

MASG MEETING – GICHD WRITTEN UPDATE – 23 APRIL 2026

GICHD STUDY ON IEDs IN THE SAHEL

In April 2026, the GICHD published the study “Improvised Explosive Devices in the Sahel: Humanitarian Responses and Current Capacities”. The study seeks to highlight the severity of the impact of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in countries across the Sahel. It also considers the distinctions between mine action and counter-IED approaches in the regional context and the challenges faced by current response efforts. The study was conducted in cooperation with the national authorities of Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria.

The study highlights that, over the past five years, the Sahel region has experienced a sustained increase in the use of IEDs and a significant expansion of their geographical spread. Across the five years, IED-related casualties surpassed 5,000. Although security forces are the main target, civilians continue to account for a significant percentage of victims. In terms of current capacities, the study considers the existing international, regional and national frameworks that support IED response, as well as current activities and division of responsibilities. While conceptually distinct, mine action and security-driven counter-IED efforts coexist in most countries in the Sahel and are often operationally intertwined. Both approaches continue to be limited by the simultaneous expansion of the threat and a reduction in funding.

The study calls for continued regional cooperation in countering the threat posed by IEDs and an expansion of humanitarian IED response capacities, particularly risk education and victim assistance, focused on protection of civilians. It further highlights the areas of complementarity and the need for coordination between the two approaches in support of sustainable and enduring national capacities for counter-IED and mine action.

UKRAINE

In October 2025, the GICHD finalised Quality Management and Non-Technical Survey Training of Trainers programmes in Ukraine launched in 2022 resulting in certification of 40 trainers. Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, GICHD delivered 15 courses in Quality Management or Non-Technical Survey, with a total of 300 participants benefiting. Training packages for both thematics have been handed over to Ukraine’s authorities.

The GICHD continued refining and maintaining Ukraine’s Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA Core), accommodating the growing number of new actors. Since its introduction, IMSMA Core in Ukraine has grown from around 10 organisations and 40 users before 2022 to more than 140 organisations and over 1’000 users at the end of 2025.

Ukraine was highlighted as a key focus across several panels of the GICHD Innovation Conference held in Luxembourg on 28-30 October 2025, including those on mechanical assets and underwater demining from a technical perspective. Trials and testing conducted in Ukraine were repeatedly used as examples, underscoring Ukraine’s role as a primary environment for innovation being tested and piloted with the GICHD actively engaged in supporting these processes.

The GICHD launched its localization project aimed at strengthening the capacity of national certified mine action operators in Ukraine. The capacity gap assessment focusing on identifying barriers faced by Ukrainian

organizations in accessing funding, particularly related to organizational structure, governance, as well as business and grants management capacities was presented at a workshop in February in Kyiv. A number of capacity building initiatives are scheduled for the rest of 2026.

Finally, the GICHD co-organised the Ukraine Mine Action Partner Coordination Workshop on 20-21 April 2026 in Geneva. The workshop brought together 100+ representatives from Ukrainian government, donor partners, UN agencies and implementing partners. The event served as an opportunity for Ukraine to both demonstrate progress that has been made with significant international support already provided and to openly discuss ongoing challenges and obstacles. The intent was to brainstorm mitigation measures, match existing commitments to pressing needs and ultimately help ensure committed resources are able to flow more freely in line with Ukraine's national priorities. As had been the case at previous workshops, the organizers will aim to develop a short set of operative takeaways in real time.

GICHD'S SUPPORT TO 3RD REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE CONVENTION ON CLUSTER MUNITIONS

In January 2026, the GICHD and the CCM Presidency co-hosted a retreat of the CCM Coordination Committee, which was also attended by selected additional stakeholders (e.g. UN agencies, mine action operators). The retreat provided an initial opportunity to collect inputs for the preparation of the new Action Plan to be adopted at the Third Review Conference (the Vientiane Capital Action Plan – VCAP), and to facilitate technical exchange on how it can be translated into a clear, coherent and practical framework for implementation over the next five-year period. Discussions focused on the scope, structure and level of ambition of the Plan, with a view to ensuring consistency across thematic areas and alignment with existing implementation machinery.

The GICHD also authored a comparative analysis of the Vientiane (2010), Dubrovnik (2015) and Lausanne (2021) Action Plans, focusing on both structure and substance. The analysis, presented at the 23 January retreat and subsequently circulated to coordination committee members and other partners, aimed to inform the development of the Vientiane Capital Action Plan (VCAP) to be adopted at the Third Review Conference (Vientiane, 14–18 September 2026).

Upon request by the CCM Presidency, the Centre also coordinated the work of a Technical Group (TG) established to support the elaboration of the VCAP. Comprising representatives of 16 organizations with diverse expertise, the TG produced a Working Paper titled “Towards the Vientiane Capital Action Plan: Challenges, Priorities and Initial Suggestions”. The paper identifies issues for the next review cycle and proposes initial options for their reflection in the VCAP. It draws on implementation challenges and gaps identified over the past cycle, using the Lausanne Action Plan as a drafting baseline while not precluding departures from it. The paper was circulated to States Parties and other stakeholders on 8 April 2026 and is structured in two parts:

- Part I addresses structure and monitoring framework;
- Part II provides suggestions for each thematic area, including gender and diversity, based on the Review document, retreat discussions and TG analysis.

Finally, together with the CCM Presidency, the GICHD hosted a side event on the margins of the NDM-UN29 meeting, which will provide a structured platform for mine action operators, national authorities, and partners to reflect on the practical implementation of the Lausanne Action Plan, and identify challenges, lessons learned and priorities to inform the development of the VCAP. The side event took place on 22 April 2026.