

8-2008

Assessment of the Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (MACA)

Ted Patterson

Faiz Paktian

William Fryer

Follow this and additional works at: <http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-globalcwd>



Part of the [Defense and Security Studies Commons](#), [Peace and Conflict Studies Commons](#), [Public Policy Commons](#), and the [Social Policy Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Patterson, Ted; Paktian, Faiz; and Fryer, William, "Assessment of the Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (MACA)" (2008). *Global CWD Repository*. 62.

<http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-globalcwd/62>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Global CWD Repository by an authorized administrator of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact dc_admin@jmu.edu.

ASSESSMENT OF THE MINE ACTION CENTRE FOR AFGHANISTAN (MACA)

Ted Paterson, Faiz Paktian, and William Fryer | Geneva | August 2008

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) strives for a world free of anti-personnel mines and from the threat of other landmines and explosive remnants of war, and where the suffering and concerns of populations living in affected areas are addressed. The Centre is active in research, provides operational assistance and supports the implementation of the Anti - Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

Assessment of UNMACA, GICHD, Geneva, August 2008

This project has been managed by Ted Paterson, Head, Policy Research & Evaluation, GICHD, t.paterson@gichd.org

© Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. The designation employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the GICHD concerning the legal status of any country, territory or armed groups, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Acknowledgements

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining would like to thank William Fryer, University of York for his contributions to this report.

Disclosures

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining is responsible for the development, enhancement and support of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), which is the principal information system used by the Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan. This assessment did not focus on IMSMA.

From 1990-97 Faiz Paktian worked for the Mine Clearance Planning Agency, one of the major Afghan NGOs working within the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan, including a two-year contract from UNOCHA from 1995-96 as operations officer for MACA, based in Kabul. Mr Paktian has since worked over ten years for UNDP and GICHD.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
Centre International de Déminage Humanitaire | Genève

7 bis, av. de la Paix | P.O. Box 1300 | 1211 Geneva 1 | Switzerland | t. + 41 (0)22 906 16 60
f. + 41 (0)22 906 16 90 | info@gichd.org | www.gichd.org

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	i
Background	i
Recent developments	ii
Conclusions and Recommendations	iii
Introduction	1
Background	1
Terms of reference	1
Methodology	1
Report layout	2
1. Background	3
Conflict and Political Development in Afghanistan	3
Key features of the history, society, and economy	3
History of Conflict	3
Development strategy, planning and programming	4
Evolution of a Development Compact & Strategy	4
Aid Management	5
Nature, Extent, and Impact of Explosives Contamination	6
History of the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan	8
Tentative beginnings: 1988-90	8
Establishment & Expansion: 1990-96	9
Relocating to Afghanistan: 1996-2002	9
MAPA in the post-Taliban Period	10
Benefits from Mine Action	11
Evidence of MAPA’s Socio-economic Benefits	11
2. Current Status of Mine Action	13
The Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (MACA)	13
The Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA)	15
Operations Reforms	17
‘Full service’ demining NGOs	17
Enhanced survey process	17
Land Impact Assessment Teams (LIAT)	17
Polygon survey	18
Demining reforms	18
One-man drill	18
Smaller teams	19
Integrated demining	19
Revised criteria for setting priorities	20
Regionalisation of operators	21
New business model	21

Government Agencies Involved in Mine Action	22
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)	22
Department for Mine Clearance (DMC)	22
Ministry of Education (MoE)	23
Ministry of Public Health	23
Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled	24
Donor Support and Coordination for Mine Action	24
3. Analysis of Key Issues	26
The MACA and MAPA	26
Potential impact of operations reforms	26
Nationalisation & National Ownership	26
National organs	27
Operators	28
Demining	28
MRE	29
Victim Assistance	29
Donor Coordination	29
Coordination among agencies supporting mine action	29
Coherence of CIDA's proposed investment with other donor strategies	30
Coherence vis-à-vis exit strategy and handover of responsibilities to the GoA	30
Mainstreaming Mine Action	30
MACA support to the overall development and reconstruction process	30
GoA political will and responsiveness to mainstream demining components	30
Integrating mine action plans with national development goals	31
MACA capacity to mainstream across development programs	31
Monitoring and Evaluation	32
Capacity for pre- and post-clearance assessment	32
Capacity for M & E of progress toward development results	32
Monitoring and evaluation of gender results	33
Monitoring and evaluation of the new 'business model'	33
4 Conclusions and Recommendations	35
Principal conclusions	35
The way forward	35
Documents Consulted	38
General	38
MACA & UNOPS Documents	38
Government of Afghanistan Documents	39
GoA & International Community Documents	40
Acronyms	41
APPENDIX I – Terms of Reference	i
BACKGROUND	i
Donor coordination	iii

Nationalization	iii
Mainstreaming of components of mine action	iii
Monitoring and Evaluation	iii
Appendix 2 – Itinerary & Meetings	v
Appendix 3 – Enhanced Survey Process	vii

List of Figures

Figure 1 – Consultative Group Structure 2006-mid 2008	6
Figure 2 – Landmine contamination by year implanted	7
Figure 3 – the evolving contamination picture: area of SHA awaiting demining	8
Figure 4 – Donations to MAPA 1989-2001	10
Figure 5 – Estimated distribution of benefits from demining	12
Figure 6 – MACA organigram	13
Figure 7 – Contributions to MAPA since 2002	15
Figure 8 – Estimated MAPA expenditures since 2002	15
Figure 9 – Landmine clearance achievements (quarterly averages for year)	16
Figure 10 – Landmines destroyed per km ² cleared	16
Figure 11 – Polygon survey	18
Figure 12 – Integrated technical survey, clearance, and risk assessment	20
Figure 13 – Funding to MAPA organisations	25
Figure 21 – Traditional survey & clearance process	vii
Figure 22 – Enhanced survey & clearance process (current)	viii
Figure 23 – Enhanced survey & clearance process (planned)	ix

List of Tables

Table 1 – Afghan Compact/ANDS Targets for Mine Action	5
Table 2 – New aid coordination mechanisms	6
Table 3 – Summary of LIAT findings for 2007	32

List of Textboxes

Textbox 1 – MACA Transitions Unit	14
Textbox 2 – Critical organs for national ownership	28

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Afghanistan is one of the countries most heavily impacted by landmines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW). It also has the world’s oldest and largest mine action programmes, which was established in 1989 and currently comprises over 20 organisations employing over 8,000 people. The Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA) has managed to function – and with significant success – throughout the ebbs and flows of almost continuous conflict and despite the many regime changes. MAPA organisations include the some of the largest demining operators in the world, which have achieved many world ‘firsts’ in the mine action field.¹

The United Nations has played a central role in mine action since the inception of the MAPA. The bulk of international funding for mine action has been channelled via the UN, with the UN Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (MACA) serving as the principal mechanism for programme planning and coordination. Following the removal of the Taliban government by the U.S.-led coalition in late 2001, the Afghan Transitional Authority requested the UN assume responsibility for mine action on behalf of national authorities. With this endorsement, the MACA re-located its headquarters from Islamabad to Kabul and (along with the MAPA operators) made important contributions in support of the initial wave of reconstruction projects.

Since 2003 at least, the MACA has been discussing the eventual transition of the MAPA to national responsibility. However, despite achievements in promoting national ownership of Mine Risk Education (MRE) and assistance to landmine survivors (normally termed ‘Victim Assistance’ – VA),² little concrete progress has been made in getting the GoA to assume responsibility for the overall mine action programme, or for demining in particular. Thus, there appears to be a consensus that the UN-MACA will continue to discharge the central planning and coordination functions until 2013 (the period covered by the Afghan National Development Strategy – ANDS) although there is no formal agreement to this effect between the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) and the UN.³ Over this period, the programme is to achieve the following targets,⁴ leaving Afghan authorities responsibility for the residual contamination problem:

Target	Indicator & status	Comments
All stockpiled anti-personnel mines will be located and destroyed by 20 March 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In October 2007, the GoA announced the achievement of the Ottawa Treaty obligation to destroy all known stockpiles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 480,000 anti-personnel landmines have been destroyed. Some stockpiles may not have been located

¹ In addition to what many believe to be the first successful civilian demining programme started by Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC), MAPA organisations conducted the first large socio-economic impact survey of mine action and implemented the first Landmine Impact Survey.

² In mid-2007, the UN signed MOUs concerning MRE and VA with the ministries of Education (MoE); Public Health (MoPH), and Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled (MoLSAMD), and with the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS).

³ For example, the ANDS refers to “the 2013 MAPA transition deadline” (p. 55)

⁴ These were initially established in the Afghan Compact, adopted in early 2006, and the ANDS: 2008-2013 has incorporated and expanded on the demining targets.

Target	Indicator & status	Comments
The area contaminated by mines and unexploded ordnance will be reduced by 70% by the end of 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Square meters of land released as safe. • The baseline is 720 million m² of suspected hazardous areas (SHA), implying: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 540 million m² need to be released by the end of 2010 ○ 648 million m² by the end of 2012 ○ 720 million m² by 1 March 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target relative to the baseline, however... • New SHA continue to be discovered.
Clear 90% of all known SHA by 1391 (2012)		
Clear all emplaced anti-personnel mines by 1391 (1 March 2013) as per the Ottawa Convention.		

Donor countries recognise that, to achieve these targets, the MAPA will remain dependant on international grants for the medium-term. International funding for mine action has averaged perhaps \$60 million per year since 2002 and, in recent months, Canada and a number of other countries have renewed or even increased their funding commitments. MACA now talks in terms of an \$85 million per year programme to achieve the targets set in the Afghan Compact and the ANDS: 2008-2013.

Recent developments

In mid-2007, the UN reorganised the MACA and recruited a new senior management team. Notably, the Programme Director is an Afghan national. He immediately sought to clarify which agency is to be the lead role in government for mine action and, presumably, assume responsibility for the national mine action programme in 2013. As a result, a national mine action symposium (government; UN; donors; MAPA partners) convened in December 2007. It became clear at the symposium that the proposed solution envisaged in the draft mine action legislation prepared by MACA (a semi-autonomous agency reporting to the Office of the President) did not command the support of some key ministries and, hence, of the GoA. Following this, an inter-ministerial body met in January 2008 and determined that the existing Department for Mine Clearance (DMC) would serve as the government focal point for mine action.

While this decision does not appear to represent a definitive position of the Government,⁵ it does provide an opportunity to initiate a process of building national capacity for the coordination of demining and mine action overall. The DMC collocated with MACA in May 2008, which will facilitate coordination between them and give MACA the opportunity to assess the capacity and commitment of DMC personnel.

MACA has also instituted a number of reforms to demining operations (survey and clearance) which, taken together, could significantly enhance the cost effectiveness of the programme, making it more likely that the performance targets set for mine clearance will be reached.

MACA has also revised the set of criteria for setting demining priorities, and established survey teams to make pre- and post-clearance assessments of demining tasks. Still, it lacks the capacity to accurately gauge the development benefits arising from mine action, and who receives the benefits (men-women; income group; etc.). This is a complex task, and will likely require a partnership with an organisation that has the capacity to conduct vulnerability or sustainable

⁵ The inter-ministerial body is an *ad hoc* mechanism, not formally appointed by the President or Cabinet.

livelihoods surveys of mine-affected communities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

MACA and MAPA more generally have great capacities and make substantial contributions to peace-building, reconstruction, and poverty reduction, although it is difficult to quantify these contributions. Current MACA managers are experienced and capable, and have initiated worthwhile reforms. However, they lack a formal strategy and medium-term plan to ensure: (i) the GoA and donors endorse the objectives and direction of the programme, and (ii) the reforms are locked-in when management team members depart.

Some progress has been made in (i) bringing Afghan nationals into decision-making positions within MACA and (ii) promoting national ownership (particularly for MRE and VA). Recently, an *ad hoc* inter-ministerial body provided some clarification concerning the agency to serve as the government focal point for mine action. However, the Department for Mine Clearance (DMC) presently has modest capability and unknown commitment.

The UN has a responsibility to transition and exit (envisaged for 2013). Conversely, the GoA has the responsibility to develop the capacity of its national mine action organs (DMC but eventually a national authority as well). The UN can only successfully support capacity development if the GoA is committed both to (i) assume national ownership and (ii) actually deliver the required mine action services.

What is needed at this juncture is clear: first, a strategy from MACA that would clarify its vision for the future and provide the basis for policy dialogue with both the Government and the supporting donors. The intended outcome of the MACA strategy and the policy dialogue would be a well conceived Government strategy for the national mine action programme. CIDA could play an important role in this process.

Specific recommendations are:

1. MACA should assess whether DMC personnel have the basic skills and commitment for a successful capacity development process. At minimum, these pre-conditions for success are (i) adequately educated and experienced personnel and (ii) a champion for change in the senior management ranks of DMC. If these pre-conditions are not in place, the UN should not waste time and money on capacity development support until changes are agreed.
2. MACA should formulate a strategy and multi-year plan for itself and the MAPA, covering:
 - what it will do (e.g. continue operations reforms to achieve clearance targets)
 - how it will:
 - support the GoA in formulating a government strategy for assuming national ownership of the mine action programme
 - support the GoA to implement its strategy once it is in place
 - assess progress towards its goals and objectives (i.e. a monitoring and evaluation framework, plus a tentative schedule for evaluations)
 - the pre-conditions required of ANDMA and, more generally, the GoA before launching a concerted programme of support to the capacity development efforts of DMC and a future national mine action authority

3. Accordingly, the GoA should formulate its strategy for mine action and the assumption of national ownership. This should be based on:
 - a forecast of the likely residual problem in 2013 (i.e. a needs analysis)
 - decisions concerning the capacities (policy; regulation/coordination; operations/service delivery) required to address this residual problem
 - plans for key national organs (national authority; MAC)
4. Donors should encourage the MACA and the GoA to join in a forum for:
 - policy dialogue, to:
 - encourage and support the GoA to formulate its national strategy for mine action
 - encourage MACA to formulate 'whole of government' policies regarding explosives contamination
 - joint monitoring of progress on both the MACA strategy and, eventually, the GoA national mine action strategy
 - commissioning periodic joint evaluations of MACA, MAPA, and GoA progress in developing its capacity and commitment for assuming ownership of the national mine action programme.

This forum should normally meet every six months, although more frequent meetings should take place until the GoA formulates its national mine action strategy and following any joint evaluations. MACA should provide the secretariat services, and the presence of representatives from UNMAS and, perhaps, UNOPS would be expected.

5. CIDA should consider bolstering its own capacity to resume its role as the donor focal point for mine action within the CG mechanism.
6. MACA should consider strengthening its capacities for monitoring and evaluation of demining by introducing a sustainable livelihoods approach in conjunction with, initially, MCPA and in partnership with the Afghan Institute for Rural Development (AIRD – part of MRRD). Secondary objectives of this effort would be capacity development for LIAT teams plus the introduction of Afghan sustainable livelihoods and rural development specialists to the field of mine action.
7. CIDA and other donors should consider a separate project to strengthen the Afghan demining NGOs, which have great capacity to contribute in other sectors (community development; rural development; vocational training), subject to the following:
 - one or more of the Afghan NGOs need to request such assistance
 - the project should not be implemented by MACA or the UN

INTRODUCTION

Background

This is a report of a mission to Afghanistan undertaken by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD or the Centre) from 16 May – 5 June 2008. The original rationale of the mission was to review the mine action sector and the projects funded by the European Commission (EC), as part of the broader evaluation of EC-funded mine action projects in the Caucuses-Central Asia. Discussions between the GICHD and the Afghanistan Task Force (ATF) of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) led to a request that the Centre also provide a report to CIDA on its assessment of the UN Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (MACA).

Terms of reference

The main purposes of this report are to (i) advise CIDA/ATF on what it should expect from the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS)⁶ in terms of reporting on development results, and (ii) assess feasible timelines and approaches for the transfer of UN responsibilities for mine action in Afghanistan to national organs, capable of addressing the country's future problems stemming from explosives contamination.⁷ The specific objectives of the assessment relate to:

1. Donor coordination, particularly as this relates to the UNMAS/MACA exit strategy and the emergence of national ownership;
2. Nationalisation, particularly with respect to the transition to full national ownership;
3. Mainstreaming components of mine action in support of reconstruction and development;
4. MACA capacity for monitoring and evaluation of development results, including gender.

The complete Terms of Reference are attached as Appendix 1.

Methodology

The mission began with a two-person team, comprising:

- Ted Paterson, Head of Policy Research & Evaluation, GICHD
- William Fryer, an independent consultant with a background in demining, who is currently completing a masters degree in Post-Conflict Reconstruction at the University of York

After the first week, they were joined by Faiz Paktian, an Afghan national with extensive experience in UN mine action programmes, who now is Head of the International Mine Action

⁶ UNMAS (part of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations – DPKO) is the lead UN agency for mine action, and assumes responsibility for UN mine action operations when (i) there are international peacekeeping or UN-mandated security forces present, or (ii) when there is no national government in place, or the government requests the UN to assume temporary responsibility for mine action. UNMAS projects are implemented by the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

⁷ Explosives contamination comprises landmines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW). In turn, ERW includes unexploded ordnance (UXO) and abandoned ordnance (AXO).

Standards (IMAS) unit at GICHD.

The team conducted a review of background documents and, during its mission, met with numerous people in Afghanistan representing:

- CIDA and other donor agencies (EC, Germany, Japan)
- MACA/UN agencies (UNMAS, UNOPS, UNDP, UNAMA)
- Demining operators (Afghan and international NGOs; international firms)
- Government officials

Two members of the team undertook a three-day visit to Bamyán – site of a large demining effort in support of the broader reconstruction programme in that province – where they met the Governor, other government officials, representatives from the Area Mine Action Centre (AMAC) and the demining operator in the province, plus the New Zealand Provincial Reconstruction Team.

The GICHD submitted a draft report at the end of June 2008. This report reflects comments on the draft received from CIDA.

Report layout

The report is organised as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides a background on Afghanistan, the nature and extent of its explosives contamination problem, and a brief history of the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA).
- Chapter 2 outlines the current status of the MAPA, the MACA, Government of Afghanistan (GoA) units involved in mine action, and government-donor coordination mechanisms for mine action.
- Chapter 3 provides the assessment team's analysis vis-à-vis MACA and MAPA more broadly, donor coordination, nationalisation, mainstreaming, and monitoring and evaluation.
- Chapter 4 provides our principal conclusions and recommendations.
- Appendices provide the ToR for the assessment, the itinerary and list of people met, and the list of documents consulted.

1. BACKGROUND

CONFLICT AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

KEY FEATURES OF THE HISTORY, SOCIETY, AND ECONOMY

At 647,500 km² (about 50% larger than Iraq), Afghanistan is a mountainous and ethnically diverse country. While estimates vary widely, the largest ethnic group among the estimated 28 million people is Pashtun (somewhere between 40 and 54%), followed in size by Tajik (30%+), Hazara (8 to 15%), and Uzbek. The country's borders cut through the traditional homelands of many ethnic groups, leaving Pashtun divided between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the Tajik and Uzbek Afghans split from those in the Central Asian republics.

Efforts by successive national governments to exert effective authority over the country's isolated and diverse regions has remained a recurrent theme in Afghanistan's political economy to this day. The difficulties experienced by central governments have been magnified by interference from neighbouring countries, often facilitated by the cross-border ethnic and religious affiliations, which also bolster informal trade (i.e. smuggling), which further reinforces the split between the central government and the regions.

Starting with the Soviet incursion in 1979, Afghanistan became a central theatre in the Cold War. The conflict has taken its toll in the form of repeated and massive migrations of people plus the growth of war economies (particularly, opium), which provide revenues and regional-ethnic powerbases for insurgents and numerous warlords (or, more politely, "commanders").

HISTORY OF CONFLICT

The 1979 Soviet invasion led governments in Muslim and Western countries to channel arms and money to support the anti-communist forces, igniting a civil war. This displaced millions of Afghans to Iran and Pakistan, which then provided bases for *mujahideen* factions. Fierce resistance wore down the Soviet forces, who exited following the 1988 Geneva Accords.

Unfortunately, there was little acceptance of the Geneva Accords among the *mujahideen* and the civil war continued. The pro-Soviet regime survived until 1992, abetted by the disunity of *mujahideen* factions. While a government of sorts was formed in Kabul, it remained under constant attack by other factions, reducing much of the capital to ruins.

The stalemate only ended with the sudden emergence of the Taliban movement. In late 1994 the Taliban took Kandahar, followed by Herat in 1995 and Kabul in 1997. Some of the anti-Taliban forces united under the Northern Alliance, retaining control of about 20% of the country. The conflict between the Northern Alliance and the Taliban continued until late 2001, when the US-led coalition threw its weight behind the former. By December 2001, Northern Alliance forces had captured Kabul and most major centres, and the Afghanistan Interim Authority was installed.

However, the Taliban were not destroyed. Initially, much of the effort to eliminate the Taliban was left in the hands of regional warlord/"commanders" financed by the US-led coalition. This proved unsuccessful, forcing Canada and other NATO members to commit additional troops. However, the Taliban has re-assumed de facto control over large areas of Afghanistan. Because of this, enhanced security is the central issue in Afghanistan. It is far and away the principal

concern of most Afghans and a pre-condition for revitalising the legitimate economy and for the government to establish even a minimal degree of credibility. Evidence suggests that, initially, this task was botched and security for most Afghans worsened.

Progress on the security/peace-building agenda requires wholesale reform of the country's security sector. A national army and police force have been established, but much more needs to be done to train and equip these forces. As well, multiple militias must be demobilised and excess arms and munitions destroyed.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY, PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING

EVOLUTION OF A DEVELOPMENT COMPACT & STRATEGY

The political, economic and social development of Afghanistan represents an enormous challenge for both the GoA and the international community. The latter is insufficiently equipped, coordinated, and coherent⁸ to tackle such a complex task, and success ultimately depends on the emergence of a reasonably capable and committed national government. The transition from dependency on international actors to national ownership is fraught with problems due to real differences in strategic approach that inevitably will emerge, plus the fact that the state apparatus has limited capacity to plan and implement a multi-dimensional development effort.

GoA efforts to formulate its own development agenda and, ultimately, to assume 'the driver's seat', have been halting.⁹ A breakthrough of sorts was achieved at the London Conference in early 2006, where the Afghan Compact was agreed between the GoA and the international community. This set-out three 'pillars of activity' (1. security; 2. governance, rule of law, and human rights; and 3. economic and social development) each with a variety of targets, along with nine principals to guide implementation. The GoA also committed to "provide a prioritised and detailed Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) with indicators for monitoring results". (p. 13)¹⁰

The ANDS¹¹ was completed and approved by President Karzai in April 2008, and presented to the International Conference in Support of Afghanistan held in Paris on 12 June (just after the end of our mission to Afghanistan). Its broadest goals are to:

- Achieve nationwide stabilization, strengthen law enforcement, and improve personal security for every Afghan
- Strengthen democratic practice and institutions, human rights, the rule of law, delivery of public services, and government accountability
- Reduce poverty, ensure sustainable development through a private sector-led market economy, improve human development indicators, and make significant progress toward achieving the MDGs

⁸ 'Coherence' usually refers to how well the 3Ds – the defence, diplomacy, and development arms of each government – work together on a complex problem.

⁹ Milestones were the National Development Framework (April 2002), *Securing Afghanistan's Future* (January 2004), and the *Interim-Afghanistan National Development Strategy* (I-ANDS in January 2006).

¹⁰ The Government presented an Interim ANDS at the London Conference.

¹¹ The ANDS also serves as Afghanistan's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, and was presented to the joint boards of the IMF and World Bank in May 2008.

Mine action falls into the Security pillar. The mine action targets are shown below:

Table 1 – Afghan Compact/ANDS Targets for Mine Action

Target	Indicator & status	Comments
All stockpiled anti-personnel mines will be located and destroyed by 20 March 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In October 2007, the GoA announced the achievement of the Ottawa Treaty obligation to destroy all known stockpiles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 480,000 anti-personnel landmines have been destroyed. Some stockpiles may not have been located
The area contaminated by mines and unexploded ordnance will be reduced by 70% by the end of 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Square meters of land released as safe. The baseline is 720 million m² of suspected hazardous areas (SHA), implying: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 540 million m² need to be released by the end of 2010 648 million m² by the end of 2012 720 million m² by 1 March 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target relative to the baseline, however... New SHA continue to be discovered.
Clear 90% of all known SHA by 1391 (2012)		
Clear all emplaced anti-personnel mines by 1391 (1 March 2013) as per the Ottawa Convention.		

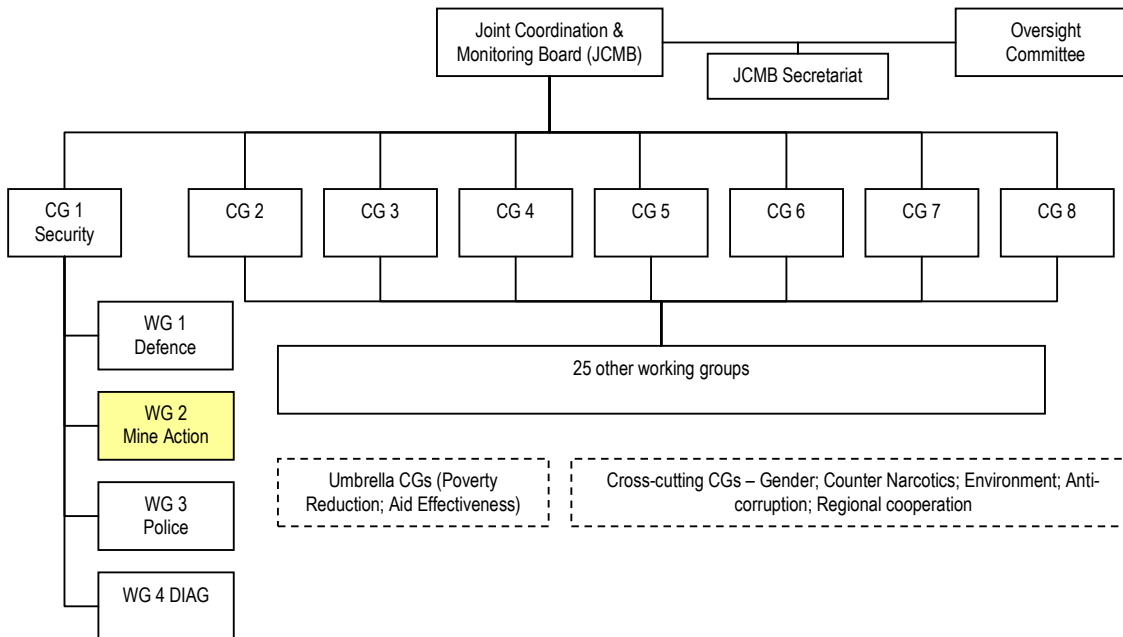
As well, the ANDS notes that “A capacity to remove mines and ERWs beyond the 2013 MAPA transition deadline probably will be needed.” (p. 55)

AID MANAGEMENT

Seeking to avoid some of the confusion created by the rush of donors into a fragile situation, the World Bank pushed a comprehensive aid coordination mechanism in Afghanistan, and tried to align this with the government’s priorities and ways of doing business. The mechanism went through a number of modifications over the years. The structure in place at the time of our mission (see Figure 1) had been agreed at the London Conference in early 2006, the same time as the Afghan Compact.

This featured eight Consultative Groups (CG), each with a number of Working Groups reporting to it, along with two ‘umbrella CGs’ and another five covering cross-cutting issues, all reporting to the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB). The JCMB, comprising seven GoA and 21 international members, was the senior body for policy dialogue and joint problem solving, serving as the ‘custodian of the Afghan Compact’.

Figure 1 – Consultative Group Structure 2006-mid 2008



The mechanisms have always been too complex. At the Paris Conference in July 2008, the GoA and its international partners agreed to keep the JCMB but to streamline the rest of the structure as follows:¹²

Table 2 – New aid coordination mechanisms

Level	Body	Roles
1	JCMB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • main forum for joint policy formulation, problem solving and strategic coordination • ensure donor funds spent efficiently & in coordinated fashion • promote mutual accountability • ensure strategic priorities are set & adjusted with changing context
2	Standing Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one Committee per pillar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Security (includes mine action) ○ Governance, Rule of Law, Human Rights ○ Economic & Social Development • support delivery & decision-making between full JCMB meetings
3	Task Forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set-up by Steering Committees to focus on specific priorities • time-bound • prepare policy papers & recommendations for Steering Committees

NATURE, EXTENT, AND IMPACT OF EXPLOSIVES CONTAMINATION

Explosives contamination in Afghanistan stems from:

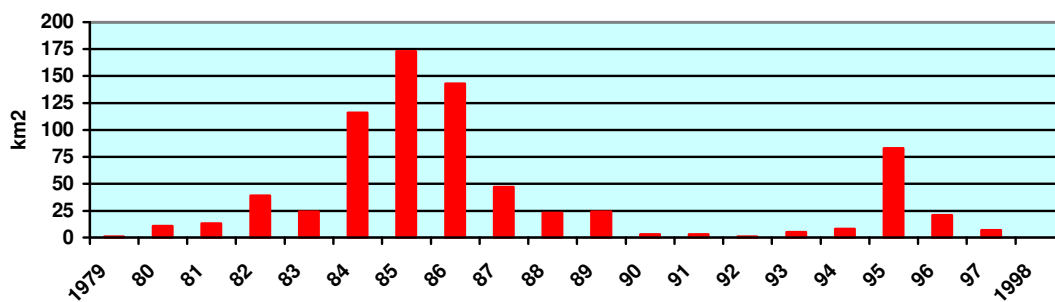
¹² JCMB co-chairs, Report on the Implementation of the Afghanistan Compact (for The International Conference In Support Of Afghanistan, Paris, 12 June 2008).

- The Soviet intervention – 1979-89
- The campaigns by the *mujahideen* against the Najibullah regime – 1989-92
- The civil war among various *mujahideen* factions – 1992-95
- The civil war between *mujahideen* factions and the Taliban – 1995-2001
- The U.S.-led coalition campaign to overthrow the Taliban – 2001

As yet, no one has been able to provide a comprehensive assessment of the problem, for three reasons:

- The Afghanistan programme began when “humanitarian”¹³ demining was an emerging discipline, with limited capacity to conduct systematic surveys;
- Mine action personnel have rarely had secure access to the entire country;
- Continued fighting resulted in new contamination.¹⁴

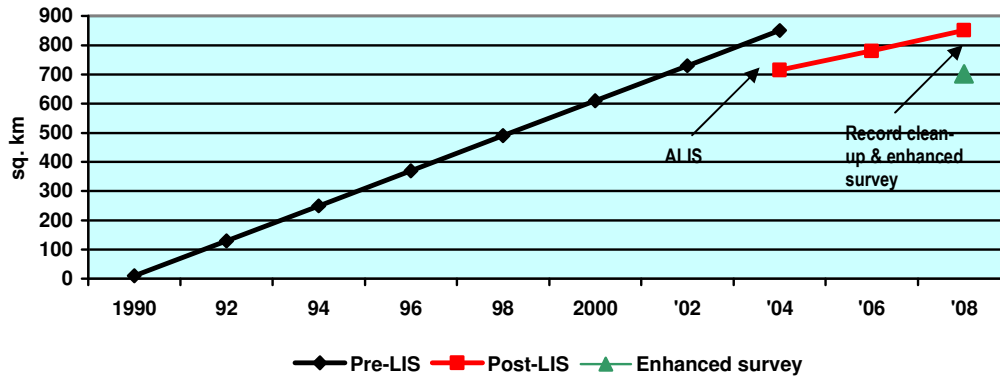
Figure 2 – Landmine contamination by year implanted



The most comprehensive picture of the contamination was provided by the Afghan Landmine Impact Survey (ALIS), completed in late 2004. It reduced the total suspected hazardous area (SHA) remaining for clearance from about 850 km² to 715 km² (14%). However, the discovery of new contamination plus slow updating of records led the remaining SHA figure to creep-up again, reaching a maximum of 852 km² in September 2007. It has fallen since, due both to records clean-up and to more rapid ‘release’ of land suspected of contamination (an issue discussed later), largely through enhanced survey activities.

¹³ In mine action, ‘humanitarian’ usually means simply ‘non-military’ and not for a commercial purpose. Thus, humanitarian mine action may support broader humanitarian, reconstruction, peace-building, and development programmes.

¹⁴ Recent reports suggest increased use of landmines by the Taliban in recent months.

Figure 3 – the evolving contamination picture: area of SHA awaiting demining

The ALIS also provided a new way of assessing the impact of contamination in Afghanistan. As with LIS conducted in other countries, it focussed more on communities rather than individual SHA and found that 2,368 communities (8% of all communities) – home to 4.2 million people (15% of Afghanistan’s population) – were impacted by explosives contamination. Twelve provinces accounted for 75% of the impacted communities, with Kabul and Parwan in the Central Region being the most impacted. Almost 2,500 recent victims (i.e. within the two previous years) were identified, of which 41% were fatalities.

HISTORY OF THE MINE ACTION PROGRAMME FOR AFGHANISTAN

The evolution of MAPA can be divided into a number of phases:

- Tentative beginnings (1988-90) – the initial, failed efforts by the UN and (more successfully) international NGOs and to initiate mine action activities.
- Establishment and expansion (1990-96) – the creation of the first ‘Afghan Mine Action NGOs’ and the build-up of both the NGOs and the programme coordination mechanism, based in Islamabad.
- Relocating to Afghanistan (1996-2001) – the long process of relocating programme planning and management functions from Pakistan to Afghanistan.
- MAPA in the Post-Taliban era (2002-present) – the beginnings of real engagement with legitimate national authorities and the broader international community active in post-Taliban Afghanistan.

The MAPA is now entering a new phase, characterised by (i) a tighter focus on medium-term performance targets and (ii) the need to transition to national ownership.

TENTATIVE BEGINNINGS: 1988-90

The signing of the Geneva Accords in 1988 led to optimistic predictions of impending peace and the repatriation of millions of Afghan refugees, but it was apparent to many groups that landmines represented a major impediment. The initial mine action work started in July 1988, when HALO Trust began a small programme in Kabul. Shortly thereafter, the UN commenced its mine action activities by (i) funding MRE for refugees, and (ii) using Western military personnel

to train thousands of refugees in basic clearance techniques. This effort was an abject failure.

ESTABLISHMENT & EXPANSION: 1990-96

Switching strategy, UNOCHA then decided to encourage the establishment of what have become known as the Afghan Mine Action NGOs (although in fact these were established in Pakistan under special registration provisions for Afghan “NGOs”¹⁵). The first of these – Afghan Technical Consultants (ATC) – was created as a clearance organisation in October 1989, followed by the Mine Clearance Planning Agency (MCPA), which specialised in minefield survey and data base. The Demining Agency for Afghanistan (DAFA), Organisation for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation (OMAR), and the Mine Dog and Detection Centre (MDC) followed in subsequent years. Additional partners were added over time; most involved in MRE.

Because Afghanistan lacked a recognised government that controlled much territory beyond Kabul, most international donors channelled funding via the UN to finance the Afghan mine action NGOs. This has given the MACA¹⁶ great leverage and the programme has functioned more like an industrial conglomerate than a network of independent organisations. The model was successful in many ways and the programme expanded rapidly. By 1995 MAPA had about 2,000 demining personnel.

RELOCATING TO AFGHANISTAN: 1996-2002

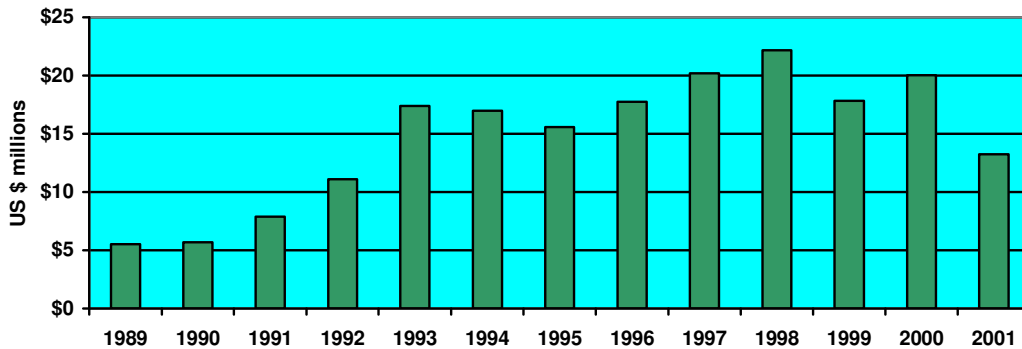
In the anarchic conditions following the Soviet withdrawal, the MACA was based at the UNOCHA office in Islamabad. MACA was a small operation, with only five international personnel supported by a few locally engaged staff. However, because of the excellent relationships between MACA and the Afghan NGOs, buttressed by UN control of the purse strings, this small unit was able to coordinate the programme.

However, as different regions of the country evolved on diverse trajectories in the, the separation of MACA and NGO headquarters in Pakistan from the work in Afghanistan became problematic. Once security improved with the emergence of the Taliban in 1994, the Afghan NGOs opened offices in Afghanistan. UNOCHA then established Area Mine Action Centres (AMAC) for regional coordination. From the start these were staffed by Afghans – the first Afghans filling reasonably senior roles within the MACA.

Inevitably, the seemingly never-ending crisis in Afghanistan led to donor fatigue. Contributions began to falter. After averaging almost \$20 million per year over the previous five years, donations fell below \$13.5 million in 2001, forcing staff retrenchments.

¹⁵ The term non-governmental organisation has no legal meaning in most countries, but these Afghan organisations never have had the governance structures or independence which most knowledgeable people would expect from a credible NGO.

¹⁶ The MACA has never been a legal entity; rather, it is a UN project (currently, an UNMAS project executed by UNOPS).

Figure 4 – Donations to MAPA 1989-2001

It is uncertain whether donor support would have continued to decline had the world not changed so dramatically on 11 September 2001. The initial impacts on MAPA of the US-led invasion later in that year was the temporary cessation of activities and the theft of vehicles and equipment; but the quick collapse of the Taliban regime heralded a renewed expansion for MAPA.

MAPA IN THE POST-TALIBAN PERIOD

The MAPA partners faced a daunting agenda once the Taliban regime collapsed in late-2001. First they had to resume operations, requiring extensive re-equipping to replace the looted equipment. They also had to undertake a rapid assessment of the new hazards stemming from coalition bombing – particularly the unexploded cluster munitions.

Clearance priorities also needed to be altered, both to deal with the cluster bombs and to address the temporary population movements from the return of displaced persons to their home communities. The MRE programme had to be overhauled, with women instructors re-engaged and programmes to reach refugee camps and transit centres. Large-scale reconstruction projects, particularly roads and airports, also required demining support.

The installation of the interim government also meant the end of the UNOCHA mandate, and the UN transferred MACA to UNMAS. As well, MACA had to move from Islamabad to Kabul just as hundreds of other aid agencies, embassies, and NGOs were establishing offices in the capital. New units also had to be added to the MACA establishment to handle the administrative, finance, and logistics functions previously provided by UNOCHA in Islamabad. The number of international positions more than doubled to over 20.

MACA and its implementing partners responded effectively to the challenges, while donors quickly provided funding to expand operations. Funding in 2002 increased almost fivefold to over \$65 million and, in 2003, total receipts exceeded \$75 million, with funding for reconstruction rising to almost a quarter of the total. In addition, MAPA agencies – in particular, HALO Trust – made significant contributions to the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programme by destroying stockpiles of weapons, ammunition, and mines.

On 28 July 2002, President Karzai announced that Afghanistan would sign the Ottawa Convention and, in March 2003, Afghanistan became a State Party to the Convention. The UN and the Afghan authorities also discussed the eventual need to transfer responsibility for the

MAPA. However, MACA has remained the *de facto* organ managing the mine action programme on behalf of both the government and donors.

No government-donor coordination group for mine action was established as part of the initial Consultative Group (CG) mechanism created in 2002. However, the Mine Action Consultative Group (MACG) was formed under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) when the CG expanded in 2003. Among other things, the MACG developed a consensus on the main features of a nationally-managed programme – in brief, the national authority should be a semi-autonomous statutory body under an inter-ministerial committee reporting via the Office of the President.¹⁷ However, MACA made little headway until 2007 on developing concrete plans for the transfer of responsibility to national officials.

There were a number of reasons for the lack of progress. First, most agreed the mine action programme was working comparatively well. Second, mine action was well down the list of Government priorities. Third, demining support was essential for many reconstruction projects: why take the risk of major changes when service disruptions could be such a problem? Finally, there was no consensus within the GoA concerning which ministry should take the lead role in mine action.

While recognising these problems in getting a clear government decision on the future architecture for the national mine action programme, it is less understandable why more was not achieved in nationalising the MACA staff complement. AMAC managers had always been Afghan, but none of the management positions in MACA headquarters were held by Afghans. Particularly frustrating was the fact that the Deputy Programme Manager position in MACA (which was designated for an Afghan) remained vacant for over two years.

Finally, in mid-2007 UNMAS created a new senior management structure at the MACA, and appointed Dr. Haider Reza – the former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs who had chaired that MACG in 2003-05 – as Programme Manager. Shortly thereafter, another Afghan was appointed Operations Manager, responsible for the largest unit within MACA.

Soon after he was appointed, Dr. Reza initiated informal discussions within the GoA to seek a clear decision concerning the body that should be the government focal point for mine action. These efforts led to national mine action symposium in December 2007, involving government ministries, donors, implementing partners, UN agencies, etc. This decided that an inter-ministerial body (ICB) should be established to arrive at a decision and, on 16 January 2008, the ICB met and selected the Department of Mine Clearance as the lead government agency for mine action. Progress since that date is discussed in the following chapter.

BENEFITS FROM MINE ACTION

Evidence of MAPA's Socio-economic Benefits

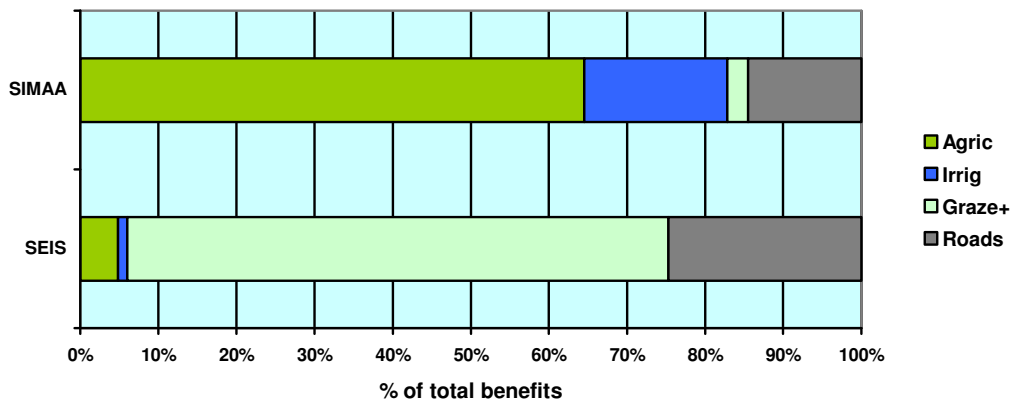
In the late 1990s, two major studies were initiated in an attempt to document the socio-economic benefits of mine action. The first of these (the Socio-Economic Impact Survey – SEIS) was conducted by MCPA (the Afghan NGO which at that time focussed on survey and information management). The second effort – the Socio-economic Impact of Mine Action in Afghanistan

¹⁷ Through a long process of consultation with stakeholders, MACA developed draft legislation to create the body, but this was never presented to the legislature.

(SIMAA) – was launched by the World Bank and used established cost-benefit techniques.

In broad terms, the results of the two studies were remarkably similar. Both found significant net socio-economic benefits, both in the range of \$30+ million in benefits for about \$20 million (the annual cost of the programme in 1999). In detail, however, the findings could not have been more different. The SEIS concluded that almost 70% of the benefits from mine action stemmed from grazing land and, more broadly, livestock. Conversely, the SIMAA found less than 3% of total benefits came from clearing grazing land. Instead, over 60% of total benefits came from clearing crop land, with substantial benefits also accruing from the clearance of irrigation works and roads. What could account for such different conclusions concerning the same programme?

Figure 5 – Estimated distribution of benefits from demining



It is clear that MCPA personnel did not have the expertise to analyse the data in appropriate cost-benefit terms. On the other hand, the authors of the World Bank study did not have adequate data on farming systems to capture how valuable livestock is for rural livelihoods. Clearing grazing land will never provide a net economic benefit on its own, but sustainable livelihoods for many rural households and communities probably requires access to adequate grazing land.

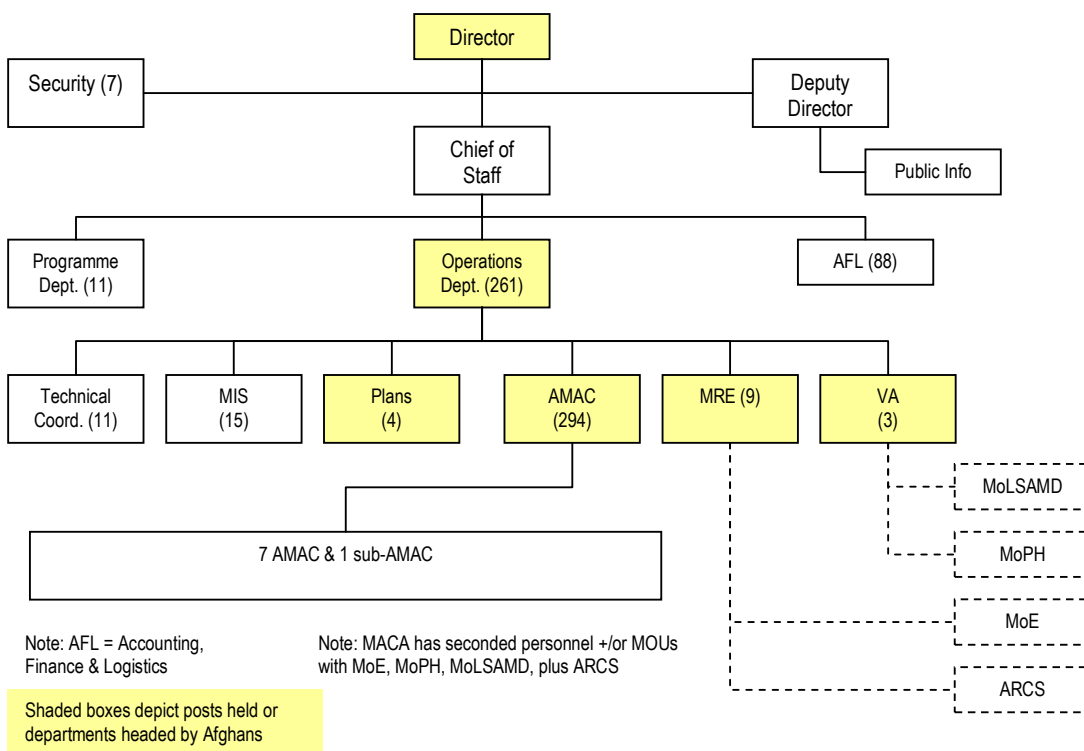
These examples simply illustrate how difficult it is to quantify the socio-economic benefits of mine action. Cost-benefit analysis is valuable, but inadequate by itself for developing a clear understanding of the negative impacts of landmine contamination or the benefits of addressing that contamination. Such studies need to be supplemented by more in-depth research on farming systems and sustainable livelihoods – a point we will return to later in this report.

2. CURRENT STATUS OF MINE ACTION

THE MINE ACTION CENTRE FOR AFGHANISTAN (MACA)

MACA currently has an approved establishment of over 470 positions,¹⁸ of which 21 are international. The majority of the staff are in Operations, which includes seven AMAC and one sub-AMAC. After focussing on programme expansion and then consolidation in the five years since the ousting of the Taliban, in 2007 MACA began instituting wide-ranging changes to its management team and organisational structure, its strategy for operations and the coordination ‘levers’ to implement this strategy, and its approach to the transition to national authority. Some of these changes represent new directions (e.g. operations reforms) and are in the early stages of implementation: other changes (relating to, for example, MRE and VA) are evolutions building on progress achieved over some years.

Figure 6 – MACA organigram¹⁹



In mid-2007, Dr. Haider Reza, an Afghan, was appointed MACA Programme Director. Shortly thereafter, an Afghan was also appointed Operations Manager. Thus, for the first time, key posts in MACA headquarters have been nationalised.

¹⁸ Eighty-five of the national posts were vacant at the time of the mission.

¹⁹ The organigram is straightforward, except perhaps the function of the ‘Programme Department’, which covers the management of contracts with implementing partners, the preparation of proposals, and tracking/reporting on funds from UN and bilateral sources.

MACA has also supported efforts by government ministries and the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) to strengthen their capacities to assume responsibility for MRE and services to persons with disabilities. These efforts have started to bear fruit within the past two years,²⁰ and in 2007 MACA signed MoUs with three ministries as well as the ARCS and ICRC to ensure this progress continues. MACA is now in the process of establishing a Transitions Unit to manage its partnerships with the three ministries and with ARCS.

Textbox 1 – MACA Transitions Unit

MACA has established a transition unit under the Director's office* to manage the transition to national responsibility for the MRE and VA components. To facilitate this, MACA has signed three-year memoranda of understanding (MoU) with:

- Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD)
- Ministry of Education (MoE)
- Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)
- Afghanistan Red Crescent Society (ARCS)

During the transition, the MACA will fund an advisor in each of the ministries to assist with policy development and capacity enhancement. This will allow the mainstreaming of MRE and Disability into ministry policies and programmes.

The MoE has made MRE a cross-cutting issue in its new curriculum (along with gender, narcotics, corruption, and the environment). These issues will be incorporated into the new national curriculum in 2009. New textbooks incorporating MRE messages were issued in 2008.**

MACA has been working with ARCS since 2006 to allow the phase-out of 'direct delivery' MRE. In 2007, MACA and ICRC signed a tri-partite MoU with ARCS to support its capacity to assume responsibility for residual risks. ARCS has already assumed responsibility in the North and North-east, and MACA plans to stop support of direct delivery MRE in the East within the coming year.

Disability is a major problem in Afghanistan (a survey conducted by Handicap International (HI) showed that 2.7% of the population are severely disability***). Accordingly, Disability Support Units (DSU) have been set up in the MoPH and MoLSAMD. An Afghan consultant has been assigned by MACA to both DSU, with additional staff provided by the ministries. Both ministries are developing policies to ensure people with disabilities can access their services.

The MACA provides additional support to the ministries to enable representatives to attend regional forums to share information and to network with other countries in the region.

* ToRs have been issued for a permanent member of the Transition Unit, which should be approved by mid-July 2008

** MACA will continue activities targeting the estimated 2 million children who do not attend formal education in Afghanistan.

*** The census now planned for 2010 is expected to include a number of questions on disability.

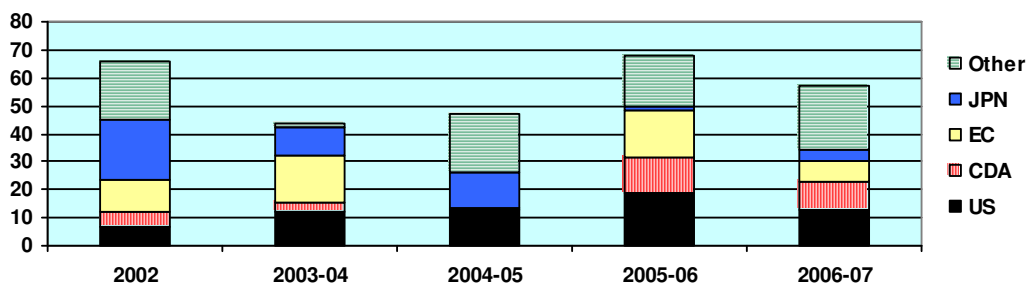
Since his arrival, Dr. Reza also pushed for a clear decision concerning the government focal point for mine action, which led to the designation of the Department for Mine Clearance (DMC) – a subject covered in a subsequent section of this chapter.

²⁰ The GICHD officer responsible for assisting countries in developing strategies for disability programmes (including landmine victims' assistance) reports that Afghanistan is one of the two 'stars' among the 24 countries she has surveyed or assisted.

THE MINE ACTION PROGRAMME FOR AFGHANISTAN (MAPA)

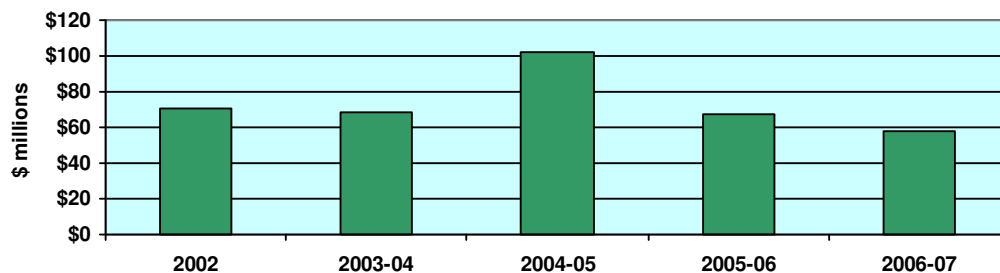
MAPA is far more than MACA alone, and comprises over 20 distinct organisations supported by donor contributions averaging about \$60 million per year since 2002. A number of these organisations (particularly the Afghan and international demining NGOs) are extremely large; some with thousands of staff. These have operated successfully for a decade or more in a challenging environment, and are extremely capable by any reasonable standards, and certainly within the context of Afghanistan today.

Figure 7 – Contributions to MAPA since 2002



Programme expenditures peaked in 2004-05, when very substantial sums were spent on demining for reconstruction projects (roads, airports, power lines).²¹ The drop in expenditures, coupled with the fact that international demining firms have entered the country²² and now obtain the lion's share of tasks in support of reconstruction projects, led to a significant cut-back in the staff of the Afghan demining NGOs (over 1,750 staff, or 27% of their peak employment levels).

Figure 8 – Estimated MAPA expenditures since 2002



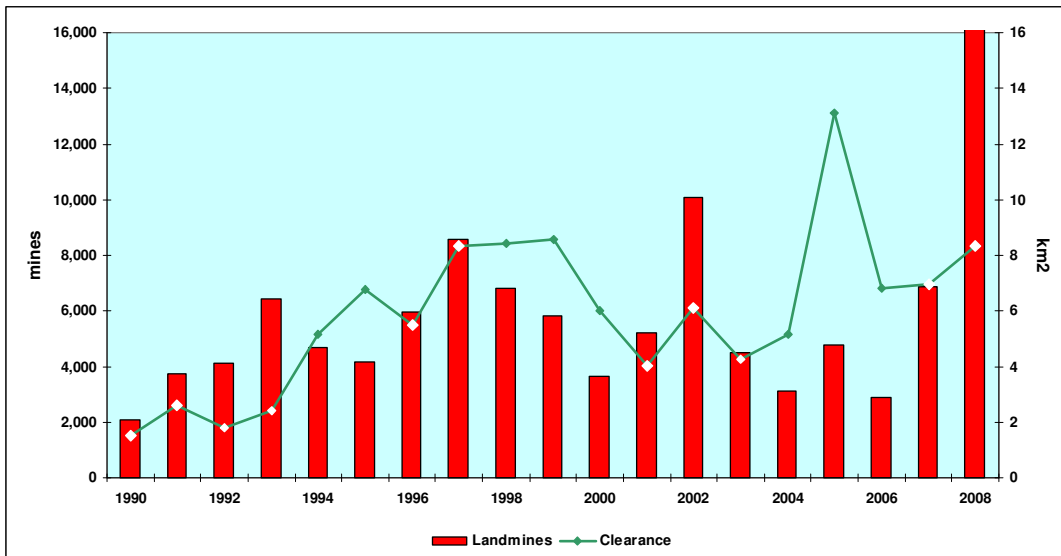
Demining accounts for the bulk of programme expenditures, and the basic performance metrics for it are (i) area cleared and (ii) devices destroyed. These measures have fluctuated significantly

²¹ Demining expenditures relating to road reconstruction are estimated at \$50 million from 2003-06, while demining at Kabul airport cost another \$7 million.

²² At least six international firms are accredited for demining, along with a smaller number of Afghan firms.

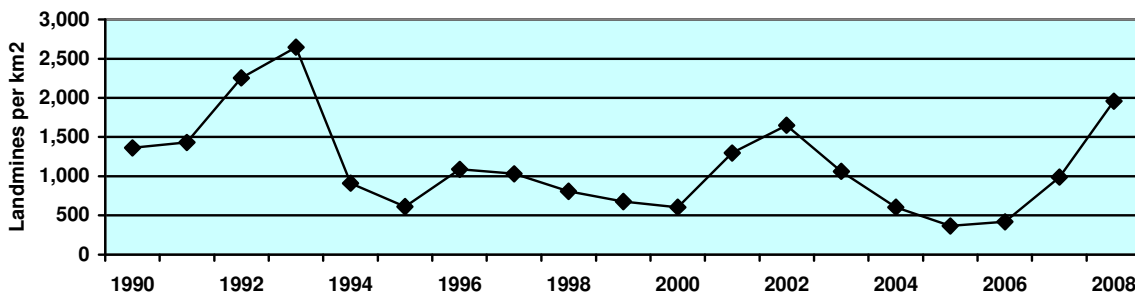
over the past years (see graphs). The fact that significant proportions of demining was done in support of road and other infrastructure work may account for the divergent pattern in areas cleared versus landmines destroyed from 2003-06. In brief, large areas were reported as cleared in that period, but the number of landmines destroyed was on a declining trend.²³

Figure 9 – Landmine clearance achievements (quarterly averages for year)²⁴



Obviously, these patterns mean that fewer landmines are being found in each km² that is demined, as is depicted in the following graph.

Figure 10 – Landmines destroyed per km² cleared



Starting in 2007, MACA introduced a number of operations reforms that appear to have reduced the trend. So far this year, operators have destroyed almost 2,000 landmines per km², over five

²³ This is common when more demining is done for reconstruction. For roads, power lines, etc., large areas are ‘cleared’ by survey and spot clearance, so square meters goes up while the number of devices/m² falls.

²⁴ Quarterly averages are presented rather than annual totals so that the figures for 2008 are comparable with those in earlier years.

times more than in 2006 and a ratio not achieved since the early 1990s.²⁵

OPERATIONS REFORMS

While MACA and its MAPA partners did a good job in expanding and then consolidating operations in the five years following the fall of the Taliban, they were slow in introducing demining innovations in the global industry. Starting in 2007, MACA has introduced a number of reforms to catch-up, and is formulating its own innovations to cope with the specific challenges – in particular, insecurity plus the scope of the contamination within a diverse country – within Afghanistan.

'Full service' demining NGOs

A number of the Afghan demining NGOs were established to perform quite distinct roles – MCPA for survey; META (now defunct) for QA and training; MDC to breed, train, and supply mine detection dogs (MDD) plus handlers to the survey and clearance NGOs. In brief, these NGOs provided complementary services and operated more like a conglomerate (with MACA as the headquarters) than as independent entities.

With the expansion of the programme since the mid-1990s, MACA had to provide ever more 'headquarters services' to coordinate operations, leading to the establishment of AMACs, which further 'UN-ised' the programme and progressively reduced the independence of the Afghan NGOs. Coordination costs came to dominate the benefits of specialisation. The model became cumbersome and made it increasingly difficult to determine responsibility for either successes (everyone was responsible!) or failures (no one was responsible!). It also complicated the introduction of demining innovations from elsewhere because two or three organisations were involved in every demining task.

Over the past two years, MACA has promoted the shift to 'full service' demining NGOs, each with survey and clearance capacities and a range of tools (manual, mechanical, dogs). This means that only one organisation is assigned to a task, and each organisation can introduce innovations without disrupting the policies and procedures of others.

Enhanced survey process

Mine action is highly dependent on both 'big picture' and 'micro' surveys to obtain both technical data (i.e. on contamination) and socio-economic data (the impacts of contamination and demining). Such data is essential for planning and prioritisation, and to provide an account of results achieved. Good survey capabilities do not guarantee a good demining programme (because survey data may not be analysed to inform decision-makers), but a good demining programme invariably implies good survey (and information management) capabilities. MACA has introduced a number of changes to survey processes since the ALIS in 2003-05.

Land Impact Assessment Teams (LIAT)

An LIS is an expensive exercise that can only provide a snapshot of the contamination and, more particularly, its impact on communities. Most of the LIS surveys conducted worldwide have become less useful over time as no mechanism was created to update the data (i.e. on a 'rolling' rather than a 'campaign' basis). In April 2007, MACA and MCPA established 16 x 3 person LIAT teams to provide such a mechanism. Employed by MCPA but tasked by the AMAC, the

²⁵ The change in trend appears to be more than would be explained purely by the reduction in demining for reconstruction.

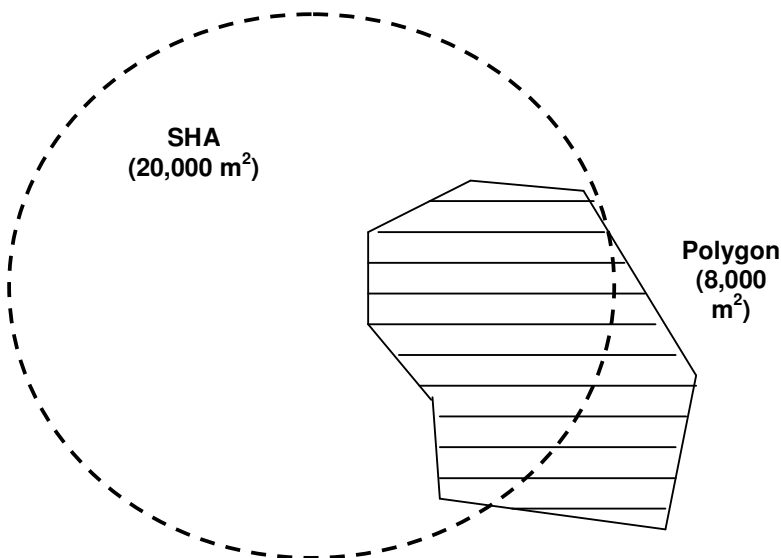
LIAT teams conduct both pre-clearance and post-clearance assessments.

- pre-clearance, teams visit communities to update information on each suspected hazardous area (SHA), sometimes cancelling an SHA (e.g. the community now actively uses it)²⁶ or modifying its area, so the data in IMSMA reflects the current status²⁷
- post-clearance assessments are to determine if demined land is being used for the expected purpose and by the intended beneficiaries (discussed later in more detail)

Polygon survey

In 2008, half of the LIAT surveyors have been provided some technical training to allow them to convert SHA (depicted as circles) into more precise polygons (i.e. the suspected shape and area of the SHA – see figure), which often results in a reduction in the recorded area of the SHA.

Figure 11 – Polygon survey



The remaining LIAT teams will be cross-trained to conduct polygon survey in 2008.

Demining reforms

MACA has also pushed to get the Afghan demining NGOs to update their standing operating procedures (SOP) to introduce innovations that have proved successful in other countries.

One-man drill

Until recently, Afghan demining NGOs used a ‘two-man drill’²⁸ – two deminers worked in one clearance lane, with one using the detector and the second observing as a QA measure. With a one-man drill, only one deminer works a lane. This requires more mine detectors, and requires rest periods (in a two-man drill, the ‘observer’ is also resting). Tests in Afghanistan (where

²⁶ Over 325 minefields and other SHA were cancelled in 2007 because of local use, the determination that false information had been provided, or further investigation by LIAT teams.

²⁷ LIAT teams also receive reports of new SHA.

²⁸ This is the term used in the demining industry and, in Afghanistan, correctly reflects the gender mix of the demining corps – 100% male.

HALO Trust has long used a one-man drill) and elsewhere suggest productivity increases of 30% can be expected.

Smaller teams

Traditionally, Afghan demining NGOs organised personnel into large teams, which reduced logistical and site management issues and (conceivably) enhanced security. A problem, however, is that large teams cannot deploy efficiently on small minefields (safety distances are required between clearance lanes because of the risk of explosions). Teams have now been reduced to 16 persons (each with 10-12 deminers), which can be split into two sections to deploy on smaller tasks or so one section can respond to a report of UXO in the vicinity. All deminers have also been cross-trained in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), which means they can deal with bombs, artillery shells, etc. rather than simply the less technically-sophisticated landmines.

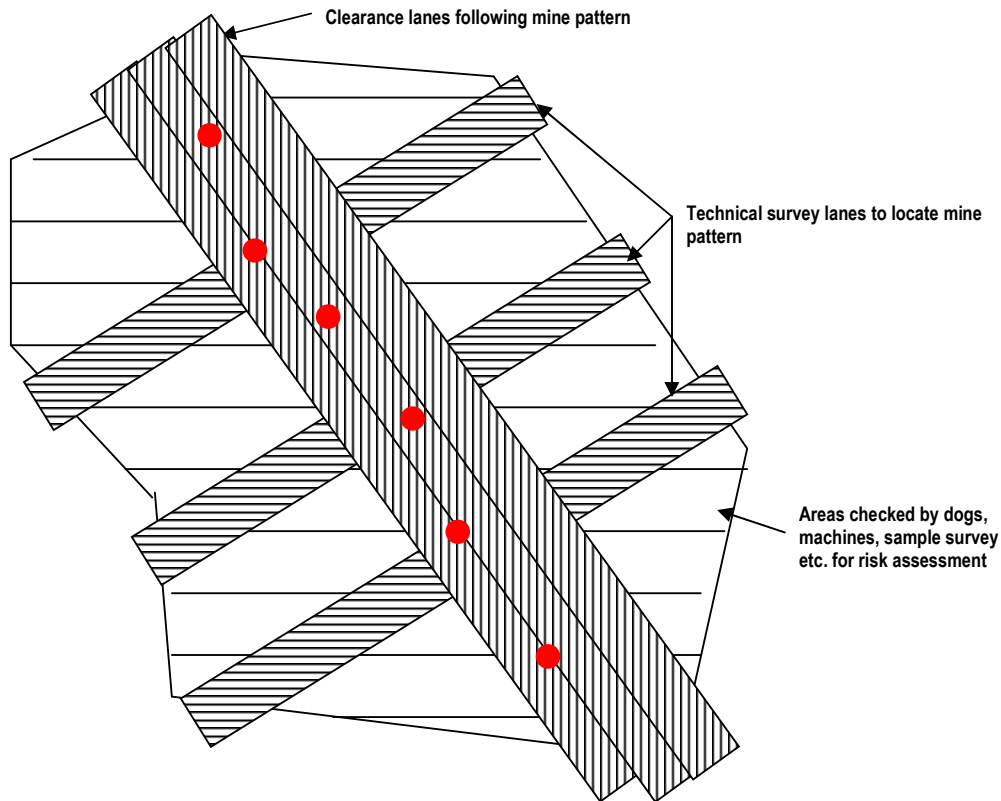
Integrated demining

Traditionally, survey teams would visit an SHA in advance of a clearance team to conduct either:

- a task planning survey (i.e. mark the boundaries of the area to be cleared; check on vegetation cover, soil type, types of explosive devices expected; etc.) to ensure the clearance team had the right tools to complete the task safely and efficiently;
- technical survey – as above, but also intruding into the hazard area to try and discover the pattern of mines and to reduce the area as much as possible.²⁹

With better equipment and additional training, the smaller demining teams can deploy to an SHA and start immediately with technical survey, shifting immediately into the clearance drill once the pattern of mines is discovered. Land which is outside the pattern of mines (plus a safety buffer) is then checked quickly (e.g. with dogs, machines, or sample survey) and released as ‘no apparent risk’ if no indications of additional devices are discovered (see diagram for simplified depiction). Initial tests suggest that an average of perhaps 30% of SHA can be released as ‘no apparent risk’ using risk assessment measures costing one- to two-thirds as much as full clearance. This approach requires good team leaders who have the discretion to make their own decisions based on findings on the ground.

²⁹ As yet there is no standardisation in the definitions of such surveys. Some organisations will say they conduct technical surveys, but in fact do not intrude into the hazard areas.

Figure 12 – Integrated technical survey, clearance, and risk assessment

Revised criteria for setting priorities

MACA has also revised the set of criteria it uses for determining priorities, as follows:

- Criteria for resource allocation (e.g. which areas of the country will have what assets)
 - 'Low-hanging fruit' (districts with few SHA that can be declared mine impact free³⁰ after a demining season)
 - Highly contaminated districts
 - Highly impacted communities
 - Areas with special cultural or other benefits (e.g. Bamyan, or areas benefiting from integrated rural development programmes)
 - Opportunities for service delivery to insecure areas
- Task priorities
 - Addressing the 'killing fields' (i.e. the minority of minefields that cause repeated accidents)
 - 'Low hanging fruit' – small hazards that were not cleared previously by the large clearance teams

³⁰ It would be inappropriate to declare most such districts as 'mine free' as new minefields continue to be discovered (e.g. once they impact an expanding community).

- Hazards within 500m proximity of the community

Regionalisation of operators

MACA has also requested³¹ the various demining operators to reallocate their assets in one or two regions of the country (e.g. ATC largely in the central region; OMAR in the East and West; etc.). This is feasible now that these NGOs are ‘full-service’ operators, and should simplify logistics and coordination, plus reduce the costs of maintaining regional offices.

New business model

MACA has also just introduced a series of measures that, together, constitute a new ‘business model’ for the demining financed via the UN. This has three inter-related components:

1. ‘projectisation’ – bundling tasks into a single project for a demining season or longer, and awarding the entire project via a request for proposal (RFP) mechanism (either open or restricted). Examples include:
 - projects covering entire districts (e.g. those with few SHA) or clusters of highly impacted communities – the first of these have just been awarded following an RFP
 - demining services in insecure areas – MACA has just requested proposals from the Afghan NGOs for community-based demining³² pilot projects in insecure areas. These are not directly competitive – each NGO has been asked for a proposal for areas in which they have strong roots (e.g. DAFA in the South; OMAR in the East), which should allow them to operate with some degree of security once local leaders assure the NGO of their consent
2. the introduction of greater competition
 - open RFP inviting proposals from accredited firms and NGOs for projects in reasonably secure areas
 - restricted RFP inviting proposals from NGOs with adequate ‘grounding’ in insecure areas, with funding provided to the soundly conceived proposals
3. switching from *ex ante* to *ex post* control – a change from controlling inputs and activities to paying for outputs that have met quality assurance standards. This will allow the NGOs to manage without seeking prior approval from MACA for every variance from plan.

Collectively, these changes could pay handsome dividends, but there are risks. Statements of work in the RFP must be soundly conceived and contracts must be well written and enforced. There are additional burdens placed on the Quality Management functions. The Afghan NGOs have significant political power which they could mobilise should they feel they are being treated unfairly. Perhaps the most significant risk is that years of paternalism and micro-management by MACA has stunted some of the capabilities of the Afghan NGOs, or left these undeveloped because they were unneeded (e.g. proposal-writing skills; fund-management).³³

³¹ As the UN funds most of these through the VTF, MACA has significant leverage in this regard.

³² MAPA has previously used the community-based approach in the Mine Action for Peace programme (using demobilised combatants) and, earlier, in projects run by AREA – a community development NGO (now defunct). The concept is to hire many local residents as guards, labourers, and (following training) deminers, which will give local communities the incentive to provide as much security as they can.

³³ These risks are real. AREA – both a demining and community development NGO – went bankrupt in 2004 following the surge in its funding from multiple donors, who also hired AREA’s most capable staff by offering salaries many times higher than the NGO paid. Reportedly, at least half of the 10 largest

However, the new business model promises a number of benefits, the chief of which are:

- service delivery in insecure areas, which will lessen the impact of contamination on the communities and could make an important contribution to peace-building
- the NGOs will be stimulated by greater competition to enhance their capabilities and become more successful while, at the same time, achieving greater independence. This will be a great boon as the transition to government responsibility for the policy and coordination functions is likely to go through rocky periods, and strong, independent NGOs could make all the difference through difficult stages
- efficiencies over time, as the poorly managed organisations shrink, releasing resources to the better managed ones.³⁴

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED IN MINE ACTION

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA)

MFA was designated the lead ministry for mine action following the country's accession to the APMBC and for a number of years did an excellent job in chairing the Mine Action CG and in representing Afghanistan in international forums. However, as is often the case in fragile states, commitment hinges on a small number of champions, and when the Deputy Minister moved to another position, mine action was no longer a priority for MFA.

International experience suggests that foreign affairs ministries should not hold overall responsibility for mine action in a mine-affected country – they often do a good job in international representation, but do poorly on the oversight of programme policy and implementation.³⁵ However, participation in the Ottawa process is important for Afghanistan, so MFA should certainly be a part of the national mine action authority in the future.

DEPARTMENT FOR MINE CLEARANCE (DMC)

DMC was established initially in 1989 via a *Mukharai* or executive order of the Najibullah regime. It was to be under an inter-ministerial committee comprising National Security, Defence, and Interior, but this never functioned so DMC was appended to the Disaster Preparedness Department. It has remained in existence ever since, although with scant resources and, hence, modest capacity. However, its role as the government focal point for mine action was re-affirmed at the meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Body in January this year.³⁶ Accordingly, MACA invited DMC to collocate and, in May, the department moved into the MACA compound.

DMC is now part of the proposed Afghan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA),³⁷ which itself will be under an inter-ministerial committee chaired by the 2nd Vice-President. DMC

Afghan development NGOs went bankrupt about the same time for similar reasons, although in most cases these were resuscitated by donors who needed them to manage projects.

³⁴ This is probably the source of the biggest potential cost benefit from competition but, elsewhere, the lack of donor coordination has muted this benefit as donors tend to prop-up their 'favourites'.

³⁵ See, for example, GICHD (2005) *Review of Ten Years of Mine Action in Mozambique*.

³⁶ This decision effectively spelt the end of the scheme envisaged in the draft mine action legislation in which a semi-autonomous agency would be established under an inter-ministerial committee, reporting to the Office of the President.

³⁷ We understand the legislation to establish this statutory body has not yet been laid before the legislature.

reports directly to the ANDMA Director. It has about 10 managerial and technical officers, plus support staff, all based in Kabul. ANDMA itself has seven zonal offices, which could provide administrative support for any DMC activities outside Kabul (although, in practice, DMC liaises with the larger and better-equipped AMACs).

The Director of DMC understands that it will be part of a transition process lasting until 2013, at which point it will assume decision-making authority for the national mine action programme. Details of this transition are unclear to all, but the DMC Director sees no need to rush; rather, he understands there will be a three to four months period during which both DMC and MACA will assess one another and discuss options. At some point, the draft mine action legislation would then be amended to reflect the selected option.

While starved of resources, DMC clearly has some capacity, and the staff have sound knowledge of public service policies and procedures. However, success in capacity development hinges on a champion within DMC who can drive the process forward, and it is unclear whether such a person is present within the current staff complement.³⁸

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (MOE)

MACA has been working with the MoE for some time and, in mid-2007, signed an MoU with it (whose Minister is committed to covering MRE and rights of the disabled issues via both the curriculum and the child protection unit). MACA now has a local TA in MoE to assist with curriculum development – grades 1-6 are complete and they are working on grades 7-12. In addition, MACA provides training (covering MRE and disability issues) to personnel in the Ministry's child protection unit, as well as materials which child protection officers have already used to train 12,000 teachers on MRE (the final target is 18,000 teachers).

MACA also has provided modest assistance for the MoE public education unit, education and training TV, and a magazine covering inclusive education among other issues. MACA also includes people from the provincial Departments of Education on various monitoring missions.

In brief, cooperation between MACA and the MoE is good and fruitful, and the Ministry is committed to assuming responsibilities on such issues as MRE and inclusive education. MACA support to the Ministry's efforts is modest but effective.

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The MoPH is responsible for providing medical care and physical rehabilitation services to people with disabilities, including landmine survivors, and has established a Disability Unit under the Director General of Primary Health Care/Essential Services.

The MACA began its engagement with the MoPH after the Nairobi Action Plan was agreed at the first Five Year Review Conference of the APMBC, held in 2004. This clearly stated that assistance to landmine survivors should be delivered as part of a broader programme to assist people with disabilities rather than via standalone projects.³⁹ Accordingly, the MACA and

³⁸ While the assessment team was, in general, favourably impressed with the level of knowledge and interest of DMC staff, we were troubled in particular by the fact that the Director has never managed the departmental budget and no knowledge of the contents of the budget other than staff salaries and emoluments.

³⁹ At the time, Dr. Reza – then with MoFA – was co-chair of the APMBC Standing Committee on Victim

UNICEF produced a draft plan of action on disability to present at the States Parties meeting in Zagreb (2005) and subsequently organised national workshops in August 2006 and November 2007. These efforts led to closer engagement with the MoPH and the broader disability community, who have worked together on a series of updates to the disability action plan.

In mid-2007, the MoPH and UNOPS (on behalf of MACA) signed an MoU with the goal of ensuring that disability rehabilitation services are integrated into both the Basic Package of Health Services and the Essential Package of Hospital Services. The MACA provides modest financial assistance and pays for an Afghan technical advisor who serves as the Coordinator of the Disability Unit in the MoPH. This individual also assists with:

- capacity development (e.g. development of curricula for training physiotherapist and orthopaedic technicians and recognition of these qualifications within the MoPH; inclusion of disability topics in the training of Community Health Workers)
- meetings of the national disability taskforce and the Community-Based Rehabilitation network

On its side, the MoPH has recognised its role in the implementation of APMBBC obligations related to landmine survivors.

The partnership is working well, with good progress made.

MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS, MARTYRS AND DISABLED

MoLSAMD is responsible for addressing social stigmatisation of persons with disabilities, including landmine survivors. As such, the MACA has encouraged the Ministry to participate in the efforts to develop a national action plan for disability programmes. MoLSAMD and UNOPS (on behalf of MACA) have signed an MoU similar to those with MoPH and MoE with goals to:

- support the implementation and monitoring of advocacy, awareness and social support services;
- chair the NGO coordination unit and the inter-ministerial coordination group on disability
- support disabled person's organisations
- advise on inclusive employment efforts

For its part, the MACA provides modest financial assistance and pays for an Afghan technical advisor who serves as the Coordinator of the Disability Unit, which reports to the Deputy Minister for Disability Affairs.

Again, the partnership seems to be working well, and progress is being made.

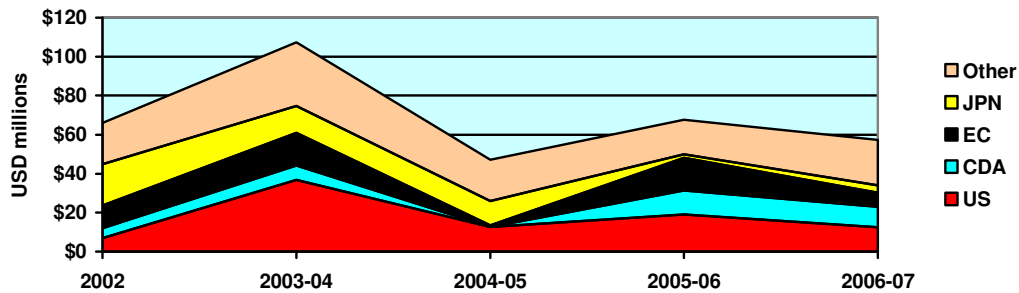
DONOR SUPPORT AND COORDINATION FOR MINE ACTION

There has been significant donor support to mine action in Afghanistan in recent years. Records compiled by MACA show MAPA organisations received a total in excess of USD 345 million from 2002 to 2006-07. The U.S. was the principal donor, accounting for 25% of the total,

Assistance.

followed by the EC and Japan (both 15%). Canada provided about 10% of the total funding.

Figure 13 – Funding to MAPA organisations



Approximately one-quarter of all funds went directly to an implementing organisation, while the remainder was channelled via the UNMAS Voluntary Trust Fund or other UN mechanisms.

For some time in the post-Taliban period, donor coordination via the Mine Action Consultative Group (MACG – later renamed the Mine Action Working Group – MAWG) was relatively effective. The departure of the first MACG Chair (Dr. Haider Reza) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, coupled with the rotation of key aid agency staff from Kabul, led to a decline in the effectiveness of donor coordination, as well as coordination between the government and donors.

It is too early to assess the impact of the recent re-vamping of the aid coordination mechanisms – including the elimination of the MAWG.

3. ANALYSIS OF KEY ISSUES

THE MACA AND MAPA

In the three years following the ousting of the Taliban, MACA was stretched to the limit to relocate to Afghanistan, resume and then expand the programme, conduct the Afghan LIS, and support the emergency reconstruction programme. It was able to consolidate its operations over 2005-07, but achieved little in terms of introducing demining innovations, nationalisation of senior positions, or broadening GoA commitment to national responsibility. The combined efforts of MACA and most other mine action stakeholders to obtain Government commitment to a suitable institutional architecture for a national mine action programme were unsuccessful.

Over the past year, progress has accelerated on a number of fronts. There are risks that progress could be stopped or even reversed (e.g. tensions between MACA and the Afghan NGOs relating to some of the operations reforms), but the outlook is positive.

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF OPERATIONS REFORMS

MACA has assumed responsibility for achieving the mine action targets laid-out in the Afghan Compact and the ANDS. Meeting these will require performance improvements, and the MACA has introduced a number of operations reforms. The potential impact of these reforms, in combination, is very significant, and can be summarized as follows:

1. Efficiency/cost effectiveness gains
 - Reduction in area requiring demining:
 - Polygon survey → 30+% cancellation/land release
 - Integrated demining → 30+% area reduction
 - thus, on average, only about half of SHA area [70%*70%] will need demining
 - Reduction in demining costs
 - One-man drill → up to 30% increase in efficiency
 - Risk reduction measures on the land released via area reduction → cost perhaps ½ as much as full clearance
 - Regionalisation → up to a 15% reduction in overall operations costs
 - Overall, almost 65% reduction in unit costs (\$/m² released) is conceivable
2. Flexibility gains
 - Smaller teams → can clear many small minefields (low-hanging fruit) that, until now, teams drove by
 - Full-service demining NGOs → fewer coordination challenges
3. Clarifying responsibilities
 - Competition & ‘projectisation’ – operators responsible for operations/regulator responsible for monitoring
 - Potential efficiency gains as weaker organisations forced to improve or disappear

NATIONALISATION & NATIONAL OWNERSHIP

Broadly, nationalisation implies both (i) placing nationals in decision-making roles within the

mine action programme, and (ii) placing the mine action programme under the control of national institutions (laws and organs; budget systems; etc.). We will use the term ‘national ownership’ to refer to this second aspect.

In terms of the former, Afghans have always played a central role in the delivery of mine action services. However, it has long puzzled observers that, given the large and capable Afghan operators and the large number of capable Afghans working on mine action internationally, no Afghans were in management positions at MACA headquarters.⁴⁰

As well, MACA stated it had an 18-month plan for transition to national ownership in 2003; fifty-four months later it had not yet reached the starting line for implementing this 18-month plan. Part of the reason for this seeming lack of progress was that the transition to national ownership was often viewed in very narrow terms – the enactment of a law to establish a statutory body for mine action that then could develop capacity to operate effectively outside the confines of Afghanistan’s dysfunctional public service. This overlooked, for example, the fact that progress could be, and has been made on progressively transferring responsibilities for certain mine action components (in Afghanistan’s case, MRE and VA).

Regardless, over the past year or so, progress has resumed, both in terms of nationalisation (of decision-making) and the emergence of national ownership. Fruitful partnerships have evolved between MACA and the Ministries of Education, Public Health, and (to a lesser extent) Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs, and Disabled. The transition to national responsibility for MRE and Victim Assistance (as part of disability programming) is well underway.

In the past year, the MACA has also made important progress in nationalising key positions. Traditionally, the AMAC managers were Afghans but foreign personnel held all the senior posts at MACA headquarters. Last June, Dr. Reza was appointed as Director of MACA, and since then Afghans have been appointed to Chief of Operations and other key posts.

NATIONAL ORGANS

The DMC has been identified as the government focal point for mine action, and DMC has collocated with MACA. This will allow MACA to assess DMC’s current capacities and whether its managers are capable of envisaging the long-term capacity requirements and successfully championing a capacity development process.⁴¹

It is unclear to the assessment team whether members of the inter-ministerial body (IMB) that affirmed the DMC role were aware of the basic institutional requirements of a national mine action programme (see textbox) – a national authority to set policy (for MRE and VA in addition to demining!); a mine action centre (MAC) to coordinate the implementation of policy; and operators to deliver the various mine action services.

We understand the DMC would eventually assume the role of the MAC. However, we do not see a commitment has been made that the IMB would serve as the national mine action authority because:

⁴⁰ One has to note that the country director of the largest international demining NGO – HALO Trust – has long been an Afghan.

⁴¹ We understand that the Director of ANAMA is expecting a recommendation from MACA concerning the type of people needed by DMC to start the capacity development process in earnest.

- the IMB was an *ad hoc* initiative, so it cannot safely be assumed this is a government decision (i.e. Cabinet could overturn the decision if, say, the Minister of Defence put it on the Cabinet agenda)
- the IMB has only met once, and it is unclear whether its members believe they have a continuing role
- the IMB has not been granted formal authority by the GoA to serve as a national mine action authority

Thus, the need for mine action legislation remains, but it is unclear when this would get on the legislative agenda.

Textbox 2 – Critical organs for national ownership

International experience suggests the following organs are required for a national mine action programme:

- National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) – an inter-ministerial committee to set policy & oversee the Mine Action Centre
- National Mine Action Centre (MAC) – to coordinate/regulate the implementation of the policy*

In addition, members of the NMAA serve on a part-time basis, so secretariat functions (policy analysis and administrative) must be provided, either by the MAC or by a distinct Secretariat established for that purpose.

* The actual providers of the mine action services (demining; MRE; VA) are normally termed operators, which could be independent (firms; NGOs), public service (civil defence; military; statutory body) or both.

See: IMAS 02.10, Guide for the Establishment of a National Mine Action Programme

OPERATORS

Demining

Afghan organisations have played central roles in demining since the start of mine action in the country. The Afghan NGOs have very significant capacities for operations, but years of paternalist ‘partnership’ by MACA has weakened their independence. The new MACA business model (projectisation, competition) should help. With greater independence, these organisations could also make significant contributions outside the mine action field (e.g. community and rural development; vocational training; survey).

A more fundamental concern is that these organisations are not truly NGOs. In addition to their extreme dependency on the UN for funding, they have very weak governance mechanisms (e.g. there is no clear way of removing or replacing the founding directors). This might discourage donors – or, in future, the GoA – from funding them directly in the absence of the UN-MACA.

The international demining NGOs (HALO Trust and DDG) are nationalised to a large degree. It is possible their local managers could decide to establish local demining NGOs or firms once the international NGO departs.

International firms now provide most of the demining support for large reconstruction projects.

Local demining firms have been formed (some affiliated with the demining NGOs) and the better managed and financed of these are likely to win contracts for demining support to smaller reconstruction, development, and commercial projects.

The GoA has not given clear indications whether the army or police will have responsibilities for humanitarian demining in the future.

MRE

The Afghan NGOs have been the principal providers of MRE since the start of mine action in Afghanistan. However, the ‘traditional MRE’ they provide (e.g. direct delivery of MRE in refugee transit points or to communities) is of limited benefit once conflict and population movements have stopped, and is unsustainable as a standalone activity. MRE needs to be more tightly targeted to at-risk groups and delivered through established institutions. Accordingly, MACA has been working effectively with the Ministry of Education and the Afghan Red Crescent Society to provide ‘residual’ MRE services.

Victim Assistance

Progress has also been made toward national responsibility for victim assistance, although this has been, quite properly, incorporated into a broader effort to formulate a national action plan for disability programmes. The Ministries of Public Health and Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled have both established Disability Assistance Units with MACA assistance, and commitment appears to be growing in both ministries. In addition, the Ministry of Education is making some progress on inclusive education. In spite of its limited resources, Afghanistan is generally recognised as one of the countries that has made the most progress on incorporating landmine survivor assistance within a broader movement for enhanced disability programming and the recognition of the rights of persons with disabilities.

DONOR COORDINATION

Coordination among agencies supporting mine action

Mine action suffers from more general weaknesses in aid coordination within Afghanistan. The efforts of the World Bank and others to advance the aid effectiveness agenda do not appear to have borne fruit as yet due to (i) the weak government and its inability to assume the driver’s seat, (ii) the political and defence interests of key donors, (iii) lack of in-country donor capacity (relatively small staffs due to insecurity, coupled with large, complex aid programmes).

In 2003-05 however, the Mine Action CG was quite effective due to the commitment of MFA (principally, Dr. Reza in his role as Deputy Minister), CIDA, and the MACA. The reorganisation of the aid coordination mechanism following the Afghan Compact, coupled with transfers of key people, has weakened coordination for mine action, both among donors and (more importantly) between government and the donors.

Donor agencies could capitalise on the presence of Dr. Reza to re-invigorate a government-donor forum for coordination and, especially, policy dialogue. However, which donor is capable of and committed to taking the lead?

Coherence of CIDA's proposed investment with other donor strategies

CIDA's support for mine action is coherent⁴² with other donor strategies, but only in the relatively weak sense that most mine action donors share a sense of assumptions, namely:

- explosives contamination is a significant problem in Afghanistan
- addressing explosives contamination can facilitate security, peace-building, reconstruction and development
- mine action delivers concrete benefits and the programme functions better than most others in Afghanistan
- transition to national ownership is called for by 2013, and
- in the interim, progress toward eventual transition is 'a good thing'

It is hard to go much further than that in the absence of a medium-term strategy (first, from MACA; second, from the GoA).

Coherence vis-à-vis exit strategy and handover of responsibilities to the GoA

Canada's announced support for mine action is not inconsistent with an eventual exit and transfer to national responsibility. Again, however, the absence of medium-term strategies/plans from the UN and the GoA makes it impossible to analyse this further.

MAINSTREAMING MINE ACTION

Mainstreaming of MRE and VA is well underway. In this section, therefore, we focus on demining issues.

MACA support to the overall development and reconstruction process

The mine action sector has done good job in supporting reconstruction; initially via services coordinated by MACA for the high-profile emergency reconstruction projects (major roads; Kabul airport). Now however, the 'core' MAPA organisations (MACA & the demining NGOs) have been supplanted, and most demining in support of reconstruction is done by international firms engaged via standard project contracting mechanisms. (One problem is that these have corporate links to private security firms, which could erode the 'humanitarian space' traditionally accorded to demining NGOs in Afghanistan.)

More recently, there are some good initiatives to support development (e.g. the UNESCO and Japanese cultural development projects in Bamyan), but links to key ministries – in particular, the Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development (MRRD) – remain underdeveloped. Senior MACA officials are aware of this shortcoming and, undoubtedly, plan to take action: it remains to be seen whether they will be able to find the time to do so in a concerted fashion.

GoA political will and responsiveness to mainstream demining components

While recognising the danger of generalising about a government's political will,⁴³ particularly in

⁴² In the development cooperation field, coherence usually refers to the internal consistency of a donor government's policies vis-à-vis a country receiving assistance (particularly '3-D' policies; diplomacy, defence, development). The assessment team was not asked to examine or comments upon the consistency of CIDA's support to mine action with other Canadian government policies for Afghanistan.

⁴³ Who is the 'government'? In all governments there are many divergent opinions, most of which remain unresolved (i.e. no clear Cabinet decision is taken).

Afghanistan, the assessment team would summarise the prevailing view as:

- mine action is a moderately high priority, but...
- it's not broken, so there's no need to fix it.

Thus, the Government has never had to make a collective decision concerning mine action, and its political will has not been tested.

Integrating mine action plans with national development goals

Clear targets for mine action are included in the Afghan Compact and ANDS. However, these are 'high-level' targets expressed as readily quantifiable indicators (numbers of impacted communities; area suspected of contamination) that give very little sense of developmental impact – indeed, there is always a danger that developmental benefits will be sacrificed for efficiency in attaining quantitative performance targets. It would be more useful to set targets for mine action – particularly demining – in terms of enabling development investments to proceed in other sectors and at the community level. However, this is difficult to do unless the sectoral, provincial, and community development plans (and planning processes) are well articulated, which is not generally the case in Afghanistan.

Mine action also falls into the security sector, where the dominant perception is that security is a pre-condition for development rather than something that should be integrated with development (e.g. in planning, implementation, and evaluation processes). More generally, ANDS remains quite compartmentalised, and the cross-sectoral links are not well elaborated.

MACA capacity to mainstream across development programs

Clearly, MACA and other MAPA organisations often make links with development plans and initiatives at both community and district levels: the modest spatial scale makes potential linkages easy to spot, and the decision-makers are close at hand. LIAT teams should further enhance this, in part by spotting potential links earlier in the planning and tasking cycle (i.e. well before specific task priorities are determined for demining).

Mainstreaming is far more difficult at the provincial⁴⁴ and, especially, national levels as different departments and agencies – often far removed from the ground – base decisions on different data in pursuit of different performance targets that have not been determined in an integrated or coordinated manner.⁴⁵

Based on a very incomplete sample of ministry officials and on interviews with mine action managers, the assessment team has the sense that awareness of the need to consider and, perhaps, address explosives contamination is high among donor/international agencies, but low among

⁴⁴ The ANDS states that “consultations included the formulation of around 18,500 village based development plans, leading to 290 district development plans, which were finally consolidated into 34 Provincial Development Plans.” (ANDS Executive Summary, p. 3) We have not seen any of these district or provincial development plans.

⁴⁵ More generally, the IMF/World Bank Joint Staff Note on the ANDS stressed that “There are far too many actions and projects throughout the ANDS document, which detracts from prioritization both across and within sectors. Moreover, the ANDS generally does not clarify which projects/sectors will be pursued at the expense of others, if necessary,” (Joint Staff Advisory Note on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, 15 May 2008, p. 5) Basically, the authors of the Note believe the GoA has avoided tough choices by forecasting more financing than is likely to materialise – a ‘soft budget constraint’.

government planners and managers. Personnel in international agencies have inflated perceptions of risks and ‘over-prescribe’ demining (perhaps for reasons of liability and insurance). Conversely, government officials in Kabul and provincial capitals seem rarely to hear that demining agencies have supported development projects and, perhaps, assume that explosives contamination is not much of a problem.

If our perceptions are correct, MACA has done a good job in raising awareness within the international community (perhaps even inflating the risks), but has not done systematic outreach to government officials whose work programmes may be affected by explosives contamination.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Capacity for pre- and post-clearance assessment

The Afghan LIS collected a great deal of socio-economic data on thousands of communities, providing a baseline for monitoring progress and assessing developmental achievements.⁴⁶ It is clear that MACA managers understand the potential value of the LIS as they have created LIAT teams, giving MACA the capacity to update the LIS (pre-clearance survey) and to collect post-clearance socio-economic data. MACA/MAPA has relatively good capacity in this regard. These post-clearance assessments allow monitoring of outputs, ‘reach’ (i.e. has the land gone to the intended beneficiaries?) and short-term outcomes (e.g. is the land being used as envisaged?).⁴⁷

Capacity for M & E of progress toward development results

Unfortunately, MACA still lacks the capacity to analyse LIAT data to report meaningfully on the development results accruing from mine action. As can be seen from the following summary table, benefits from land cleared are presented in terms of annual gross income, with no adjustment for the costs of inputs (labour, capital, seed, etc.).⁴⁸ MACA personnel lack the tools to analyse the streams of costs and benefits over time, and to discount these to present value terms.

Table 3 – Summary of LIAT findings for 2007

Region	Cleared MF/BF (m ²)	Annual production (\$)	Beneficiaries
South	1,386,850	\$ 56,696	5,260
West	6,145,962	2,240,013	82,760
North	3,063,297	175,869	50,114
N-E	714,054	1,016,420	415,683
East	5,563,962	139,738	49,273
S-E	5,438,806	382,914	18,139
Central	2,860,010	707,639	51,826
Total	25,172,940	4,719,289	673,055

As well, these summary figures say nothing of the distribution of benefits – are benefits going to the poorest households or (somewhat weaker) to deserving households? Is the cleared land owned privately or by the state (for, e.g. schools, mosques, clinics), or is it common pool resources (e.g.

⁴⁶ Like all such surveys, the primary purpose of the ALIS was to set priorities. For this, however, only a small sub-set of data is used – principally that relating to recent victims.

⁴⁷ For some time, various results-based management experts have advocated ‘reach’ as an intermediate result between ‘output’ and ‘outcome’.

⁴⁸ In Afghanistan, one must also be concerned about the misuse of cleared land – obviously, poppy cultivation but also land theft.

grazing land). To what degree do women benefit from clearance? The assessment team understands that some data along these lines are collected, but not in a systematic fashion to facilitate regular analysis and periodic reporting.

The experience of the 1997-99 Socio-economic impact study (SEIS) by MCPA and the Socio-economic Impact of Mine Action in Afghanistan (SIMAA) study shows that the proper analysis of socio-economic benefits is a difficult challenge. The analysis and presentation of LIAT findings could and should be improved, but this still would provide little insight into the distribution of benefits and, more fundamentally, the impact of demining on individuals, households, and communities. Our collective ignorance on rural vulnerability and sustainable livelihoods (the relationship between crops and grazing; different livelihoods for different social groups; etc.) places a limit on what we can interpret from the type of data collected by LIAT teams. A number of groups within Afghanistan are working on such issues,⁴⁹ but there has been no interchange between them and MACA/MAPA.

Monitoring and evaluation of gender results

As is well known, gender roles in Afghanistan are sharply divided and unequal, with women in a subordinate position. These relations are the result of long-term cultural and historical processes that mine action (along with other internationally-supported programmes) can only influence on the margin. Mine action services could and should be delivered to women as well as men, and MAPA organisations have endeavoured to do so when the opportunity has presented itself (women MRE instructors; MRE and disability rights messages in schools; etc.). As well, more opportunities for employment within mine action should be available to women – MACA itself has a number of women on staff (including the Deputy Programme Director), but still the vast majority of people working in the sector are men.

More fundamentally, MAPA organisations still have little opportunity (i) to ensure that women as well as men are actively engaged at the community level in determining priorities for clearance and other mine action services, or (ii) to determine the degree to which women benefit equally from these services. One of the MAPA organisations (DDG) is planning a project to assess women's perceptions on explosives contamination and mine action, which will provide a starting point.

Monitoring and evaluation of the new 'business model'

It is clear the new business model poses some more sophisticated quality management challenges. The introduction of competition invariably strengthens incentives for performance, and it is critical that a broader range of indicators is used to ensure incentives are aligned with desired performance, rather than what can be readily measured.

UNOPS and UNMAS now have a good deal of experience in contracting for mine action services. In many cases, and particularly where contract monitoring is complicated by inaccessibility and insecurity (e.g. South Sudan), UNOPS uses a combination of cost-plus contracts (which lessen the incentives to cut corners) plus QA on both processes (e.g. prior approval of clearance plans for assigned tasks) and the demining itself.

⁴⁹ These include the Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit (AREU – an independent research organisation based in Kabul), the National Surveillance System–Vulnerability Assessment Unit (NSS–VAU) based at the Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development, MRRU, but perhaps moving to the Central Statistic Office, and the Afghan Institute for Rural Development (AIRD); also part of MRRD

We understand the initial contracts awarded for Afghanistan in 2008 are for a fixed-price. Thus, a more stringent monitoring regime is required to ensure contractors do not reduce quality and safety standards to increase profits. Both contracts were awarded to well-established demining firms that would take pains to protect their reputations, particularly in dealings with UNOPS and UNMAS, which represent a major portion of the market for commercial demining services. Still, MACA will need to make a special effort to provide adequate external QA on these contracts.

In the current Afghan context, it cannot be assumed that the delivery of demining outputs (i.e. cleared land) will lead to sound development outcomes. The assessment team is unaware of any efforts by UNOPS or UNMAS to incorporate development outcomes into their demining contracts or to evaluate the development effectiveness of their programmes (e.g. Sudan, South Lebanon, Eritrea, Kosovo).⁵⁰ As well, the recent evaluation commissioned by UNMAS of its Sudan programme was ‘tightly scripted’⁵¹ and the report has not been placed in the public domain. This approach probably would be inadequate to provide a broad assessment of the merits of the new business model relative to other possible approaches (e.g. sole sourced contracts to NGOs; cost-plus contracts; etc.). At the very least, UNMAS should:

- advise donors well in advance of any evaluation;
- circulate the draft ToRs to key stakeholders (donors; GoA) for comment before these are finalised;
- give significant freedom to the evaluation team to develop its own methodology and work plan for achieving the evaluation objectives; and
- share the evaluation report with key stakeholders and, ideally, put it in the public domain.

Regardless, it will always be difficult to obtain a broad and balanced assessment of the development outcomes stemming from demining in insecure environments. Again, this points to the need for innovative approaches to complement traditional methods of quality management (QA and M&E). The vulnerability or sustainable livelihoods research effort discussed earlier would help in this regard. As well, MACA might contract the evaluation unit of MRRD or a community development NGO already working in a region to do independent assessments of (i) inclusive participation in setting priorities, (ii) community satisfaction with demining activities, and (iii) development outcomes.

⁵⁰ In most programmes led by UNMAS, its first priority is to a UN peacekeeping mission, and the bulk of its funding is provided for this explicit purpose via the UN assessed budget for peacekeeping operations.

⁵¹ We understand that the draft ToRs were not shared with all key stakeholders prior to being finalised. The ToRs suggest that UNMAS engaged three separate evaluators and formed them into a team that followed an evaluation plan established by UNMAS and its Programme Director in Sudan. We would characterise the exercise as more of a performance audit to inform UNMAS management than an independent evaluation to account to donors, the host government, etc.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

PRINCIPAL CONCLUSIONS

MACA and the MAPA organisations have, collectively, great capacity to address contamination problems but also to make more substantial contributions to peace-building, reconstruction and poverty reduction.

MACA now has a strong management team in place, which has initiated some excellent reforms. Its managers are thinking strategically, but it still have not written-up a formal strategy and medium-term plan to ensure: (i) the GoA and donors understand and endorse the objectives and direction of the programme, and (ii) the reforms and strategic direction are locked-in when management team members depart.

Some progress has been made in (i) bringing Afghan nationals into decision-making positions within MACA and (ii) promoting national ownership (particularly for MRE and VA). Recently the inter-ministerial body has provided some clarification concerning the agency to serve as the government focal point for mine action – the Department for Mine Clearance (DMC), which then collocated with MACA. However:

- the DMC presently has little capability and unknown commitment
- the endorsement of the DMC as the focal point stemmed from an *ad hoc* process, which may not represent the final position of the GoA
- the broader institutional framework (laws; national organs) has not been agreed.

The UN has a responsibility to transition and exit (currently envisaged for 2013). However, a successful transition requires the existence of a capable and committed organisation to assume responsibility for the residual contamination problem. The UN can support capacity development of the DMC if that department has some basic management and technical capacity to build upon, plus the leadership to implement change and performance improvements.

Conversely, the GoA has the responsibility to develop the capacity of its national mine action organs (DMC, but also a national authority). The UN can only successfully support capacity development if the GoA is committed both to (i) assume national ownership and (ii) actually deliver the required mine action services to its people.

THE WAY FORWARD

What is needed at this juncture is clear: first, a strategy from MACA that would clarify its vision for the future and provide the basis for policy dialogue with both the Government and the supporting donors. The intended outcome of the MACA strategy and the policy dialogue would be a well conceived Government strategy for the national mine action programme. CIDA could play an important role in this process. Specific recommendations are:

1. MACA should assess whether DMC personnel have the basic skills and commitment for a successful capacity development process. At minimum, these pre-conditions for success are (i) adequately educated and experienced personnel and (ii) a champion for change in the senior management ranks of DMC. If these pre-conditions are not in place, the UN should

not waste time and money on capacity development support until changes are agreed.

2. MACA should formulate a strategy and multi-year plan for itself and the MAPA, covering:
 - what it will do (e.g. continue operations reforms to achieve clearance targets)
 - how it will:
 - support the GoA in formulating a government strategy for assuming national ownership of the mine action programme
 - support the GoA to implement its strategy once it is in place
 - assess progress towards its goals and objectives (i.e. a monitoring and evaluation framework, plus a tentative schedule for evaluations)
 - the pre-conditions required of ANDMA and, more generally, the GoA before launching a concerted programme of support to the capacity development efforts of DMC and a future national mine action authority
3. Accordingly, the GoA should formulate its strategy for mine action and the assumption of national ownership. This should be based on:
 - a forecast of the likely residual problem in 2013 (i.e. a needs analysis)
 - decisions concerning the capacities (policy; regulation/coordination; operations/service delivery) required to address this residual problem
 - plans for key national organs (national authority; MAC)
4. Donors should encourage the MACA and the GoA to join in a forum for:
 - policy dialogue, to:
 - encourage and support the GoA to formulate its national strategy for mine action
 - encourage MACA to formulate ‘whole of government’ policies regarding explosives contamination
 - joint monitoring of progress on both the MACA strategy and, eventually, the GoA national mine action strategy
 - commissioning periodic joint evaluations of MACA, MAPA, and GoA progress in developing its capacity and commitment for assuming ownership of the national mine action programme.

This forum should normally meet every six months, although more frequent meetings should take place until the GoA formulates its national mine action strategy and following any joint evaluations. MACA should provide the secretariat services, and the presence of representatives from UNMAS and, perhaps, UNOPS would be expected.

5. CIDA should consider bolstering its own capacity to resume its role as the donor focal point for mine action within the CG mechanism.
6. MACA should consider strengthening its capacities for monitoring and evaluation of demining by introducing a sustainable livelihoods approach in conjunction with, initially, MCPA and in partnership with the Afghan Institute for Rural Development (AIRD – part of MRRD). Secondary objectives of this effort would be capacity development for LIAT teams plus the introduction of Afghan sustainable livelihoods and rural development specialists to the field of mine action.
7. CIDA and other donors should consider a separate project to strengthen the Afghan demining NGOs, which have great capacity to contribute in other sectors (community development; rural development; vocational training), subject to the following:

- one or more of the Afghan NGOs need to request such assistance
- the project should not be implemented by MACA or the UN

DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

GENERAL

Barakat, S et al (2006)

Mid-term evaluation report of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) Afghanistan, accessed at: <http://www.york.ac.uk/depts/poli/prdu/publications.htm>

Bean, P. (2003)

Mine Action in Afghanistan: Transition Options, report for UNDP BCPR

CIDA (2007)

Review of the Afghanistan Program, Evaluation Division

Craib, A., H. Thompson and Dr. H. MacDonald (2002)

Assessment of the UN MACA, report for DfID and Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

IMF/World Bank (2008)

Joint Staff Advisory Note on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 15 May 2008

Paterson, T. (2004)

Capacity Development for Mine Action in Afghanistan, (unpublished country case study for the GICHD)

Poulton, Robin-Edward, C. Mandakovic, J. Bonnet, & J. Ahmadi (2007)

Collecting one gun at a time makes peace: Report of the Evaluation of DDR and CIP in Afghanistan

Survey Action Center (2008)

Victim Reduction Model: Final Report

UNDP (2007)

Afghanistan New beginnings Programme (ANBP)

van Ree, Bill, Ted Paterson, Qadeem Tariq and Khan Mohammed (2001)

Report on the Review of UNOCHA's Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan, report for DfID, CIDA and the Government of Japan

MACA & UNOPS DOCUMENTS

Gielissen, H (2006a)

Building stones for the design of the National Mine Action Agency

_____ (2006b)

Outline Human Resource Development Approach

MACA (2008)

CIDA Proposal: Meeting the goals of the strategic plan, Support to Mine Action in Afghanistan
April 2008 – March 2012

_____ (various years)

Annual Report: Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan

_____ (2006)

Mine Action in Afghanistan: The Way Ahead

_____ (2003)

Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan: Strategic plan 2003-2012

_____ (2002)

MAPA Strategic Plan

MACA, ICRC and ARCS (2008)

Memorandum of Understanding

Macdonald, A (2008)

The 2008/9 Coordinated Operational Implementation Plan (COIP)

Sediq, Mohammad (2008)

Mine Action Operations Update as on May 2008, (presentation)

UNOPS and the Ministry of Education (2008)

Memorandum of Understanding

UNOPS and the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (2008)

Memorandum of Understanding

UNOPS and the Ministry of Public Health (2008)

Memorandum of Understanding

GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN DOCUMENTS

_____ (2008)

The Afghan National Development Strategy: 1387-1391 (2008-2013)

_____ (2006b)

Concept of Operations for Main Phase DIAG (Final Draft), accessed at
www.diag.gov.af/DIAGJSCONOPS.pdf

Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (2008)

AIRD Strategic Plan 2008 – 2010, accessed at www.mrd.gov.af/aird/

Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development and Central Statistics Office (2007)

The National Risk and Vulnerability Assessment 2005

GOA & INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY DOCUMENTS

_____ (2006)
The Afghanistan Compact

JCMB (2008a)
Report on the Implementation of the Afghanistan Compact (report to the International Conference
In Support Of Afghanistan, Paris, 12 June 2008)

JCMB (2008b)
Draft Annual Report 27/04/08

ACRONYMS

AIRD	Afghan Institute for Rural Development	MCPA	Mine Clearance Planning Agency
ALIS	Afghanistan Landmine Impact Survey	MDC	Mine Dog & Detection Centre
AMAC	Area Mine Action Centre	MDD	Mine Detection Dog
ANBP	Afghan New Beginnings Programme	MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
ARCS	Afghan Red Crescent Society	MoD	Ministry of Defence
ANDS	Afghan National Development Strategy	MoE	Ministry of Education
ATC	Afghan Technical Consultants	MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
AXO	Abandoned Explosive Ordinance	MoPH	Ministry of Public Health
BAC	Battle Area Clearance	MoLSAMD	Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
CG	Consultative Group	MRE	Mine Risk Education
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency	MRRD	Ministry for Reconstruction & Rural Development
DAFA	Demining Agency for Afghanistan	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
DDG	Danish Demining Group	NMAA	National Mine Action Authority
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation & Reintegration	OMAR	Organisation for Mine Clearance & Afghan Reconstruction
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)	PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
EC	European Commission (also European Community)	QA	Quality Assurance
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal	QC	Quality Control
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War	RFP	Request for Proposal
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining	SAC	Survey Action Center
GoA	Government of Afghanistan	SHA	Suspected Hazardous Area
HALO	Hazardous Area Life-support Organisation	SOP	Standing Operating Procedure
IDP	Internally Displaced Person	UN	United Nations
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards	UNAMA	UN Assistance Mission for Afghanistan
IMB	Inter-Ministerial Body	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
JCMB	Joint Coordination & Monitoring Board	UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
LIAT	Land Impact Assessment Team	UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan
LIS	Landmine Impact Survey	UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
MAC	Mine Action Centre	UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
MACA	Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan		
MACG	Mine Action Consultative Group		
MAPA	Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan		
MAWG	Mine Action Working Group		
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding		

APPENDIX I – TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

After more than two decades of conflict, Afghanistan is one of the most heavily mine contaminated countries in the world, posing a formidable challenge to social and economic reconstruction of the country. Landmines affect more than 4 million people, living in 2,368 communities. In 2007, an estimated 756 square kilometers are considered contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), concentrated in 12 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces. Canada has played a leadership role in addressing the global landmine crisis and championing the goals of the Mine Ban Treaty. In Afghanistan, Canada has funded mine action initiatives since 1990.

In developing Canada's action plan to respond to the Ottawa Convention, CIDA was specifically mandated to provide funding in the areas of victim assistance (VA), mines risk education (MRE) and humanitarian demining, while DFAIT took leadership in policy dialogue and non-humanitarian demining, and DND was tasked with demining technology research."

The international community and the Government approved the Afghanistan Compact and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy in February 2006. These documents provide a framework for institution building and reconstruction, establishing benchmarks for various sectors. Under Article 5 of the Mine Ban Treaty, Afghanistan must destroy all antipersonnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but no later than 1 March 2013, with an interim target of reducing the area contaminated by mines and UXO by 70 per cent by 2010, in accordance with the Afghanistan Compact and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy.

1. Support to UNMACA and Mine Action in Afghanistan via UNMAS:

The Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (MACA) is a project of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), which serves as the UN focal point for mine action globally, and is executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), which provides contracting, procurement, financial management, and technical and legal assistance. As of May 2007 UNMACA had 22 international staff, all based in Kabul.

MACA coordinates the activities of the Mine Action Program for Afghanistan (MAPA), an association of more than twenty accredited NGOs and commercial contractors involved in one or more mine action components including clearance, mine risk education (MRE) and victim assistance (VA).

The Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the MACA coordinate activities under the direction of the Mine Action Consultative Working Group, a mechanism created to respond to the requirements of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. The group provides strategic guidance to the MACA, develops policies and legislative frameworks, and monitors MAPA activities and targets. In addition, it is working towards a transfer of responsibility for mine action activities from the UN to national authorities.

Each year, UN entities, nongovernmental organizations, national and local authorities and donors collaborate to assemble a national portfolio of mine action project proposals

that together reflect the strategic response developed in the field to all aspects of the problem of landmines and explosive remnants of war. A Country Portfolio Coordinator, usually a representative of a UN agency or a national authority, coordinates meetings where all mine action actors agree on a set of projects and priorities and determine funding needs. The proposals in each country's portfolio are assembled with those of other participating countries and published jointly by the UN Mine Action Service, the UN Development Programme and UNICEF in an annual "Portfolio of Mine Action Projects." This publication serves as a tool for collaborative resource mobilization, coordination and planning of mine action activities. The Afghanistan (Islamic Republic of) Country Portfolio Team's funding appeal for mine action projects in 2007 totalled US \$77,755,277.

As part of this project, UNMACA proposes to undertake components that include, but are not limited to the following:

- To plan, coordinate, support and shape mine action in Afghanistan in line with strategic and operational plans and frameworks to achieve yearly targets;
- To ensure quality of mine action activities; and,
- To develop capacities within relevant parts of the Government of Afghanistan and related bodies to provide national authorities with the tools and expertise to assume responsibilities for long-term coordination and policy-making roles for mine action.

UNMACA has an internal three-year plan for 2007-2009 that is updated annually based on progress made in the previous year. The MAPA adopted a 10-year strategic plan in 2003, which was revised in 2005 to take account of land impact survey findings, the expectation that UNMACA would transition to a national program, and the requirement for mine clearance to support rehabilitation of national infrastructure as well as humanitarian needs. In the transition to national ownership, an Inter-Ministerial Board for Mine Action was established under the Department for Mine Clearance, which is part of the Agency for Disaster Preparedness.

The MAPA also has a nationwide strategy to involve women in mine action efforts despite difficulties caused by cultural concerns within Afghan society, which has resulted in advocacy activities that have included both genders. Although women constitute a minority casualty group (less than five percent in 2006), they play a key role in educating their children in risk-avoidance. A Gender Equality in Mine Action Programmes learning symposium was held in Dubai in early September 2006.

Challenges

Some of the challenges reported in the 2007 Landmine Monitor report on demining in Afghanistan and known to ATF are as follows:

- a) The transition to full national ownership of the program formally started in June 2005, and was expected to take two years. After progress in 2005-2006, the transition process stalled; the government expressed no view on how it wanted to proceed and no transition timetable was agreed by the government and the UN for most of 2007.
- b) Afghanistan's ability to complete clearance obligations before the Treaty-bound deadline is unclear based on the progress made so far..
- c) The collection of comprehensive mine/ERW casualty data in Afghanistan remains problematic, due in part to communication constraints and the time needed to centralize information.

2. Rationale

Since 1989, Canada has provided \$84.3 million for demining, the vast majority of this through UNMACA. CIDA recently announced a 48-month project with UNMACA of a total value of CAD\$80,000,000 to be dispersed in annual contributions of CAD\$20,000,000.

Given the significant investment in demining, as well as the intended outcomes of this program – CIDA would like to optimize the opportunity afforded by the EC Evaluation and consult GICHD's expertise in this sector to write a report. The resulting report will inform CIDA/ATF what constitutes reasonable expectations for UNMACA/UNMAS reporting on development results and to assess the feasible timelines and approaches for UNMACA's proposed nationalization plan.

3. Specific Objectives:

The consultant is asked to pursue the following research questions in the course of his visit to the field:

Donor coordination

- To assess whether CIDA's proposed investment is coherent with other donor strategies for mine action in Afghanistan, particularly as it pertains to an exit strategy for UNMAS/UNMACA and handover of responsibilities in the mine action sector to the GoA To assess the coordination among other agencies supporting mine action in Afghanistan

Nationalization

- To provide a preliminary assessment of progress in the transition to full national ownership of the program, which should include consideration of the following: the capacity of relevant ministries; sustainability of funding; drafting and enforcement of mine action legislation; and, clarification of responsibilities between different GoA ministries.
- To assess the Mine Action Consultative Working Group, and the Inter-ministerial Board for Mine Action
- To provide a preliminary assessment the GoA Ministries identified for handover of all components of mine action

Mainstreaming of components of mine action

- To provide a preliminary assessment of UNMACA's support to the overall development and reconstruction process
- To provide a preliminary assessment of UNMACA support to integrate mine action plans with national development goals and the GoA's political will and responsiveness to mainstream demining components
- To assess the capacity of MACA to mainstream components of mine action across development programs, particularly within UN agencies.

Monitoring and Evaluation

To assess the capacity within MACA in Afghanistan to undertake the following:

- Socio-economic assessments (i.e. Pre- and post-clearance assessments);
- Monitoring and evaluation of progress toward development results; and,
- Monitoring and evaluation of gender results.

4. Services Required:

Professional services are required as per background information above as well as their subject matter expertise and familiarity with the country and its political context.

In consultation with the responsible officers for the CIDA program, the consultant will:

- a) Review background documents:
 - (i) review project files and briefing notes;
 - (ii) Coordinate with the organizations;
 - (iii) meet with officers at the Development Aid Section in Kabul.
- b) Draft a work plan to include dates of scheduled visits; list of key contacts and persons to be interviewed.
- c) Draft a report that addresses the research questions outlined above.

5. Duration of the consultancy:

Preparations, field visits, interviews, report writing and debriefings should be completed before the end of June 2008.

APPENDIX 2 – ITINERARY & MEETINGS

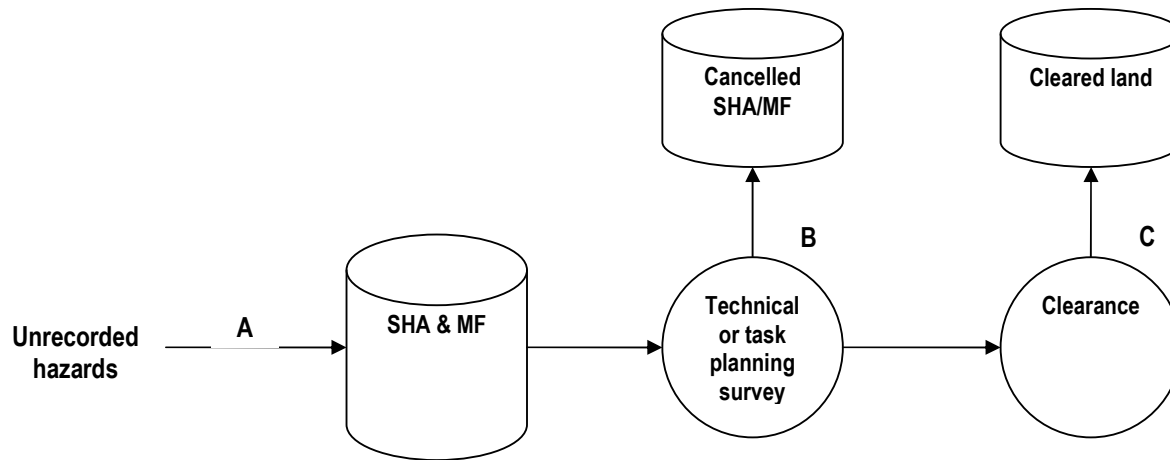
16-17 May 2008 – T. Paterson & W. Fryer Geneva → Kabul			
T. Paterson & W. Fryer – Kabul (18-25 May)			
18 May	MACA	Dr. Haider Reiza	Programme Director
		Susan Helseth	Deputy Programme Director
		Alan Macdonald	Chief of Staff
19 May	MACA	Mohammad Sidiq	Chief of Operations
		Mohammad Wakil	Plans Officer
		Abdul Qader Kakar	EOD Associate
		Aimal	Chief, QM
		Mo Shafiq Yosufi	Sr Ops Manager
		Idress Nabiyar	Operations Assistant
		Samin Hashimi	MRE Programme Coordinator
		MACA	Susan Helseth
	MACA	Alan Macdonald	Chief of Staff
	Canadian Embassy	Georgina Wigley	Counsellor Development
Karolina Guay			
20 May	EC Delegation	Clement Bourse	Programme manager
21 May	German Embassy	Erich Schmidt	Second Secretary
	MACA	Susan Helseth	Deputy Programme Director
22 May	ATC, OMAR, MCPA, DAFA, MDC, DDG, HALO	Directors Mine Action NGOs	
		ArmorGroup	Rob Halam Mir Mo Shaker
	MDC	Mo. Shohab Hakimi	Director
25 May	OMAR	Fazel Karim Fazel	Director
	DDG	Clinton Smith	Country Programme Manager
	MACA	Mohammad Wakil	Plans Officer
		Mashooq Karim	Sr Plans Associate
F. Paktian & W. Fryer – Bamyān (26-29 May)			
26 May	AMAC-Bayan	Abdul Quader Qayomi	Operations Officer
	UNAMA	Heran Song	Head of Office Bamiyan
	NZ-PRT	Lt Col Richard Tracy	Contingent Commander
	ATC-Bamyān	Achmed Zafer Mujaddi	Senior Operations Manager Bamiyan Field Office
27 May	ATC-Team 39	Zahidullah	Team Leader
		Sayed Burhan	Section Leader
	Bamiyan Provincial Government	Habibi Sarabi	Governor
	Directorship of Information and Culture Bamiyan	Najebullah Ahran	Director
Afghanistan National Security Bamiyan Office	Sayed Mohammad Tahir Wasiq	Director	
29 May	Afghanistan National Police	Lt Col Qudsi	Chief of Security National Police
	Agha Khan Foundation	Sanjef Gupta	Programme Manager
	Provincial Council	Jawad Zuhak	Secretary / Deputy of Shura

T. Paterson – Kabul (26-29 May)			
26 May	DAFA	Eng Sattar	Director
	ATC	Kefayatullah Eblagh	Director
	HALO Trust	Dr. Farid Homayoun	Country Director
		Tom Dobb	Sr Operations Officer
27 May	AMAC-Kabul	Akbar Oriakbil	AMAC Manager
		Shafiquallah Seddiqi	AMAC Deputy Manager
28 May	MACA	UNMAS/UNOPS debriefing to operators on recent RFPs	
29 May	MCPA	Haji Attiquallah	Director
T. Paterson, F. Paktian, W. Fryer – Kabul (30 May – 6 June)			
30 May	MineTech International	Max Dyck	Business Development Manager
	UNOPS	Paul Hyslop	Manager, Mine Action Unit
1 June	DMC	Abdul Haq Rahim (& others)	Director
	DynCorp	George Zacaczewsky	Program Manager
		Skip Hartberger	Task Order Project Manager
		Michael McDonnell	Senior Technical Advisor
UNMAS	Cris Stephen	Programme Officer	
2 June	MACA	Amir Omeragic	Senior Programme Officer
	Japanese Embassy	Kenji Inoue	Second Secretary Economic Cooperation Section
	UNDP	Kavil A Mohan	Chief of Staff
		Besmillah Ekhlas	Programme Officer
Fakhruddin Azizi		Head of UNIDO Operations	
3 June	Min. of Education	Ariana	Advisor to the Minister
		Mutahar Shah Akhgar	Mine Action Advisor
	MACA	Steve Williams	Technical Advisor
	Canadian Embassy	Debriefing by GICHD to CIDA, EC, MACA	
4 June	Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)	Dr Armahdzai	Acting Director, Primary Health Care
		Mohammad Ghami Amin	Disability Dept Advisor
		Dr Wasiq	PHC Advisor
		Dr Azeem Jaavid	PHC Advisor (HIV M&E)
	MoPH	Dr Pashtoonyar	Advisor to the Minister
	Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs & Disabled	Wasil Noor Momard	Deputy Minister
5 June	JCMB Secretariat	Abdul Moein Jawhari	Pillar Coordinator, Governance
		Fardhim Sidiqi	Pillar Coordinator, SE Dev
	Afghanistan Institute Rural Development (AIRD–MRRD)	Ajmal Shirzai	Strategic Implementation Advisor
	UNAMA	Vadim Nazarov	Sr Political Affairs Officer
	T. Paterson, F. Paktian, W. Fryer → Geneva		

1 July 2008 – Telephone interview with Hubert Gielissen, former UNDP Capacity Development Advisor.

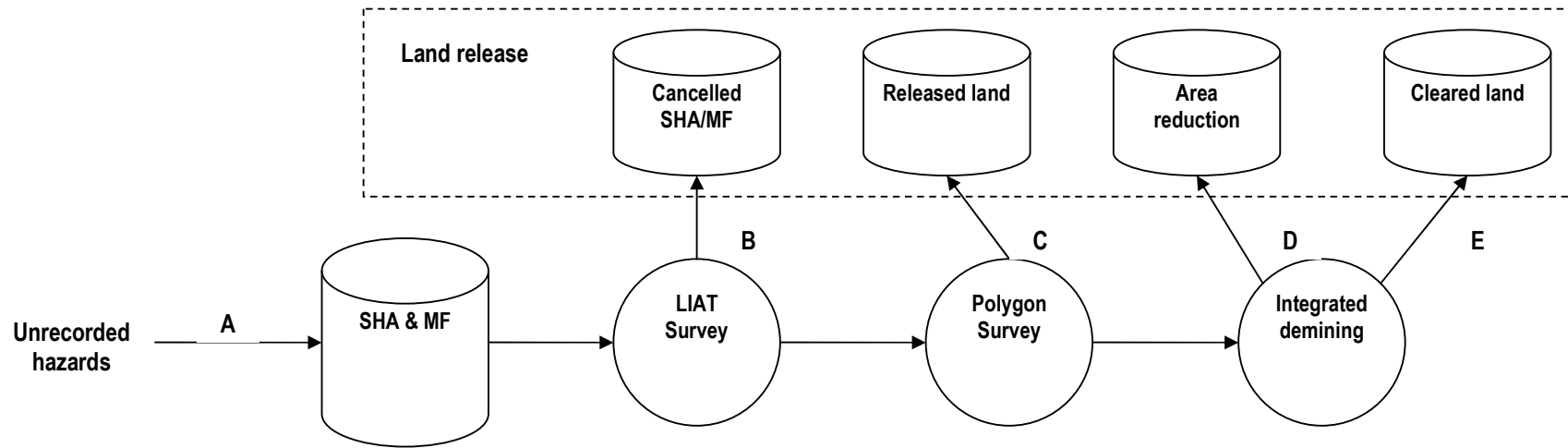
APPENDIX 3 – ENHANCED SURVEY PROCESS

Figure 14 – Traditional survey & clearance process



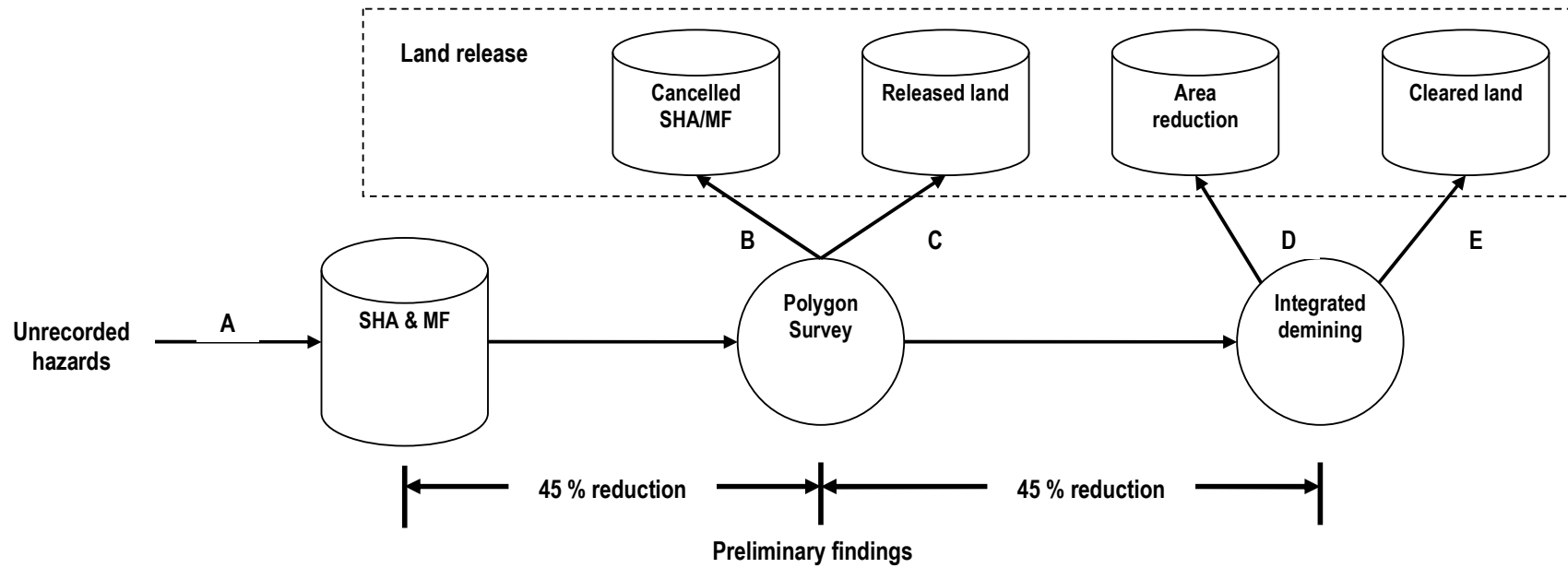
Until 2008 $A > B + C$ (i.e. total hazardous area on record increasing)

Figure 15 – Enhanced survey & clearance process (current)



Until 2008 $A > B + C + D + E$ (i.e. total hazardous area on record increasing)

Figure 16 – Enhanced survey & clearance process (planned)



Until 2008 $A > B + C + D + E$ (i.e. total hazardous area on record increasing)