

Terms of Reference
Mid-term Review of the Towards Sustainable Mine Risk Education for Primary and Secondary School Students (SMRE) project

I. INTRODUCTION

I.A. Evaluation Overview

At the mid-way point of the project 'Towards Sustainable Mine Risk Education for Primary and Secondary School Students', a mid-term review (MTR) will be conducted to assess the project performance, check progress against intended outcomes and outputs, identify challenges and make course adjustments to improve effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance in the last half of project.

The MTR will largely employ a qualitative methodology including qualitative assessment with related stakeholders including primary and secondary school students, parents, teachers, Department of Education and Training (DOETs), Vietnam Mine Action Centre (VNMAC), Universities in Quang Binh, Quang Tri and Thua Thien Hue (TTCs), and Project staff. Besides, a desk review of project documents and a recently-conducted light KAP survey report will be used as quantitative data for the MTR.

I.B. Project Background:

Catholic Relief Services - CRS is an international humanitarian agency based in the United States. CRS works to save, protect, and transform lives in need in more than 100 countries, without regard to race, religion or nationality.

CRS began working in Vietnam in 1992 and established an office in Hanoi in 1994. CRS Vietnam assists local partners in the areas of inclusion of people with disabilities, Mine Action, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, and Community-based Climate Change Adaptation.

For 20 years CRS has been helping to ensure students in the most Exploded Ordnance (EO) contaminated areas in Vietnam are able to protect their lives from EO accidents.

'The Mine Risk Education Plus for Primary and Secondary School Children' (MRE+) project achieved significant outcomes contributing to the reduction of risk of injury and death from EO in high-risk communities in Quang Tri, Quang Binh, Da Nang and Quang Nam provinces. CRS partners, including provincial Departments of Education and Training (DOETs) and three Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) in Quang Binh, Quang Tri and Quang Nam provinces, decided to include Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Integration Guidelines (EOREIG) in the compulsory curriculum for all primary, secondary schools and faculties of primary education. From 2016 - 2019, CRS trained over 554,963 primary and secondary children, 19,000 teachers, 667 parents, 39 lecturers and 463 undergraduates on EO risk, contributing to declining EO casualties in targeted areas.

Building off the success of the MRE+ Project, from 2020 – 2024, CRS has conducted a four-year project titled 'Towards Sustainable Mine Risk Education for primary and secondary school students' (SMRE) in 5 provinces of Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Thua Thien Hue, Da Nang and Quang Nam and three TTCs in Quang Binh, Quang Nam and Thua Thien Hue provinces. This project aims to further promote EORE integration in schools with initiatives to adapt to the new educational reform requirements and prepare for a sustainable EORE transition to its partners through capacity building and advocating for a national EORE

framework. Key EORE messages through in-class and extra-curricular exposure are reinforced. The project updates EOREIG for primary and secondary school teachers, then develops digitalized EOREIGs for convenient access.

The SMRE project emphasizes the effective transition of the EORE program to local implementing partners under provincial leadership. In this phase, the project will help to strengthen partners' capacity in implementing EORE by themselves, contextualize interactive standard materials and put them in place for easy access by teachers and other key stakeholders. EORE technical capacity will be strengthened at the national and provincial levels so that similar EORE activities can be conducted by local government and NGO partners beyond the scope and timeframe of this project.

This project will deepen the institutionalization of EORE within the formal education system, as well as build the capacity of the provincial/national coordination bodies for mine action in Vietnam. The utilization of more flexible approaches and promotion of Information Technology (IT), such as online training and digitalized EORE materials, will be taken to protect the health and safety of project staff, partners and targeted children during the emerging COVID-19 pandemic.

Responding to the broad strategic priorities of explosive remnants of war (ERW), this project will continue to leverage CRS' in-depth experience, achievements, and innovations in advancing EORE for children and other vulnerable groups in health, education, and civil society in Vietnam. SMRE will serve 654,857 direct beneficiaries by continuing strong government partnerships and expanding national technical capacity with key stakeholders such as Vietnam's National Mine Action Center (VNMAC).

II. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of the MRE+ Project's midterm evaluation (MTE) is two-fold:

- To evaluate Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Approach/ Cohesion during the implementation in the first half of the project.
- To contribute to agency learning by identifying potential good practices or lessons learned and recommendations for the last half of the project

III. EVALUATION QUESTIONS / OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the MTR are:

1. to review project progress towards its objectives at activity, output and IR levels (a) and assess the project efficiency (b) to make timely course corrections
2. to assess the relevance of the project as an opportunity to re-examine the project's strategy or theory of change
3. to identify the project successes and challenges, thereby developing project good practices and lessons learned
4. to provide a quality check on MEAL system and monitoring activities to see if they meet the information needs of project stakeholders.

In order to attain above objectives, the MTR needs to answer the evaluation questions in the table 1:

Table 1. Evaluation questions	
Objective	Related questions
1a	Is there evidence that the project achieved/is likely to achieve its objectives? Why or why not?
	What are the links between the project's activities, outputs and IRs?
	Are the planned IR-level objectives being achieved?
	What is the likelihood that the project's SOs will be met?
1b	Were project activities implemented as planned and described in the proposal and DIP?
	Were project resources used in the best possible way to achieve the objectives? Why or why not?
	How appropriate and close to plan were the costs, the time requirements, the staff capacity and capability, and the availability of required financial resources
	What could the project do differently to improve implementation and maximize impact as an acceptable cost?
2	Do beneficiaries and stakeholders feel that the project's interventions meet their needs/deal with their priorities?
	Do beneficiaries trained under the project feel competent that they can apply what they learnt (acquired knowledge and skills) in their career?
	What are their perceptions of what is working and not working?
	Are there differences in responses to above questions based on gender?
3	How well do project partners work together?
	How have relevant stakeholders participated in the project activities?
	What successes can we build on?
	What should be sustained after the project end? What are the mechanisms/actions that partners have been working on to sustain those project activities?
	What can we learn and apply from better understanding challenges?
4	How well is the monitoring system functioning? Are data being gathered and reported as planned?
	How useful are the project's performance indicators? Are modifications required?
	Are anticipated events and outcomes being sufficiently tracked?
	To what extent are senior project staff using monitoring information to make management decisions?
	What might this mean for the project during the remaining period?

IV. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The midterm review will be consultancy- led and use multiple methods. The consultant, in discussion with Program Manager and Meal Manager, will design the evaluation methodology including identifying data collection methods, sampling strategy, data analysis plan. The MTR may include but not limited to the following methods: 1) Desk review of relevant project documents, including a light KAP survey report; 2) qualitative assessment; 3) Participatory Reflection Events. All qualitative assessment respondents will be asked to give written consent to participate in the midterm evaluation.

V. EVALUATION TEAM

This is a consultancy team-led MTR with at least one team leader and two team members together with the participation of the Mine Action program team and MEAL manager in coordination with provincial and district DOET staff.

The consultants will be selected based on adequate skills, experience, and qualifications.

Team leader:

- Master's Degree required, PhD preferred.
- At least 5 years of experience designing and conducting evaluations for learning/documentation for international NGOs.
- Experience and profound knowledge on development programs, especially Explosive Ordinance Risk Education Program or Education Program is a plus.
- The ability to respectfully and effectively communicate with diverse groups of people.
- Strong interpersonal and facilitation skills, and cultural and gender sensitivity in working with local communities and a range of stakeholders.
- Excellent oral communication skills and the ability to deliver high quality written reports in English and Vietnamese.
- Excellent analytical and ability to solve problems.
- Demonstrable experience in producing high-quality, credible evaluations, documentation

Team member(s)

- Bachelor's Degree required.
- At least 4 years of experience designing and conducting evaluations for learning/documentation for international NGOs
- Experience and profound knowledge on development programs, especially Explosive Ordinance Risk Education Program or Education Program is a plus.
- The ability to respectfully and effectively communicate with diverse groups of people.
- Strong interpersonal and facilitation skills, and cultural and gender sensitivity in working with local communities and a range of stakeholders.
- Excellent oral communication skills and the ability to deliver high quality written reports.
- Excellent analytical and ability to solve problems.
- Good experience in contributing to high quality evaluation processes.

VI. REPORTING AND DISSEMINATION PLAN

VI.A. Evaluation Report

The report is expected to be written in English and Vietnamese, no longer than 25 pages (excluding appendices), and should be written and presented in standard form to enable CRS to share internally and externally. Report's outline will compose the following contents:

- A title page
- A list of acronyms and abbreviations

- A table of contents, including a list of annexes
- An executive summary
- An introduction describing the program’s background and context
- A description of the program, including the results framework or theory of change
- A statement of the purpose of the MTR
- Key evaluation questions or objectives and a statement of the scope of the MTR, with information on limitations and delimitations
- An overview of the MTR approach and methodology and data sources
- A description of the MTR findings
- Recommendations based on the MTR findings
- Lessons learned and good practices based on the MTR findings
- Appendices

VII. SCHEDULE AND LOGISTICS

The intended duration for the entire consultancy of the MTR is expected to run no more than total 37.5 days for all consultant’s team leader and member(s). The desk assessment and completion of MTR plan with clear methodology, sampling strategy, and tools should be completed and approved by CRS before deployment to collect field data.

The consultant team will be expected to present their interim findings following field data collection and final presentation at the end of MTR with related stakeholders. Key activities are including but not limited to the followings:

- Desk review of all related documents.
- Develop Detailed MTR Plan with clear methodology, sampling, and tools to submit to CRS before deployment.
- Conduct field data collection and report writing.
- Facilitate and present findings at the MTR reflection meeting.
- Finalize report, including final presentation of results at the end of the project and responding to CRS comments and revision.

The following support will be provided to the consultant by CRS:

- Related project documents including: Project Results Framework and Theory of Change, Project MEAL Plan; Project updated Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT); Project proposals and project agreements with implementing partners; CRS quarterly donor reports; Partner quarterly progress reports; Beneficiary Service Delivery Indicator reports; Light KAP survey report 2022; National and sectorial policies and documents related to EORE; Award Provisions and Standard Terms and Conditions of US Department of States; Donor Requirement Compliance Checklist
- Transport, accommodation, meals and other logistical considerations to be coordinated by CRS Vietnam or consultant (s) upon the agreement of two parties during consultant recruitment and contract signing.
- Interviews and meetings with project participants, DOETs at province, district BOETs level, schools (students, teachers, parents), CRS staff will be coordinated by CRS Vietnam in consultation with consultants.

- Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) in Quang Binh, Quang Tri and Quang Nam provinces Vietnam Mine Mine Action Centre (VNMAC)
- Timeline of the MTR is tentatively scheduled as below:

ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	ESTIMATED NUMBER OF DAYS NEEDED TO COMPLETE*	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
Desk review	Consultants	2 days	Feb 27, 2023
Design the MTR Plan with clear methodology, sampling strategy, tools	Consultants, in consultation with CRS UXO PM/ MEAL Manager	3 days	Mar 3, 2023
Data collection – 5 provinces (including TTCs, DOETs, BOETs, Schools, parents)	Consultants, POs, MEAL Officer	15 days (collect data within one week for 5 provinces)	Mar 20, 2023
Data collection - VNMAC & CRS	Consultant	0.5 day (Team leader)	Mar 21, 2023
Data analyzed and report writing	Consultants	10 days	Mar 31, 2023
Participatory partner reflection sessions	Consultants	2 days (Team Leader: 1 for preparation, 1 for facilitation)	Apr 25, 2023
Final report completed	Consultant	3 days	May 5, 2023
Total		35.5 days	

VIII. DELIVERABLES

Consultant(s) is expected to deliver the following deliverables during the contract period:

- i) Detailed Evaluation Plan and Methodology in English and Vietnamese. This should be included but not limited to:
 - Qualitative evaluation methods
 - Evaluation Schedule
 - Data Analysis methodology and framework, Method planning table (evaluation questions, methodologies, sources and tools, etc)
 - Interview or FGD guides for each stakeholder group
- ii) KII/FGD notes and expanded field notes as per CRS' template, and audio records
- iii) Data analysis matrix in Vietnamese

- iv) Facilitation plan and presentation for the reflection session in English and Vietnamese
- v) Midterm Review Report in English and Vietnamese, considering suggestions and changes recommended during the review/validation process

X. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The MTR team must ensure that the MTR adheres to ethical guidelines as outlined in the American Evaluation Association's (AEA) Guiding Principles for Evaluators. A summary of these guidelines is provided below:

1. Informed Consent (See Annex 2): All participants are expected to provide verbal informed consent following standard and pre-agreed consent protocols. For children respondents (under 18 years) in the qualitative assessment, written parental consent is required for each child participating.
2. Systematic Inquiry: Evaluators conduct systematic, data-based inquiries.
3. Competence: Evaluators provide competent performance to stakeholders.
4. Integrity/Honesty: Evaluators display honesty and integrity in their own behavior, and attempt to ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process.
5. Respect for People: Evaluators respect the security, dignity and self-worth of respondents, program participants, clients, and other evaluation stakeholders. It is expected that the evaluator will obtain the informed consent of participants to ensure that they can decide in a conscious, deliberate way whether they want to participate.
6. Responsibilities for General and Public Welfare: Evaluators articulate and take into account the diversity of general and public interests and values that may be related to the evaluation.
7. A link to a more detailed description of AEA's Guiding Principles for Evaluators can be found at: <http://comm.eval.org/eval/Go.aspx?c=ViewDocument&DocumentKey=ba879c95-f810-4c6b-bf50-524da31144c1>

XI. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Interested parties are requested to submit the proposal in English:

1. Technical proposal:

- Expression of Interest (1 page maximum)
- A concise technical proposal
- A tentative work plan
- CVs demonstrating relevant capacity and experience
- Minimum 2 references for similar assignment
- Example of previous similar work (weblink or PDF)

2. Financial proposal:

- Proposed consultant fee with a detailed breakdown of the daily rate in Vietnam dong and including PIT.
- Proposed travel costs

3. Method for submission:

Supporting documents should be duly signed, stamped, scanned and sent to this email address:
vn_rfp1@crs.org

Closing date for submission: **by 22 February 2023**