Donors are furthermore responsible for communicating MEAL results to internal structures within their respective governments.

Annex A
(normative)

references

[1]   IMAS 04.10, *Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations*

[2]   IMAS 05.10, *Information management for mine action*

[3]   IMAS 07.14, *Risk management in mine action*

[4]   IMAS 07.40, *Monitoring mine action organizations*

[5]   IMAS 07.42, *Monitoring of stockpile destruction programmes*

[6]   TNMA 07.11/02, *Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for land release and stockpile destruction programmes*

Annex B
(informative)

References

[1]   ITAD (2022), *A Sector-Wide Theory of Change for Mine Action and User Guide*

[2]   Kusek, J.Z. and Rist, R.C. (2004), *Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System*. World Bank, Washington DC.

[3]   ITERAC, *Monitoring and Evaluation Planning Series*

Annex C
(informative)

Summary of MEAL Requirements across the programme life cycle

Programme phase	Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning activities
Programme conceptualization, design and planning	– Conduct a situation analysis based on the country context – Identify risks and assumptions and lessons learnt from previous evaluations or programme – Develop a risk register or risk management matrix – Identify and prioritize the key areas where mine action interventions can make meaningful difference in line with national priorities – Develop an explanation of how the identified and prioritized issues will be transformed into activities/outputs, and how they will lead to outcomes/impacts (for example, a theory of change (TOC) or Log frame) – Develop corresponding indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time and bound (SMART) – Develop learning questions – Establish accountability mechanisms and assign responsibility for tasks and deliverables – Allocate budget for MEAL – Develop a MEAL plan, including a process to evaluate this plan on a periodic basis
Programme implementation	– Collect data as per the monitoring and evaluation plan – Review risk register and update appropriately – Assure quality of data through field verification and data audits – Analyse collected data, use them for informed decision making and reporting – Conduct project site visits and assure quality of the implemented activities – Regularly review the TOC and logical framework – Regularly document lessons and best practices – Conduct regular participatory programme reviews – Conduct implementation research (if required or planned for) – Provide feedback and reporting to relevant stakeholders including beneficiaries, NMAAs, donors and other stakeholders – Review, analyse and action feedback from stakeholders
Mid-term review	– Organize mid-point review(s) as planned – Document and share lessons learnt – Use lessons learnt to improve programme implementation – Review MEAL framework and revise tools and methodology if necessary
Programme completion	– Organize programme end-point review – Document and share lessons learnt – Prepare the programme completion report and submit to relevant stakeholders
Post-programme learning and knowledge sharing	– Conduct and impact evaluation – Share lessons learnt

Amendment record

Management of IMAS amendments

The IMAS series of standards are subject to formal review on a five-yearly basis. However, this does not preclude amendments being made within these five-year periods for reasons of operational safety and efficiency or for editorial purposes.

As amendments are made to this IMAS they are given a number. The date and general details of the amendment shown in the table below. The amendment is also shown on the cover page of the IMAS by the inclusion under the edition date of the phrase "*incorporating amendment #.*"

As the formal reviews of each IMAS are completed, new editions may be issued. In this case, amendments up to the date of the new edition are incorporated into the new edition and the amendment record table cleared. Recording of amendments then starts again until a further review is carried out.

The most recently amended IMAS are posted on the IMAS website at www.mineactionstandards.org.

Number	Date	Amendment details