Closing the Circle

Eddie Banks
EOD World Services

Rob Shahmir
Environment and Infrastructure Group of Companies

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The destruction was systemic, leading to an environment at the end of the war that is not only very unlikely but also continues to be critically dangerous to civilians due to the massive quantity of bombs, booby traps, and rockets that remain everywhere in southern Lebanon.

To the outside world, it seems during Israel’s air strikes there was little difference established between the military objectives and civilian targets. Bridges, roads and airports were destroyed to strategically cripple enemy forces; yet this also made the delivery of humanitarian aid not only hard but nearly impossible.

Suggestions for Protecting Civilians

Many measures can be taken to ensure the safety of civilians, particularly with the increased threat they face in modern warfare. In the Middle East and other regions at risk of conflict, it is important to protect civilians by providing the poorest countries with bunkers and other protective installations in the main cities during peaceful periods, with a particular focus on schools and hospitals.

Additionally, international law should strictly enforce the convention against killing civilians and destroying civilian areas during conflict, prosecuting under criminal law those who do not follow this convention.

The United Nations Security Council should also be given the power—and be willing to use it—to stop any war in which genocide is observed.

Finally, in mine action, activities need to focus on providing updated awareness campaigns that are informed by the changing reality of recent conflicts to ensure that children and other vulnerable people are protected.

See Embouza, page 109

Conference on Women in Armed Groups, Human Rights

In November 2005, Geneva Call and the Program for the Study of International Organization(s) from the Geneva-based Graduate Institute of International Studies held a workshop in Ethiopia entitled “Women in Armed Opposition Groups in Africa and the Promotion of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.”

The workshop sought ways to strengthen international humanitarian and human-rights law within African armed groups and their political groups. Thirty-nine female leaders from armed opposition groups and civil society from countries currently involved in conflict or recently involved in the post-conflict recovery process came together for the conference. The workshop also sought to increase the international community’s understanding of and ability to work with African armed groups.

Four topics were discussed in working groups during the workshop:

1. Humanitarian law
2. Human-rights law
3. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
4. Transition into governance roles

The final report from the conference, which presents information and analyses that came out of these four thematic working groups, is available in English and will soon be available in French. The report can be downloaded at http://jenipuri.com/kyte. If you would like a printed copy of the report, e-mail info@genevacall.org.

The authors present a critique of the International Mine Action Standards currently in use. After highlighting gaps in IMAs related to assessment and survey, an improved aspect of mine-action planning methodology is presented, which includes a prioritization component using a socioeconomics approach. The result is LIRA: landmine impact combined with a new measurement of risk assessment. This updated model can contribute to improved safety, quality and productivity of landmine action through more effective strategic planning tools.

Banks and Shahrir: Closing the Circle

The various documents referred to above all make the right noises. However, the aim of mine action is to strive for effectiveness and efficiency, then there is still much work to be done. If another aim is national ownership of clearance programs, more work is needed here also.

First, we need to reduce duplication and simplify documentation. In addition, we need to understand that in order to create a “standards mentality,” documents must be in national languages. There is also a need to ensure donations are measured for their cost...
While we acknowledge the IMAS have created ordnance, drainage and soil types, etc. The tendency is to concentrate on mine-action. This trend to follow the IMAS approach of mine action is based on its impact on the needs of local communities. A number of elements such as local communities, local overall view; an assessment should not only in whom, and not just about equipment, training and knowledge; and the principles, process, collection, commercial and national requirements, address- ing them all in a balanced manner.

In all mine-action programs, the number of elements such as the General Mine Action Assessment (GMAA) should be reduced to as few as possible to assure that the greatest impact is perceived, from the economic reparations for families, small communities and medical facilities to the emotional aspect of injuries and death; but is this perception correct? For example, the mining and UXO in Kuwait, Iran, Iraq and Angola, to name just a few. The local communities in these countries are devastated as anywhere else in the world, with injuries, death and economic hardships, among other problems. Yet, mines and UXO in these and other countries also de- liver or have delayed regulation of national commercial activities such as oil and gas exploration and extraction, denying the af- fected country millions of dollars each and every day, which could be used to help solve the mine and UXO problem.

Within this SLA framework, the LIRA process should be:• Purpose: Meaning its aims and objectives• Focused, concentrating on one or more specific aspect of the national, the type of alternatives being considered, the nature of the likely impacts, the availability of impact-identification methods, and those involved. The LIRA team with their one. In addition, the resources available would impact the method of LIRA used as cost, information, time and personnel inevitably vary with each specific case.

In all mine-action programs, the number of resources available is almost always fewer than what is needed to address the mine and UXO problem immediately and thoroughly.

The “impact analysis” or detailed study phase of LIRA should involve several of reference; impact analysis, to predict the effects of specific clear- ance activities and evaluate their significance; mitigation, to establish measures to prioritize high-, medium- and low-impact activities; re- porting, to prepare the information necessary for decision-making; review, to check the quality of the LIRA report; decision-making, to approve or reject the specific clearance activities and set conditions; follow-up, to monitor, manage and audit post-clearance impacts; and public involvement, to inform and consult with stakeholders.

The “impact analysis” or detailed study phase of LIRA should involve several of these functions. Identification of a LIRA necessitates a systematic ap- proach that is defined with the following three core values:

1. Integrity: The LIRA process con- forms to agreed principles.
2. Utility: The LIRA process provides balanced, credible information for decision-making.
3. Sustainability: The LIRA process results in good management.

Areas where it is deemed necessary to utilize a Strategic Landmine Assessment program would include:

• Sector-specific policy, plans and programs
• Spatial and land-use plans
• Regional development programs
• Natural-resource management strategies
• Legislative and regulatory bills
• Investment and lending activities
• International aid and development assistance

and effectiveness. Finally, there is a need to look at those issues requiring modifica- tion. As a starting point, the IMAS 08.10—General Mine Action Assessment out- lines the necessary framework, evaluation, analysis and interpretation of in- formation used for mine-action assessment and planning.

Internal, the general purpose of a GMAA (general mine action assessment) is to con- tinue to develop a method that make available sufficient information to assist and update strategic planning of the national mine action program.

The question is: why we need this in- formation and what is necessary for stra- tegic planning, and by strategic one assumes crucial, critical and important. However, the IMAs are rather general in what crucial information is required, tend to concentrate on local aspects and fail to address several of the most important issues. The assessment tendency is to concentrate on mine-action elements such as local communities, local element are rather general in what crucial information is required, tend to concentrate on local aspects and fail to address several

Commercial or Social Precedence The IMAS and GMAA concentrate on the local issue, and accordingly this is where the most important issues are. While we acknowledge the IMAS have created ordnance, drainage and soil types, etc. The tendency is to concentrate on mine-action. This trend to follow the IMAS approach of mine action is based on its impact on the needs of local communities. A number of elements such as local communities, local overall view; an assessment should not only in whom, and not just about equipment, training and knowledge; and the principles, process, collection, commercial and national requirements, address- ing them all in a balanced manner.

Allowing an emotional response or lo- cal considerations alone to dictate clear- ance requirements in effect delays the eco- nomic recovery of the country, maintains dependency on donor funds, and restricts the development of local and geographi- cal information systems, expert systems, and professional

Utility:

• A good method for displaying EI/RA
• Focused, real-time, continuous
• Good for experimenting
• Can become very complex if used beyond simplified version
• Excellent for impact identification and analysis
• Easy to understand
• Good display method
• Excellent for prioritizing impacts

Disadvantages:

• Do not distinguish between direct and indirect impacts
• Do not link action and impact
• The process of incorporating values can be controversial
• Heavy reliance on knowledge and data
• Often complex and expensive

Table 1: Advantages and disadvantages of impact-identification methods.

Advantages:

• Link action to impact
• Good method for displaying EI/RA results
• Address only direct impacts
• Do not address impact duration or probability
• Do not distinguish between direct and indirect impacts
• Significant potential for double-counting of impacts

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Conclusion
Some years ago the main issue in mine action was about safety and quality versus produc-
tivity. Now is the time to take a more pragmatic approach and look at all three subjects in a
balanced manner. A foundation based on standards has now been accepted by the international-
community as essential to maintaining safety and quality. However, control must be exerted
by donors not to fund studies and improvements that fail to provide a noticeable improvement
in the quality of life of those whose daily struggle is one of survival.

What is critical is the need to modify the present IMAS and the other documents in order to
conduct strategic planning in a systematic manner. Policies concentrating on local aspects need
to take a broader view and a recognition of the importance of prioritization is needed, which
must be initiated at the earliest possible opportunity and must also incorporate the knowledge
that is less effective in some places than it is in others is simply demeaning in the wrong place and
is an intellectual use of time, effort and limited financial resources. Currently the documenta-
tion presented does not complete the picture or provide a coherent approach; there is now an
urgent need to “close the circle” by providing and utilizing the missing information. ❖

See Endnotes, page 109

Quality Assurance for
Mined and Survey Areas

Mechanical demining is an important and
essential part of any demining process, and
quality-assurance methods must constantly
be revised to address the balance between
safety and efficiency. Based on experience
from the MineWolf mechanical demining
experience, the tiler system would improve
the demining process significantly, thereby
increasing speed and reducing the costs of
demining operations.

by Heinz Rathi and Dieter Schröder [Safety Technology Systems]

Important Requirements
A Total Quality Control system—a management tool for improv-
ishing performance that aggressively strives for a defect-free
process—a required and includes the demining-organizations, equip-
ment choices, standard operating procedures, training programs and the
following essential requirements:

1. Ground-penetration depth up to 30 centimeters (12 inches).
2. Multiple operations with the tiler, to break up partially
demolished or remaining mines and explosives components not
completely destroyed by the tiler.
3. Effective depth control for both the tiler and tiler system.
   We recommend placing transverse sensors on both sides of the vehicle
   so the movement on either side is independent from the move-
   ments of the opposite side (otherwise, effective depth of demining
   might be reduced due to topographical variants).
4. Monitoring of drive control to be displayed inside the cabin
   for all relevant technical data such as clearance depth, rate of
   revolution for tiler and flail, vehicle speed, engine temperature
   and vehicle positioning.
5. Global-positioning-system navigation for directional control.
6. Driver on board to intervene if needed with difficult topogra-
phy and obstacles.
7. Quality record system for all relevant data to be printed from
data loggers.

The tiler process has the potential to be capable of destroying all
mines, provided the tiler operates consistently with a rotation speed of
at least 300–400 revolutions per minute and is fitted with special cut-
ing tools to destroy all mines, avoiding slipping, turning, and
overturning. In general, a TQC program provides a modern, overall quality concept of a company or system.

It is easy to see if the process is capable or not by looking at the
area after the demining process. The area has to be homogeneous
after a uniform process as this is the basis for a capable process.