

## REGIONAL CONSULTATIVE MEETING

Bali, Indonesia | 5 December 2022

# To Promote the Establishment of Regional Victim Assistance Network

under the project

Enhance Victim Assistance Programme in the ASEAN Member States



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) sincerely thanks the Government of the Republic of Korea for its instrumental support through the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF). This generous contribution has enabled the successful implementation of the “Enhance Victim Assistance Programme in the ASEAN Member States,” as well as the organization of this pivotal Regional Consultative Meeting. The commitment of AKCF in supporting the ASEAN region’s victim assistance efforts reflects Korea’s deep-rooted dedication to fostering peace, security, and sustainable development, and its enduring role as a key partner in humanitarian action.

ARMAC also expresses its heartfelt appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for hosting this meeting in Bali. Indonesia’s exceptional hospitality, facilitation, and logistical support were essential to the success of the event, and their active participation reflects the country’s strong commitment to addressing victim assistance challenges at both national and regional levels.

We gratefully acknowledge the active participation of ASEAN Member States, whose valuable insights, expertise, and continuous collaboration remain central to the success of the project. Their commitment to advancing victim assistance and addressing the needs of explosive ordnance survivors within their respective countries is an inspiration for the broader regional effort.

Our thanks also go to the regional and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations agencies like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and academic institutions for their participation in the meeting. Their technical input and field experience have provided essential guidance in shaping the future direction of victim assistance programs in ASEAN.

Lastly, we extend our deepest gratitude to the survivors of explosive ordnance, whose courage in sharing their personal stories has significantly impacted the discussions and outcomes of this meeting. Their firsthand experiences are a powerful reminder of the importance of ensuring that victim assistance remains at the heart of humanitarian work.

We also acknowledge the ongoing guidance and oversight of ARMAC’s Steering Committee, whose leadership is fundamental in steering the Victim Assistance Project and enhancing regional collaboration in mine action.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) organized a Regional Consultative Meeting on Promoting the Establishment of the Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN) on December 5, 2022, in Bali, Indonesia. This meeting was a pivotal part of the “Enhance Victim Assistance Programme in the ASEAN Member States”, which aims to strengthen support systems for victims of explosive ordnance (EO) across ASEAN. A central objective of the meeting was to validate and enhance the draft Terms of Reference (ToR) and communication mechanisms for the proposed Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN), a key initiative designed to provide a cohesive, coordinated platform for victim assistance across the region.

The meeting brought together representatives from all ten ASEAN Member States, as well as regional and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN agencies, including UNDP, and academic institutions. Participants engaged in constructive discussions on the outcomes of national consultative meetings held in five ERW-affected ASEAN countries. This collaboration allowed for valuable input into the structure, functions, and coordination mechanisms of the Regional VAN.

Key discussions centered around sharing national experiences in victim assistance, identifying challenges and gaps in current services, and proposing roles and responsibilities for the Regional VAN. Stakeholders actively contributed to refining the draft ToR, suggesting mechanisms for information sharing, resource mobilization, and advocacy for ERW victims. The meeting underscored the importance of a unified, integrated approach to victim assistance and emphasized the necessity of addressing both the immediate and long-term needs of victims across ASEAN.

Commitments were made by all participating stakeholders to continue their collaboration in the development and implementation of the Regional VAN. Inputs provided during the meeting were pivotal in finalizing the ToR and communication protocols for the network. These discussions not only laid a strong foundation for the Regional VAN, but also marked a critical step toward ensuring regional integration and sustainable victim assistance across ASEAN.

>>>



### Key Outcomes:

- **Enhanced understanding** of national victim assistance programs and challenges across ASEAN Member States.
- **Valuable input collected** for the refinement of the draft Terms of Reference for the Regional VAN.
- **Identified potential roles and functions** of the Regional VAN in knowledge sharing, coordination, and resource mobilization.
- **Strengthened collaboration** among ASEAN Member States and relevant stakeholders in the field of victim assistance.
- **Clearer direction** established for the next phase of the project, focusing on the finalization and operationalization of the Regional VAN.

The discussions and outcomes of this meeting represent a significant milestone in ASEAN's collective effort to enhance victim assistance and ensure that no one is left behind. The contributions made by ERW victims during the consultative meeting serve as a powerful reminder of the challenges faced by affected individuals and underscore the urgent need for a coordinated regional response. By providing a platform for the exchange of knowledge, resources, and best practices, the Regional VAN aims to bridge gaps in victim support and improve the overall quality of life for those affected by EO.

Looking ahead, the feedback and momentum generated by this meeting will be essential in shaping the future of victim assistance in ASEAN. The next steps involve finalizing the Regional VAN Blueprint and organizing further regional consultations to refine its structure and operational details. These steps will culminate in the launch of a fully operational Regional VAN, which will serve as a central platform for ASEAN Member States to collaborate, share resources, and provide effective assistance to those affected by explosive ordnance. This network will play a crucial role in coordinating efforts, mobilizing funding, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of victim assistance programs across the region.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	2
Executive Summary .....	3
1. Introduction .....	7
1.1 Project Overview	
1.2 Objectives of the Report	
1.3 Link to Broader Timeline	
2. Background .....	8
2.1 ERW/Mine Context in ASEAN	
2.2 Project Inception	
2.3 ARMAC's Mandate	
3. Meeting Overview .....	10
3.1 Objectives	
3.2 Date, Time, and Venue	
3.3 Format	
3.4 Opening Ceremony Summary	
4. Participants .....	12
4.1 Total Number of Participants	
4.2 Stakeholder Groups	
4.3 Geographic Representation	
4.4 Attendance Mode	
5. Technical and Thematic Discussions .....	13
5.1 Overview of National VA Programmes and Services	
5.2 Challenges and Gaps	
5.3 Survivor Testimonies	
5.4 Regional/Global Guidance	
6. Regional VAN Discussion .....	16
6.1 Rationale and Proposed Functions	
6.2 Group Discussions Summary	
6.3 Stakeholder Roles	
6.4 Coordination and Communication Mechanisms	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

7. Meeting Outcomes .....	19
7.1 National–Level Commitments	
7.2 Identified Challenges	
7.3 Action Points	
8. Good Practices and Successes .....	21
8.1 Positive Experiences	
8.2 Scalable Initiatives	
8.3 Partnerships and Innovation	
9. Lessons Learned .....	22
9.1 What Worked	
9.2 What to Improve	
9.3 Contextual Adjustments	
10. Recommendations .....	23
10.1 For National Stakeholders	
10.2 For ARMAC/Regional Actors	
10.3 For Technical and Funding Partners	
11. Way Forward .....	24
11.1 Immediate Next Steps	
11.2 Regional Consultations	
11.3 Timeline for Deliverables	
Conclusion .....	25



# 1. INTRODUCTION



## 1.1. Project Overview

The “Enhance Victim Assistance Programme in the ASEAN Member States”, commonly referred to as the Victim Assistance (VA) Project, was launched by the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) with financial support from the Government of the Republic of Korea through the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF). Commencing in January 2021, the project is scheduled to conclude in June 2025. Its primary objective is to strengthen victim assistance efforts within the ASEAN region for individuals affected by explosive remnants of war (ERW). The core focus of the project is the establishment of a Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN), which aims to create a collaborative platform for diverse stakeholders across ASEAN Member States (AMS) to enhance coordination, resource mobilization, and the sharing of best practices in victim assistance.

## 1.2. Objectives of the Report

This report captures the outcomes of the first Regional Consultative Meeting on Promoting the Establishment of a Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN), held on December 5, 2022, in Bali, Indonesia.

The primary aim of the meeting was to gather and consolidate regional inputs on the Terms of Reference (ToR) and communication mechanisms for the proposed Regional VAN. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the discussions, key outcomes, and action points from the meeting, which will guide the next steps in the development of the Regional VAN. These outcomes will be essential in refining the structure and function of the network and contribute to its eventual operationalization.

## 1.3. Link to Broader Timeline

The Regional Consultative Meeting represents a significant step in the broader timeline of the Victim Assistance Project. It followed a series of national consultative meetings held in Cambodia, Viet Nam, Thailand, and Myanmar earlier in the project implementation. The inputs gathered during these national consultations formed the basis for discussions at the regional level. The outcomes of this Regional Consultative Meeting will subsequently inform the development of the Regional VAN ToR, which will be further discussed at a planned regional workshop before being submitted to the ARMAC Steering Committee and related ASEAN stakeholders for final inputs and approval.



## 2. BACKGROUND



### 2.1 ERW/Mine Context in ASEAN

The ASEAN region faces a persistent and devastating challenge from explosive ordnance (EO), including landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), which continue to affect several ASEAN Member States (AMS) as a direct consequence of past conflicts. These remnants of war pose an ongoing threat to lives and livelihoods, inflicting casualties and leaving survivors with lifelong physical, psychological, and socio-economic burdens. The presence of EO in affected communities not only results in death and injury but also disrupts entire communities, preventing them from fully participating in social, economic, and developmental activities.

The impact is far-reaching—families are torn apart, communities are left without the workforce to rebuild, and entire regions remain economically stagnant due to the dangers posed by landmines and UXOs (unexploded ordnance). The economic cost of EO contamination is staggering, limiting agricultural activities, restricting access to essential resources like water and infrastructure, and hindering regional development.

Despite these overwhelming challenges, the provision of victim assistance remains critically underfunded and inadequately coordinated in many affected areas. The need for comprehensive and sustained victim assistance has never been more urgent. This assistance must go beyond immediate medical care to include long-term rehabilitation, psychosocial support, and socio-economic integration to enable survivors to rebuild their lives and contribute to the recovery of their communities.





As the region's humanitarian crisis persists, ARMAC's Victim Assistance Programme seeks to address these urgent gaps in support, ensuring that no one affected by EO is left behind in the struggle for recovery and development. Through regional collaboration, knowledge sharing, and resource mobilization, ARMAC aims to alleviate the profound suffering caused by EO and pave the way for a more inclusive and sustainable future across ASEAN.



## 2.2. Project Inception

The "Enhance Victim Assistance Programme in the ASEAN Member States" was developed in response to identified gaps in support for explosive ordnance (EO) victims across the ASEAN region. These gaps were highlighted during the Regional Workshop on "Enhancing Mine Action Knowledge and Promoting Future Platforms for Mine Action Knowledge Sharing for ASEAN Member States", hosted by ARMAC and relevant stakeholders in November 2018. The workshop identified several core areas of support needed in mine action, with specific emphasis on victim assistance. Consequently, the VA project emerged as a key focus of ARMAC's program to address these gaps and ensure more effective and comprehensive support for victims.



## 2.3. ARMAC's Mandate

The ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) was established in November 2012 by the ASEAN Leaders to serve as a center of excellence to encourage efforts to address explosive ordnance (EO) for interested ASEAN Member States (AMS) and to facilitate cooperation between interested AMS and relevant institutions. ARMAC's mandate includes the functions to: enhance awareness programs on the dangers of explosive remnants of war (ERW) among affected communities and to facilitate appropriate medical and rehabilitation assistance for victims of ERW, upon request from the affected ASEAN Member States (AMS). Additionally, ARMAC aims to assist interested AMS in research and knowledge sharing on the effects of ERW and efforts to address them. The Victim Assistance Project directly aligns with ARMAC's mandate to support ERW victims in the region.

## 3. MEETING OVERVIEW



### 3.1. Objectives

The Regional Consultative Meeting held in Bali on December 5, 2022, had the primary objectives of further collecting and synthesizing inputs at the regional level on the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN) and its communication mechanism. The meeting aimed to build upon the outcomes of the preceding national consultative meetings and to foster discussions among a broader range of regional and international stakeholders involved in victim assistance. Specifically, the objectives included sharing best practices and challenges in victim assistance implementation and discussing the establishment of the Regional VAN.

### 3.2. Date, Time and Venue

The Regional Consultative Meeting took place on **Monday, December 5, 2022**, at the **Grand Hyatt in Bali, Indonesia**. The meeting was a one-day intensive event designed to facilitate focused discussions and collaborative input generation.

### 3.3. Format

The meeting was conducted in a **hybrid format**, with in-person participation from representatives of ASEAN Member States and various stakeholder organizations present in Bali, and virtual participation from other relevant stakeholders who joined online. The agenda included opening remarks, presentations on national victim assistance programs and best practices, survivor testimonies, a presentation on the outputs of national consultations, and group discussion sessions focused on the draft Regional VAN ToR and its communication mechanism. The working language of the meeting was English.



### 3.4. Opening Ceremony Summary

The opening ceremony was marked by inspiring remarks from key dignitaries and representatives. Mr. Prum Suonpraseth, Executive Director of ARMAC, welcomed all participants, both in-person and online, emphasizing the significance of the meeting as a pivotal step towards the establishment of the Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN).



He expressed deep gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Korea for its generous support and acknowledged the vital contributions of the national focal points in hosting the preceding national meetings.



**H.E. Kwon Hee-seog, Ambassador of the Mission of the Republic of Korea to ASEAN**, congratulated ARMAC on organizing the meeting and expressed his pleasure with the progress made through the national consultations. He reaffirmed Korea's commitment to supporting mine action efforts across the region through the ASEAN-Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF), stressing that victim assistance plays a critical role in achieving long-term peace and reconciliation in affected communities.



**H.E. Yeap Samnang, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Cambodia to ASEAN**, warmly welcomed all attendees and conveyed special thanks to the Government of the Republic of Korea for their generous financial support. In his capacity as Chair of ASEAN, he highlighted ARMAC's role in fostering cooperation on socio-economic development issues and underscored the significant contribution of the Victim Assistance Project to the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint 2025. He officially declared the Regional Consultative Meeting open, urging participants to engage in active discussion and knowledge sharing.



Following the opening remarks, a group photo was taken to commemorate the occasion.



## 4. PARTICIPANTS



### 4.1 Total Number of Participants

A total of 38 representatives participated in the Regional Consultative Meeting, including three online participants. This diverse group of stakeholders brought together key actors from government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN agencies, and academic institutions, all of whom contributed their expertise and insights to the discussions.

### 4.2 Stakeholder Groups

The participants represented a diverse range of stakeholder groups involved in mine action and victim assistance in the ASEAN region, including:

- **ASEAN National Authorities:** Representatives from mine action centers, ministries of social welfare, and other relevant government agencies from the ten ASEAN Member States.
- **Regional/International NGOs:** Organizations actively involved in victim assistance, rehabilitation, and advocacy for mine/ERW victims, such as Humanity and Inclusion (HI).
- **UN Agencies:** Representatives from United Nations agencies, including the UNDP, contributing to mine action and victim support efforts.

- **Academic Institutions:** Experts and researchers from universities and research centers involved in mine action related studies and victim assistance programs.
- **ERW Survivors:** Individuals directly affected by explosive ordnance incidents, sharing their personal experiences and needs.

### 4.3 Geographic Representation

The meeting saw participation from **all ten ASEAN Member States:** Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Additionally, representatives from the Republic of Korea also participated, reflecting their role as the primary donor for the project.

### 4.4 Attendance Mode

The majority of participants attended the meeting **in-person** in Bali, allowing for direct interaction and networking. A smaller number of stakeholders participated **virtually**, ensuring broader inclusion and representation.

## 5. TECHNICAL AND THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS



### 5.1. Overview of National VA Programmes and Services

The meeting included case studies and presentations providing an overview of victim assistance programmes and services in several ERW-affected ASEAN countries.

- **Cambodia:** The Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) highlighted the national capacity and ownership in rehabilitation, noting the extensive mine/ERW contamination and the role of Physical Rehabilitation Centers (PRCs). Challenges include limited coordination, centralized data systems, and funding sustainability. The Cambodian Mine Action Center (CMAC) presented its activities on victim/survivor assistance, including mine clearance for safe land use, EO risk education, and emergency support for victims.
- **Lao PDR:** The National Regulatory Authority for UXO Action in Lao PDR (NRA) provided background on the extensive UXO contamination and its impact. They outlined main activities in victim assistance, achievements, challenges (including unmet needs and data management issues), and the national UXO Victim Assistance Work-Plan 2021-2025.
- **Myanmar:** The Department of Rehabilitation (DoR), Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, presented an overview of their rehabilitation functions, including mine risk education and victim assistance. They discussed approaches such as cash assistance and coordination with various organizations, as well as challenges in developing comprehensive programs.
- **Thailand:** The Thailand Mine Action Center (TMAC) provided background on Thailand's mine action efforts, including demining, risk education, victim assistance coordination, and advocacy. They outlined their progress in releasing mine-affected land and the VA schedule for 2023. The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEP) highlighted general disability data and efforts to support mine victims through service centers.
- **Viet Nam:** The Viet Nam Mine Action Center (VNMAC) presented the extent of ERW contamination and its socio-economic impacts. They outlined the support provided to mine victims, including medical care, rehabilitation, and socio-economic reintegration, as well as lessons learned and recommendations for cooperation. Quang Tri Mine Action Center (QTMAC) shared its overview and coordination mechanisms in one of the most contaminated provinces.





## 5.2. Challenges and Gaps

Presentations and discussions highlighted several common challenges and gaps in victim assistance across the region:

- **Limited financial and technical resources for comprehensive victim assistance programs.**
- **Gaps in coordination and collaboration among national stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and international organizations.**
- **Challenges in data collection, management, and information sharing related to ERW victims and available services.**
- **Insufficient provision of crucial support services, such as psychosocial support, vocational training, and economic empowerment opportunities for victims.**
- **Need for stronger linkages between physical rehabilitation services and broader healthcare and social welfare systems.**
- **Ensuring the sustainability of victim assistance efforts as donor support evolves.**
- **Addressing the specific needs of different victim groups, including women, children, and persons with disabilities.**
- **Strengthening national policies and frameworks to ensure comprehensive and rights-based victim assistance.**

## 5.3. Survivor Testimonies

The meeting featured deeply moving personal testimonies from survivors of explosive remnants of war (ERW) from Lao PDR (Mr. Cheuporvang), Thailand (Ms. Wiboonrat Chanchoo), Viet Nam (Ms. Nguyen Thi Nam), and Cambodia (Mr. Moeurn Sila). Their stories offered a stark and poignant reminder of the profound, life-altering effects of ERW incidents — physical injuries that left lifelong scars, psychological trauma that still haunts them, and the overwhelming socio-economic challenges they face daily, often with little support.

As they shared their personal journeys, the survivors spoke not only of the help they have received but also of the gaps that remain in victim assistance programs. Their voices resonated with a raw truth about the need for victim support to be truly inclusive, accessible, and attuned to the real, often invisible, challenges that they face. These testimonies are a powerful call to action — reminding us that victim assistance is not just a service, but a vital lifeline that can restore hope, dignity, and a sense of belonging to those who have been so profoundly affected by the remnants of war.





#### 5.4. Regional/Global Guidance

The discussions underscored the critical importance of aligning victim assistance efforts with regional and global standards and frameworks. A key reference in these discussions was the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) 13.10, which provides comprehensive guidance on an integrated approach to victim assistance. The principles outlined in IMAS, which prioritize the rights and needs of survivors, were emphasized as fundamental in the design and implementation of effective victim assistance programs.

Moreover, relevant international conventions and treaties, including the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), were acknowledged as essential frameworks that support the global and regional efforts to assist victims of explosive ordnance. These frameworks provide the necessary legal and policy foundation for ensuring that victim assistance programs are comprehensive, rights-based, and sustainable.



## 6. REGIONAL VAN DISCUSSION



### 6.1. Rationale and Proposed Functions

The creation of a **Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN)** is a direct response to the urgent need for unified, multi-sectoral efforts to provide meaningful, sustainable, and effective assistance to explosive remnants of war (ERW) victims across the ASEAN region. The Regional VAN is envisioned not just as a network, but as a critical, centralized platform that will integrate and elevate victim assistance across national borders, ensuring a coordinated and strategic response to one of the region's most pressing humanitarian challenges.



At the heart of this network is the commitment to facilitate the **sharing of knowledge, best practices, and resources**, while driving efforts to overcome the persistent gaps in victim assistance. The **Regional VAN** will serve as a powerful tool for amplifying the **voices of ERW victims** and ensuring that their needs are met with urgency and compassion.

#### Key proposed functions of the network include:

- **Advocating** for the continuous development and updating of national mine action standards on victim assistance to ensure relevance and effectiveness.
- **Facilitating the monitoring and transparent reporting** on the implementation of these national standards, as well as alignment with international conventions such as the APMBC and CRPD.
- **Establishing and promoting** a regional data-sharing hub, ensuring timely access to vital information on victim assistance services and victim data, thus optimizing the use of resources and responses.

- **Connecting and linking** ERW victims with key stakeholders, including mine action operators, service providers, and victim communities, fostering a sense of solidarity and support across borders.
- **Mapping and mobilizing** critical resources, ensuring that victim assistance programs are well-funded and equipped to meet the needs of affected individuals.
- **Championing the representation** of ERW victims, ensuring their voices are central in all discussions and decision-making processes.
- **Providing regular updates** on the progress of victim assistance (VA) implementation, highlighting successes, challenges, and policy shifts that could impact future efforts.

The Regional VAN is not just a framework, but a lifeline for victims, ensuring that no one is left behind in the collective effort to address the long-term impact of explosive ordnance in the ASEAN region.



## 6.2 Group Discussions Summary

Participants engaged in **group discussions** to provide feedback and inputs on the initial draft of the Regional VAN Terms of Reference (ToR) and its communication mechanism. Key areas of discussion included:

- **Law/rules/regulations/treaties/standards:** Identifying existing national frameworks related to victim assistance and persons with disabilities, and determining what revisions or new establishments are needed at the national level in accordance with IMAS 13.10 and an integrated VA approach.

- **Chair and Co-chair/s:** Exploring the roles of ARMAC and government/focal institutions in leading the VAN, and considering the need for secretariat support, including its potential roles and responsibilities.
- **Membership:** Defining the composition of the VAN, including representatives from mine-affected and non-mine-affected states, government agencies, NGOs, UN agencies, academic institutions, donors, and victim communities.
- **Roles & Responsibility:** Outlining the specific tasks and duties of the Regional VAN and its members in areas such as advocacy, information sharing, data management, medical care, rehabilitation, psychosocial support, and socio-economic inclusion.
- **Planning for VAN activity:** Discussing potential short-term, medium-term, and long-term activities for the VAN, including data reporting, needs assessments, guideline development, resource mobilization, and integration with mine risk education.
- **Coordination Mechanism:** Determining effective communication modes and platforms for the network, including the use of ARMAC's existing social media and other online tools, as well as the potential for hybrid meetings.
- **Potential Challenges:** Identifying possible obstacles to the implementation and sustainability of the Regional VAN, such as differing national data systems, budget constraints, and the need for human and technical resources.







### 6.3. Stakeholder Roles

The discussions emphasized the importance of clearly defined roles for various stakeholders within the Regional VAN. These include:

- **Governments of EO-affected countries:** Ensuring national frameworks for victim assistance, participating in knowledge sharing, and contributing to regional initiatives.
- **Governments of non-EO-affected countries:** Providing potential support through resource mobilization and sharing relevant expertise.
- **Non-governmental organizations (NGOs):** Contributing field experience, technical expertise, and advocacy efforts.
- **United Nations (UN) agencies:** Providing technical assistance, guidance on international standards, and support for capacity building.
- **Academic and research institutions:** Contributing evidence-based research and analysis to inform victim assistance strategies.
- **Donor states and relevant stakeholders:** Providing financial and technical support for the activities of the Regional VAN.
- **EO direct and indirect victims, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups:** Actively participating in the network to represent their needs and perspectives.
- **ARMAC:** Playing a central coordinating role in facilitating the establishment and ongoing functioning of the Regional VAN.



### 6.4. Coordination and Communication Mechanisms

The meeting addressed potential coordination and communication mechanisms for the Regional VAN. Proposed strategies included:

- **Utilizing ARMAC's existing social media platforms** and creating a dedicated space on its website for sharing relevant information, policies, research, and guidelines.
- Employing other **social media platforms, email, and messaging applications** for ongoing communication among network members.
- Organizing **working group or task force meetings** in a hybrid format to address specific topics as needed.
- Establishing clear **guidelines on the VAN's structure, management, and decision-making processes**.
- Developing mechanisms to **avoid duplication of efforts** in areas such as data collection and information sharing.
- Considering the need for a **secretariat role** to support the coordination and administrative functions of the VAN.

## 7. MEETING OUTCOMES



### 7.1. National-Level Commitments

The Regional Consultative Meeting served as a powerful catalyst, reinforcing the commitment of ASEAN Member States to prioritize and enhance victim assistance efforts across the region. Participants engaged actively throughout the discussions, offering valuable input to shape the Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN)'s Terms of Reference (ToR), signaling their willingness to collaborate and contribute to the network's overarching goals. By validating national experiences and learning from the successes and challenges faced by other affected countries, the meeting sparked further dedication to strengthening national victim assistance programs. The shared insights and mutual commitment underscored the critical importance of engaging with the Regional VAN as a platform for advancing comprehensive, long-term victim support.





## 7.2. Identified Challenges

Despite the positive momentum, the meeting also highlighted several persistent challenges that need to be addressed for effective victim assistance and the successful operationalization of the Regional VAN.

**These include:**

- **Financial Sustainability:** Ensuring the long-term financial viability of victim assistance programs and the Regional VAN itself remains a critical concern. A sustainable funding model must be established to ensure the continuity of efforts and the expansion of services.
- **Data Systems and Sharing:** Addressing the diverse and sometimes fragmented data systems across ASEAN countries is essential. Harmonizing data collection and analysis processes will enable efficient regional data sharing and better decision-making on victim assistance.
- **Implementation of Existing Frameworks:** Practical challenges persist in implementing laws, regulations, treaties, and standards related to victim assistance and the rights of persons with disabilities. Strengthening the capacity to enforce these frameworks at the national level is crucial for ensuring the effective delivery of victim support services.
- **Human Resources and Technical Support:** Adequate human resources, specialized technical expertise, and technological support are vital to the successful implementation of victim assistance programs. Addressing gaps in these areas will be key to the operational success of both national and regional initiatives.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Maintaining sustained engagement and active participation from all relevant stakeholders throughout the life of the Regional VAN is critical. Ensuring that stakeholders remain committed and involved will be essential for the long-term success and effectiveness of the network.

These challenges underscore the need for continued collaboration and proactive problem-solving as the Regional VAN progresses towards full operationalization. By addressing these barriers, ASEAN Member States can ensure that the network provides lasting, meaningful support to victims of explosive remnants of war across the region.

## 7.3. Action Points

The **Regional Consultative Meeting** resulted in several key action points that will guide the next steps in the development and establishment of the **Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN)**:

- **Sharing of Draft Documents:** ARMAC will circulate the draft Regional VAN Terms of Reference (ToR) and its communication mechanism to all meeting participants for their valuable input and feedback. This collaborative approach ensures that all perspectives are considered in shaping the network's structure.
- **Additional Feedback:** Participants will be asked to provide further comments and suggestions on the draft ToR to enhance the document and address any potential gaps or concerns.
- **Development of the First Draft:** Based on the feedback received, ARMAC will compile and produce a first draft of the Regional VAN ToR, ensuring that the document reflects the collective input of all stakeholders.
- **Regional Workshop Presentation:** The first draft of the Regional VAN ToR will be presented at the inaugural Regional Workshop, scheduled for 2023. This workshop will serve as a forum for further discussion, refinement, and validation of the document.
- **Finalization and Approval:** Following the workshop, the finalized draft ToR will be submitted to the ARMAC Steering Committee and relevant ASEAN stakeholders for their final input and formal approval, ensuring the document meets all necessary standards and expectations.
- **ARMAC's Ongoing Role:** ARMAC will continue to facilitate and coordinate the process of establishing and sustaining the Regional VAN, fulfilling its mandate to support regional cooperation and ensure effective victim assistance. ARMAC's leadership will be crucial in maintaining momentum and ensuring the long-term success of the Regional VAN.

These action points lay the foundation for moving forward with the Regional VAN's establishment, with a clear path toward finalizing its structure, securing stakeholder engagement, and ensuring that the network is ready to operate effectively across ASEAN.

## 8. GOOD PRACTICES AND SUCCESSES

### 8.1. Positive Experiences

The Regional Consultative Meeting itself stood out as a successful example of collaboration, bringing together a wide array of stakeholders from across ASEAN Member States, NGOs, UN agencies, and other sectors to focus on the vital issue of victim assistance. One of the most significant outcomes was the sharing of national consultation processes, which provided valuable insights into the unique approaches, challenges, and successes encountered by different countries in providing support to explosive remnants of war (ERW) victims. The interactive discussions fostered a collaborative environment, enabling participants to exchange ideas, identify best practices, and learn from each other's experiences. This open dialogue ensured that the meeting was not just a platform for knowledge sharing but also a stepping stone toward enhancing regional cooperation in victim assistance.



### 8.2. Scalable Initiatives

While specific scalable initiatives were not directly highlighted as a central theme of the meeting, several national programs provided valuable models that could be adapted and scaled across the region. For example, Cambodia's network of Physical Rehabilitation Centers (PRCs), supported by international organizations, offers a promising model for expanding physical rehabilitation services to countries with similar needs.

Vietnam's development of national rehabilitation guidelines stands as an excellent example of standardized and comprehensive care, which could be leveraged by other ASEAN Member States to improve their own rehabilitation services. Additionally, the emphasis on community-based support in various national programs suggests a scalable approach for victim reintegration, as it builds upon local capacities and fosters long-term sustainability.



### 8.3. Partnerships and Innovation

The meeting underscored the critical role that multi-sectoral collaboration plays in advancing victim assistance. The participation of government agencies, NGOs, UN agencies, academic institutions, and donors in the consultative process highlighted the value of partnerships in addressing the complex and diverse needs of ERW victims. The discussions also pointed to the potential of innovative, cost-effective tools for enhancing communication and coordination within the Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN). The idea of leveraging existing online platforms and social media for the Regional VAN's communication mechanism shows an interest in utilizing digital tools to connect stakeholders, share vital information, and increase accessibility, especially in remote or underserved areas. This innovation promises to facilitate a more efficient and responsive network.

## 9. LESSONS LEARNED

To reflect on the key lessons gathered from the Regional Consultative Meeting, providing an opportunity to evaluate the successes, areas for improvement, and contextual adjustments necessary to enhance the development and implementation of the Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN).

### 9.1. What Worked

The Regional Consultative Meeting highlighted several positive aspects that contributed to the effectiveness of the discussions and provided valuable insights. These aspects were key in shaping the outcomes of the meeting and setting the foundation for future regional collaborations.

- The **consolidated regional platform** provided an effective space for technical discussions and the exchange of diverse perspectives on victim assistance.
- The **building upon the outcomes of national consultative meetings** ensured that the regional discussions were grounded in national realities and priorities.
- The **active participation of a wide range of stakeholders**, including ERW survivors, enriched the discussions and ensured a more comprehensive understanding of victim needs.
- The **focused group discussion sessions** allowed for in-depth exploration of specific aspects of the Regional VAN ToR and communication mechanism.



### 9.2. What to Improve

While the meeting was successful in many areas, there are key areas for improvement that could strengthen the process in future consultations. These areas will help address gaps and ensure that the network is truly inclusive, efficient, and responsive to the needs of all stakeholders.

- **Future consultations could benefit from wider representation from grassroots victim support organizations and community-based initiatives, providing additional insights from the ground level.**
- **There is a need for clearer frameworks and indicators for measuring the impact and effectiveness of the Regional VAN. This will help ensure that progress can be tracked and outcomes evaluated.**
- **Exploring strategies for more robust data sharing while respecting national sensitivities and data protection regulations will be critical in fostering effective regional coordination and communication.**



### 9.3. Contextual Adjustments

The diverse national contexts within ASEAN necessitate a Regional VAN that is **flexible and adaptable** to different legal frameworks, socio-economic conditions, and victim assistance capacities. The ToR should allow for **context-specific implementation** of regional guidelines and initiatives at the national level. Recognizing the varying levels of ERW contamination and the maturity of national mine action programs is crucial for tailoring regional support and collaboration effectively.



## 10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcomes of the Regional Consultative Meeting and the discussions that took place, several actionable recommendations have been identified for various stakeholders. These recommendations aim to ensure the effective establishment and operationalization of the Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN) and improve victim assistance efforts across the ASEAN region.



### 10.1. For National Stakeholders

National stakeholders play a vital role in shaping the future of victim assistance efforts. The following actions are recommended to ensure that victim assistance is prioritized, comprehensive, and aligned with international standards:

- Actively engage in the finalization of the Regional VAN Terms of Reference (ToR) and communication protocols, ensuring that feedback is provided in a timely and comprehensive manner to reflect national realities and needs.
- Strengthen national coordination mechanisms for victim assistance, involving all relevant government agencies, NGOs, and representatives of victim communities to ensure collaborative and inclusive efforts.
- Prioritize the development and implementation of comprehensive national victim assistance programs that are aligned with international standards (such as IMAS 13.10) and cater to the diverse needs of ERW victims, ensuring they receive the support they require.
- Explore opportunities for data sharing and harmonization at the regional level. This will enable a better understanding of victim needs and improve service provision, making victim assistance more responsive and effective across the ASEAN region.

### 10.3. For Technical and Funding Partners

As the coordinating body for the Regional VAN, ARMAC and other regional actors must ensure that the network is established and maintained effectively. The following steps are recommended to support this effort:

- Lead the facilitation and finalization of the Regional VAN ToR in a timely, inclusive, and transparent manner, incorporating the valuable inputs received during the consultative meeting from national stakeholders and other participants.
- Develop a clear implementation plan for the Regional VAN, outlining key activities, timelines, and responsibilities to ensure smooth operationalization and continued engagement from all relevant stakeholders.
- Establish sustainable coordination and communication mechanisms for the Regional VAN, utilizing appropriate online and offline platforms to facilitate seamless information exchange and collaboration among ASEAN Member States and partners.
- Facilitate knowledge sharing and the exchange of best practices in victim assistance among ASEAN Member States through the Regional VAN, promoting cross-border learning and collaboration on victim assistance strategies.
- Explore opportunities for resource mobilization at both the regional and international levels to support the sustainability of victim assistance programs and the activities of the Regional VAN, ensuring long-term impact and progress.



## 11. WAY FORWARD



### 11.1 Immediate Next Steps

The immediate next steps will focus on refining the Terms of Reference (ToR) and communication mechanisms for the Regional VAN, incorporating the comprehensive feedback gathered from meeting participants. ARMAC will lead the effort to compile and integrate this input, resulting in a revised and improved ToR that is aligned with the collective goals and expectations of all stakeholders. This revised ToR will serve as a critical tool in ensuring that the Regional VAN is positioned to deliver tangible results and meet the needs of ERW victims across ASEAN.

### 11.2. Regional Consultations

Following the consultative meeting, the establishment of the Regional VAN will progress with a regional workshop scheduled for 2023. This workshop will serve as a crucial opportunity to engage all stakeholders in finalizing the ToR, aligning on the key operational elements, and securing broad consensus on the network's strategic direction. By refining the ToR and communication protocols, the workshop will

ensure that the Regional VAN is equipped to foster meaningful collaboration, strengthen victim assistance programs, and mobilize resources for effective implementation.

### 11.3. Timeline for Deliverables

The finalized Regional VAN ToR and communication protocols will be submitted for approval to the ARMAC Steering Committee and relevant ASEAN stakeholders. The approval of these documents will mark the formal launch of the Regional VAN, signaling the beginning of its full operationalization. This will represent a transformative step towards improving victim assistance efforts in the ASEAN region, enhancing coordination, resource mobilization, and ensuring that ERW victims receive the support they need. The Regional VAN will become a central mechanism for integrating victim assistance at a regional level, with measurable outcomes in the areas of support, outreach, and long-term recovery for affected individuals and communities.



## CONCLUSION



The Regional Consultative Meeting on Promoting the Establishment of the Regional Victim Assistance Network in Bali, Indonesia, stands as a pivotal moment in ASEAN's collective efforts to enhance support for victims of explosive remnants of war (ERW). This meeting was instrumental in catalyzing a regional dialogue, fostering collaboration among key stakeholders, and laying the groundwork for the creation of a robust and sustainable Regional Victim Assistance Network (VAN).

By bringing together government agencies, international organizations, UN agencies, NGOs, and most importantly, ERW survivors, the meeting facilitated a meaningful exchange of experiences, best practices, and the identification of persistent challenges in victim assistance. This collective effort will significantly contribute to shaping a coordinated framework for providing more efficient, comprehensive, and sustainable support to victims across ASEAN. The consensus reached on the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Regional VAN, coupled with the strategic guidance provided by stakeholders, demonstrates a unified commitment to tackling the humanitarian impact of ERW and advancing victim assistance initiatives.

The continued engagement and support expressed by all participants underscore the long-term commitment to operationalizing the Regional VAN, which will serve as a central platform for regional cooperation, knowledge-sharing, and resource mobilization. The outcome of this meeting reinforces the importance of cross-sector collaboration, ensuring that victim assistance programs are not only effective but also efficient, maximizing impact with the available resources. The Regional VAN is poised to deliver tangible results for ERW victims, creating a more integrated and responsive support system that can be scaled and sustained over time.

The successful outcomes of this meeting provide a strong foundation for future progress, with clear next steps for finalizing and implementing the Regional VAN. As this initiative moves forward, the commitment to value for money is central, ensuring that every investment in the Regional VAN contributes to real-world improvements in the lives of ERW survivors and their communities across the ASEAN region.

This initiative is implemented by the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC), under the Enhance Victim Assistance Programme in ASEAN Member States, with the generous support of the ASEAN–Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF).

## ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC)



**Copyright © 2025**

ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC)  
All rights reserved.

**ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC)**

#29, Street 115, Sangkat Veal Vong, Khan 7 Makara,  
Phnom Penh 120307, Cambodia

Telephone: +855 23 221 354

Email: [secretariat@aseanmineaction.org](mailto:secretariat@aseanmineaction.org)

Website: <https://aseanmineaction.org>

This document is available in PDF format on the ARMAC website.

**Disclaimer:**

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ASEAN–Korea Cooperation Fund (AKCF), ARMAC, or the ASEAN Member States